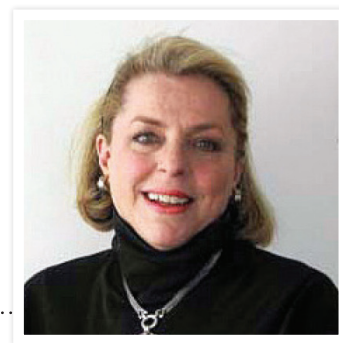


# TREND watch



By Beth Anderson

Sharon Adler's knowledge of merchandising spans over 30 years, including 8 years with Associated Merchandising Corporation (AMC), the preeminent overseas sourcing and product development arm servicing the leading department stores in the U.S. and Europe.

Adler spent seven years sourcing and developing product for 2 leading seasonal wholesalers, the Director of Product Development for Santa's World (Kurt Adler) and Department 56 Inc. After leaving Department 56 in 2002, Sharon joined Li Fung, the world's largest global sourcing company, as Director of Trend and Color overseeing the art department and all products of home merchandise. She attended seminars and trade shows globally and produced color and trend reports for major wholesalers and retailers in all categories of home furnishings. Sharon is currently consulting in trend, color, product development and global sourcing in the home furnishings industry.

***"...fortune cookie with a Misfortune inside."***



As we're starting the seasons of holidays and gatherings, I continue my reporting on foods from the New York Fancy Food Show and the items that can be merchandised as gifts. Two categories that are selling well and continue to be popular at this time of the year are: Mocktails, Cocktails, & Shrubs and Holiday Treats & Snacks.

## **Mocktails, Cocktails and Shrubs**

I've written about this topic in prior Trend Watch articles about the growth of non-alcoholic drinking and how important this category is for Millennials. This was proven at the Fancy Food Show in New York where many new non-alcoholic cocktails and wines were being introduced. Offshoots of this are crackers, snacks, and alcohol infused candies and maple syrup. So setting up a section near your barware can round out these additional giftables.



From France a real wine maker has introduced a grouping of alcohol free wines: Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, White wines, Chardonnay and Rose wines, Rose Provencal, sparkling Blanc de Blanc Brut and others. All are vegan friendly, zero pesticide residues and low sugar. LE PETIT BERET, 646-991-6838, Sebastien Demsar, s.demsar@lepetitberet.com, www.lepetitberet.com



HELLA COCKTAIL Mixers established in Brooklyn, NY in 2011 are gluten free and vegan made in small batches and offered as gift sets for the home bartender or sold in full size bottles. Their bitters and soda are sparkling mixers with flavors from Gentian root in the South of France. 802-595-1954, sales@hellacocktail.co, www.hellacocktail.com.

From Spain coming in beautiful gift bottles are four flavors of Sangrias from LA SALA that are alcohol free. They are offered in red, white, rose, and mulled wine. They also come naturally with alcohol as well. The packaging creates a beautiful gift for any time of the year. LA SALA, David Hidalgo, 786-508-5199, david@tsvus.com, www.thespanishwineyards.com



ST. REGIS offers a de-alcoholized wine product introduced their Nosedcco that is the taste of Prosecco with floral prosecco flavor in a classic bottle. They offer a whole line of wines, Kir Royal, Brut, Cabernet Sauvignon and more. ST. REGIS, David Abrams, 800-361-9157, ext. 2173, dabrams@idfoods.com, www.idfoods.com

MARTINELLI'S sparkling blush ciders made of 100% fresh apples and a splash of raspberry to create a pink color. They have around for over 150 years in Watsonville, CA producing ciders with no added sweeteners or chemical preservatives. MARTINELLI'S, 800-662-1866, www.martinellis.com



BITTERMILK is a well-known mixer in this area and a Gold soft winner in 2019 for their No. 2 Tom Collins with Elderflower & Hops. It mixes with Gin or Vodka but also with light spirits or Champagne. Bittermilk offers their line in small gift set bottles and have won awards in 2016, 2017 and now in 2019. They have a wide range of cocktail mixers to make Whiskey Sours, Old Fashioneds and more. BITTERMILK, [drink@BITTERMILK.com](mailto:drink@BITTERMILK.com), [www.BITTERMILK.COM](http://www.BITTERMILK.COM)

Adding to your bar presentation are side snacks. THE SAUCY LADIES are a new kettle chip introduced in 2019 that are not only delicious and crispy but come in an upscale packaging. Taking color inspiration from that famous blue jewelry box and a silhouette image of another famous icon the bags will stand out on your floor especially if you present them in a silver bowl. They have several flavors from five cheses, tomato basil, arrabbiata and old fashion (basic). Not as commercial and new to the market so you might want to give them a try. THE SAUCY LADIES, Deb Crisan, 631-771-6921, [DEB@SAUCYLADIESUSA.com](mailto:DEB@SAUCYLADIESUSA.com)



On the Rocks by KOPPERS CHOCOLATE, a new item introduced this season a candy with liquid center filled with every cordial and inspired by all the key drinks and mixers and covered with coating with various forms of chocolate that complement the filling either mint and coco dusting or strawberry dusting. They are in a re-sealable package, 64% Dark Chocolate in every cordial and some of the offerings are Bourbon Cordials with coco dusting, Moscow Mule with Vodka flavored center and spicy-sweet and a ginger mint coating. KOPPERS CHOCOLATE, [sales@kopperschocolate.com](mailto:sales@kopperschocolate.com), [www.ontherocks.com](http://www.ontherocks.com)



WINE STICKS make a perfect pick me up side gift. They are a cookie similar to a biscotti that you would dip into your after dinner wine as you would a biscotti into coffee. They go well with cheese and spreads on them and eaten alone and not dipped. They come in various flavors such as apple made with homemade applesauce, white wine and cinnamon and they suggest you pair it with Riesling, Pinot, and Chardonnay. So each package with a flavor has a suggested pairing. Other flavors are chocolate, lemon and cinnamon expresso and Carolina spice. THE SWEETERY is the maker of Wine Sticks, 864-224-8394, [www.thesweetery.net](http://www.thesweetery.net)



RUNAMOK MAPLE syrup is very much like a fine wine or alcohol. Runamok has infused their syrups by using Bourbon barrels that draws in the essence of the bourbon without using alcohol. They also produce other flavors using the same method such as Whiskey Barrel-Aged, Bourbon Barrel-Aged, Rum Barrel-Aged and more. They have recipes for Kafka's Mocktail or a real cocktail in their recipe for Wardrobe Malfunction with tequila and Ginger Root infused Maple Syrup. Runamok has several sample gift sets of 60ml bottles for Cheese Pairing, Cocktail Pairing Smoke + Barrels (those listed before) as well as sweet pairing for ice cream and tea's for the foodies who love to sample and try. RUNAMOK MAPLE, 802- 849-7943, [sales@runamokmaple.com](mailto:sales@runamokmaple.com) [www.runamokmaple.com](http://www.runamokmaple.com)



## Holiday Treats & Snacks

It's almost BOO-Time, Half Time, Thanksgiving and then the big ones, Christmas and New Year's. So many events and many celebrated by being with friends, family and of course food.

For Halloween, I found at BRANDT a black "Chinese" fortune cookie with a Misfortune inside. They are sold individually wrapped in a counter display or as a box of 4 for a gift. The artwork is great and a clever idea. CARL BRANDT INC., 267-614-3344, [www.carlbrandt.com](http://www.carlbrandt.com)



Here are a few holiday novelty recommendations when you're sourcing Halloween and Christmas. RUSTIC BAKERY was highlighted in a prior article for Halloween and Valentine's Day they make large single wrap cookies decorated with sparkling sugar. Besides the buttery taste they are pretty to give. They also make jars with vanilla butter cookies in ghost shapes or in smaller cellophane packages. They are a premium cookie resource. RUSTIC BAKERY, 707-789-7400, [www.rusticbakery.com](http://www.rusticbakery.com)





GIAMBRIS SWEETS have been in business since 1942 in South Philadelphia. They use Belgian chocolate to cover their pretzels and finished off with novelty treats on the chocolate pretzels twists and rods with a wide range of toppings for everyday and holiday needs. Their top sellers are tiny peanut butter pieces, rainbow non-pareils, and mini chocolate buttons. But they have over 40 to choose from. The pretzel is their signature item but they also apply the same technique to graham crackers, cookies & cream sandwich cookies. Giambri Sweets also offer handspun candy canes, chocolate straws, peanut brittle and hard and gummy candies. GIAMBRIS SWEETS, 866 238 0169, [info@giambri.com](mailto:info@giambri.com), [www.giambri.com](http://www.giambri.com)

Le Chocolat des Francais is a young French company established in 2014 where I spotted them at the Fancy Food Show just a few seasons ago when they came to the U.S. They use only natural ingredients and 100% pure cocoa butter without palm oil or conservatives they make an award winning product given by France. Their signature is the artwork on their packaging which is bright and eye catching and all different and changing. They hold art shows and many different illustrators are found and the winner's art work is shown on their packages. They sell bars and square bite size gift sets. They look fabulous & young and relate to pop culture. Warehoused in the U.S. – Englewood, NJ. FRENCH FEAST, Phyllis Brooks, 201-731-3102, [contact@frenchfeast.com](mailto:contact@frenchfeast.com) [www.frenchfeast.com](http://www.frenchfeast.com)

Oprah loves it and so do Vogue and many others, the novelty shape and beautifully shaped chocolate from MAGGIE LOUISE CONFECTIONS made for any holiday or special event. Small minimums for custom pieces, if there is a need for a fashion show or charity event, are available. The gold accent lipsticks look like the real thing but they are bespoke chocolate candy. Handmade in Austin TX. Every holiday and life event is represented in her custom molds and hand decorated finishing. Flat rate shipping –MAGGIE LOUISE CONFECTIONS, 888-886-2342, [help@maggielouiseconfections.com](mailto:help@maggielouiseconfections.com) [www.maggielouiseconfections.com](http://www.maggielouiseconfections.com)

More wonderful chocolates are coming from Andres Confiserie Suisse and also Harbor Sweets who both have handmade chocolates with hidden treats inside, placed like a puzzle within the cavity mold nuts and caramel. ANDRE'S CONFISERIE SUISSE brings us three generations of Swiss trained confiseurs making handmade sweets with no additives and wonderful paper cutting packaging. One of their newer items is a chocolate pine cone in foil that you open and the pine cone is in two halves with mini dusted cocoa chocolate almonds inside. They can also be used at a tree ornament or a tie on for a gift. Andre's offer other items as well which you can view on their website. ANDRE'S CONFISERIE SUISSE, 816-561-3440, [info@andreschocolates.com](mailto:info@andreschocolates.com) [www.andreschocolates.com](http://www.andreschocolates.com)

HARBOR SWEETS just won the 2019 soft Bronze award at the Fancy Food Show for their Cocoa Sante Kashir Spice Hot Chocolate which is rich and has depth to it and a presentation packaging. I'm highlighting their Milk Chocolate and Dark Chocolate Antique mold Santa's that are also opens up filled with a surprise treat of almond butter crunch toffee, whole toasted almond, sand dollar caramel with pecans. Harbor Sweets also has other box candies and uses local artists for their artwork and packaging and they donate a percent of their annual profits to local organizations such as Salem Food Pantry. HARBOR SWEETS, 978-745-7648, [www.harborsweets.com](http://www.harborsweets.com)

Going from bespoke and high quality chocolate to young and fun - PELICAN BAY introduced Elf Snot a sour apple liquid candy for a fun stocking stuffer. It comes in a counter display and snot is in – Unicorn Snot and now Elf Snot. PELICAN BAY, 800-826-8982, [www.pelicanbayltd.com](http://www.pelicanbayltd.com)

MELVILLE CANDY has lots of marshmallow items such as Toppers for hot chocolate and Monster Halloween pops and Christmas pops. They are loaded with novelty shape pops in hard candy, marshmallow and rice treats. Honey spoons in many honey flavors. Something for every season. MELVILLE CANDY, 800-638-8063, [www.melvillecandycompany.com](http://www.melvillecandycompany.com)

