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Think on-trend when buying for couples.

With March being Melbourne's busiest wedding season, it's the time of year those stiff white envelopes filled with lavishly embossed invitations start arriving in our letterboxes. But with more and more couples living together before they tie the knot, the tradition of present-giving is getting trickier - a set of steak knives just isn't going to cut it any more.

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However, some of the long-established gift staples, such as towels, crockery and tea sets, still make perfectly wonderful gifts - but why not steer clear of the traditional white and **china** options and go for something more on-trend. Melbourne **brand** Ziporah is creating luxe towels in vibrant colours, and artists Rowena Martinich and Geoffrey Carran are producing exquisite one-off dinner plates and platters. Top of the gift-registry for many couples will be the Tom Dixon Form tea set. Made from brass and bakelite, it's undoubtedly a future heirloom.

If you're in a **group** of guests combining resources, how about splashing out on a piece of art? Consider an original work from an up-and-coming local artist, or a fabulous vintage poster such as the French, circa 1960, Transiradio poster from Galerie Montmartre in Fitzroy. Hanging in the newlyweds' home, it will be appreciated every day, and will last a lot longer than any toaster.

HANGING AT REAR Tissue paper garland, \$14.95, from Lark. Transiradio original French advertising poster printed c. 1960 (see right), from Galerie Montmartre. FOREGROUND, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT IN BOX, LEFT Rowena Martinich and Geoffrey Carran hand-painted platters, \$250 each, from the National Gallery of Victoria shop; and aqua heart plate, \$79.50, from Market Import. Small white stool, \$125, from Market Import. ON STOOL Blue Portuguese Diamond jug (see right); and Fleur De Lys hand-blown tumblers, \$20 each; both from Shelley Pantan. Home Sweet Home and They Lived Happily Ever After cushions, \$58.56 each (inserts not included), both from Auntycookie.com. Large aqua stool, \$259, from Market Import. Small aqua stool, \$125, from Market Import. ON STOOL Flamingo bath sheet (see right), from Ziporah. Timber house candle-holder (see right), with Queen **B** candle (see right); both from Shelley Pantan. Flowers supplied by stylist. Tom Dixon Form brass tea and coffee set, pieces **sold** individually: tray \$220; tea pot \$253, **milk** jug \$88, jug \$154, sugar dish and spoon \$110; all from Turner & Lane. Mustard and white zigzag rug, \$285, from Clickon Furniture. All boxes, ribbon and tissue paper from discount stores.

STOCKISTS

Aunty Cookie auntycookie.com

Clickon Furniture 9417 1183, clickonfurniture.com.au

Galerie Montmartre 9486 8686, galmont.com.au

Lark larkstore.com.au

Market Import 9500 0764, marketimport.com.au

National Gallery Shop ngv.vic.gov.au

Shelley Panton 9533 9003, shelleyanton.com

Turner & Lane 9821 0012, turnerlane.com.au

Ziporah ziporah.com.au

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