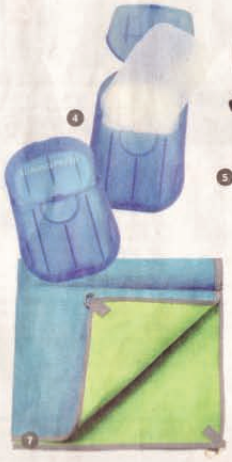
PRACTICAL TRAVELER

Holiday Gifts For a Globetrotter



By MICHELLE HIGGINS

AVID travelers are notoriously hard to buy gifts for. They seem to want only things that will make their trips easier or their luggage lighter, even though they already have the perfect suitcase and the best noise-canceling headset. You can try finding something luxurious, but beware those Gharka luggage tags for your backpacking sister-in-law or that elegant swivel-lid alarm clock that weighs a ton.

It doesn't help that every holiday, these hard-core travelers who have been everywhere and done everything one-up your gift with something cooler brought back for you from one of their exotic trips. Remember that Masai beaded necklace from Tanzania you got so many compliments on?

Below, gift suggestions for the hard-to-please globetrotter on your list.

1 For Parents on the Go

Air Play Tray Table Cover, $25

Inspired by parents who found themselves trying anything to keep their 16-month-old content on a long flight, this entertainment center turns the airplane tray table into a game with colorful beads, a peek-a-boo mirror, zipper and crinkly materials. It may drive the person in front of the kid crazy as a child bangs and grabs at the toys, but at least any 6- to 24-month-old will be happy for a while instead of screaming at the top of her lungs. Information: Starkidsproducts.com.

2 For the Fashionista

Hermès silk scarf, $375

Worn on the head, around the neck or as a sash around the waist, a scarf will add versatility to any traveler's wardrobe, and can easily fit into any bag. Information: Hermes.com.

3 For the Techie

JuiceBar Multi-Device Pocket Solar Charger, $45

No need for a different charger for laptop, iPod and cellphone. The JuiceBar includes 12 adapters and uses the sun — or the lamp in a hotel — to power up the whole set of electronics. Information: Cableorganizer.com.

4 For the T.S.A. Hater

Man on the Move Paper Soap Set, $14

Give the gift of easier security clearance in the form of shaving cream, soap and body wash made of dissolvable paper. Each compact packet includes 30 single-use sheets. Just add water. Information: Flight001.com.

5 For the Neat Freak

GRID-IT! Organizer, $25

Eliminate that tangle of wires at the bottom of a bag by keeping digital camera, iPod, headphones, laptop cables and other doo-dads neat and secure in this rubberized organizer. It can be placed at the top of a carry-on for easy access. Information: Cocooninnovations.com.

6 For the Wannabe Spy

Heys BioCase Carry-On, $2,200

This futuristic carry-on features biometric technology, so only the owner's fingerprint will unlock the bag. Billed as "nearly indestructible," it's made of 100 percent German polycarbonate and comes with a U.S.B. cord and power adapter to recharge the lock on arrival. Information: Heyusa.com.

7 For the Beach Bum

CGear Sand-Free Multimat, $60

Originally designed as a "deployable helimat" to eliminate dirt, dust and debris from being kicked up by military helicopters when landing, the 8-by-8-foot Multimat promises a "sand-free experience at the beach." With built-in ultraviolet protection, it can also be used for shade. Information: Cgear-sandfree.com.

8 For the Over-Packer

TravelOn Luggage Scale, $24

A portable luggage scale to help avoid those overweight luggage fees. Handles and a hook pop out with the press of a button, and the backlighted display changes from blue to red when the bag is too heavy. Information: Ebags.com.

9 For the Pet Lover

Teafco Argo Action Petpack, $138

This lightweight carrier, designed for small dogs or cats, doubles as a backpack. A detachable compartment holds a leash, treats or other essentials. Offered in petal pink, tango orange, kiwi green or berry blue to best match "your pup's individuality." Information: Teafco.com.