

Liquor— a quick gift that warms many hearts

By George Miller

Candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker—when it comes to buying last-minute Christmas gifts.

Lincoln liquor merchants agreed that December is the biggest month of the year for liquor sales.

Jeff Riebe, manager of the Clock Tower Bottle Shoppe at 70th and A streets, said business volume triples during the Christmas rush. He said he looks for the real crunch of customers to begin this week.

Mitch Tavlin, manager of Mitch Tavlin Liquors at 13th and South streets, said December is known as the "devil month" among liquor dealers.

Don Wendelin, manager of Wendelin's Bottle Shop at 2620 Stockwell St., said the sales peaks rush on Christmas Eve, which he said was the second busiest day of the year for liquor stores—New Year's Eve being the busiest.

The more expensive brands of liquor are popular as Christmas gifts, according to Mrs. John Settlem, owner and manager of Jax Liquors at 48th and Van Dorn streets and at 27th and Woods Blvd.

Such brands as Chevis Regal, Seagrams, Crown Royal, Jack Daniels, Canadian Club and Cutty Sark were mentioned as popular brands for Christmas gifts.

Mettlen said decanters and wine and gift

packages also sell well at Christmas.

Such sets include one or two bottles of wine along with some glasses, a book on wines or a package of nuts, she said.

Wines, according to Tavlin, are the only thing to give when considering liquor as a Christmas present.

"Whisky as a gift is nothing," Tavlin said. "The selection of a bottle of wine is the classic gift, an expression of love, affection and esteem."

Taking time

He said the selection of a bottle of wine as a gift shows that the person giving the gift has taken time to carefully choose his present.

Mettlen said he believes many persons buy liquor as a last-minute gift.

Mettlen said people know there will always be liquor to buy.

When picking wine for the Christmas meal, a white wine is recommended if turkey will be served, the merchants said. Riebe said French and German white wines are best to serve.

Meats and drinks

If the main course is to be a ham, a rose

is the best to serve, they said.

Tavlin said ham is usually prepared to taste sweet and that white wines are not to be served with sweet foods.

If duck is served, a red pino noire, or burgundy is best to serve, Tavlin said, because the duck has mainly dark meat.

Riebe said younger people now tend to drink any kind of wine they like, regardless of what type of food is being served with it.

But when picking a liquor as a gift for someone whose drinking tastes are unknown, the liquor store managers have a few suggestions.

Safe gift

Tavlin said a safe gift will always be a dessert wine (such as a creme sherry, a sauterne or a port) or a German wine.

Mettlen said if the liquor is to be a wine for the table, a drier wine is preferred. If it is to be a sipping wine, a sweeter type is in order.

Riebe recommends a liqueur such as Galliano, Kahlua or Drambuie because many things can be done with them. They also can be poured over desserts, he said.

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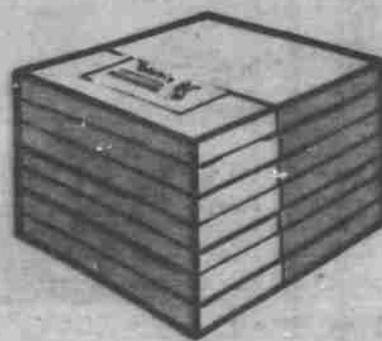
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