

WHAT TO BUY THE EPICUREAN ENTHUSIAST

▼ If there is just one cookbook that every cook needs, it is the timeless classic **Joy of Cooking**, originally by Irma S. Rombauer. Newly reissued in a 75th anniversary edition, the cooking bible now contains 4,500 recipes, including 500 that are new. *Barnes & Noble's* well-stocked cookbook section sells it for \$35.

BEST LOVED AND BRAND NEW

75th ANNIVERSARY

JOY OF COOKING

500 New Recipes
4000 of the Most Beloved

4500 RECIPES FOR THE

Irma S. Rombauer, Marjorie

▲ To be a good cook, you need good knives, and the best cooks know that only one knife is essential — an 8-inch chef's knife, the sharper the better. A **J.A. Henckles Four Star II**, forged from a single piece of high-carbon stainless steel, is an excellent choice. It sells for \$129.99 at *Bed Bath & Beyond*.

► The **Waring Pro Blender** strips the concept of a blender down to its essentials — two speeds, low and high. Well, technically they're "lo" and "hi." It's the type of blender a bartender uses, and its 500-watt motor is stronger than most blenders at the same price point, \$59.99 at *Target*.

▼ Mix the ingredients in a pot, flip a switch, and forget about it. Hours later, you have a full and delicious meal, fall-off-the-bone tender and steaming hot. Slow cookers have made a strong resurgence in the last few years, led by Rival, the only company that can call its product a **Crock-Pot**. A 5-quart version with four time settings goes for \$29.99 at *Kohl's*.

► Ask anyone who has one: A **Le Creuset Dutch oven** is the best cooking tool they have in their kitchen. Sure, they're pricey — \$229.99 for a 5½-quart size, \$184.99 for the less convenient 3½ quart, at *The Andersons* — but they're gorgeous, and food just begs to be cooked in them.

▲ Are **See's Candies** the best chocolates in the country? Yeah, probably. The bite-sized pieces of chocolate-covered perfection are available, at least through the holidays, though in a limited selection only, at *Dillard's*. A 1-pound box of assorted chocolates is \$17.50, and the same size tin of those amazing Toffee-ettes is a bargain at \$21.

◀ Serious bakers need serious baking equipment. And what could be more serious than a **Viking Professional Mixer**, a 7-quart, 1,000-watt behemoth? It's sturdy, heavy, and strong; even the paddles are made of metal. *The Andersons* in Maumee has one close-out model left, at the greatly reduced price of \$393.

◀ No more waiting and waiting for a tea kettle to boil. The **Capresso H2O Plus electric tea kettle** boils up to six cups of water in practically no time at all. Plus, the tempered glass exterior allows you to watch the bubbles form and the water start to roil, which is cooler than it sounds. It's \$59.99 at *Bed Bath & Beyond*.

◀ Just what everyone needs for entertaining, the **Bella Kitchen Triple Slow Cooker Buffet Server** is three slow cookers and three chafing dishes in one. In three 2½-quart pots, you can slow-cook three different dishes and then keep each one warm for serving. And each pot has an individual temperature control. *Kohl's* sells them for \$89.99.

◀ No American kitchen should be without a good **cast-iron skillet**. They are extraordinarily versatile, last forever, and only improve with age. When they get a nice black sheen on them, they're practically nonstick. Lodge Logic makes a particularly sturdy version; \$18.99 for a 12-inch skillet and \$14.99 for a 10¼-inch, at *Target*.

Gift ideas: Daniel Neman