

## Technology Hits Toilet With H2Orb

That low-flow toilet installed last year has earned you a nice rebate from the city water department. But did you know a leak or stuck flapper could flush away those savings in just days?

The H2Orb by AquaOne Technologies, LLC detects leaks, stuck open flappers and leaky fill valves. If the toilet begins to run excessively, the Orb even intercepts the flow of water to the toilet tank before the leak becomes potentially property damaging. If the water level in the bowl gets too high, the product shuts off the water supply so not even a second flush is possible.



Just to be clear, the H2Orb will not save any money or water on a properly working loo. Think of it as a check engine light on your car's dashboard.

Pay attention to the beeping and flashing and you'll save yourself impending trouble and expense.

The softball-sized H2Orb installs between the water valve on the wall and the hose running to the toilet tank. It takes about 10 minutes if you have no do-it-yourself experience.

AquaOne originally developed the Orb to simply stop overflows after a senior facility patient overflowed his toilet, slipped and later died from complications of a broken hip.

The H2Orb is available for \$127 through theH2Orb.com or 866-598-3474.

## Famed Distiller Blends Non-Vintage

Single malt whisky lovers have long praised The Glenrothes vintage offerings, but the distillery's first non-vintage is nothing to look down on either. Hand-picked by the Malt Master from the same quality casks and similarly produced as their prestigious Vintages, a bottle of Select Reserve has a more palatable price tag of about \$45, compared to more than twice that for its better known cousins.

Though entry-level on The Glenrothes scale, this Speyside 80 proof is still top-shelf and still a prized single malt, albeit mixed with whiskies from a variety of ages.

Medium gold to amber in color with a hint of green, the Select is citrus and minty in taste with hints of thyme and rosemary in the nose. It earned 90 points from the Beverage Testing Institute.

Select Reserve is well worth it if you're ready to leave blends behind and step up to single malts.

For more information, visit [www.theglenrothes.com](http://www.theglenrothes.com).



## Breaking Beyond Beer's Boundaries

Founder/brewer Jim Koch brought America to its senses just a few decades ago with an unprecedented variety of full-flavored beers from his Samuel Adams brewery.

Koch & Co. will raise the bar again in November with the release of its 2009 batch of Utopias.

Bring a big wad of cash, but leave any preconceived idea of beer behind when you raise a snifter of Utopias.

That's right, a snifter. Uncarbonated, served in two-ounce pours at room temperature, this drink more resembles a port more than a traditional beer.

And like port, Utopias tips the scale on alcohol, too. Weighing in at 25 percent alcohol, it holds the *Guinness Book of World Records* title of world's strongest beer."

Utopias is brewed with several strains of yeast. Caramel and Munich malts give the beer a ruby-black color, and three kinds of Noble hops add a floral, spicy character. Like many spirits, this brew is a blend of liquids, some aged in bourbon casks and Scotch whiskey barrels for 16 years. Once blended, this year's batch was finished in sherry and port casks.

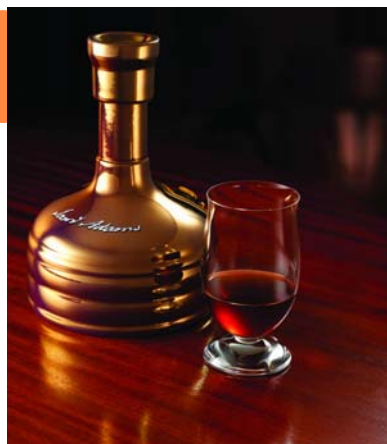
Utopias is intense. The alcohol level grabbed us first during our sneak peek tasting in August, because we were expecting – beer. But when we re-tooled our tongues to savor a true, aged and blended drink, nods and smiles spread across the table. Maple, nutty, oak and honey notes, dark fruit aromas – words not usually reserved for beer. Sweet, but not syrupy; mellow, but hardly wimpy; as incredibly complex as some of the best wines and spirits on the market today.

Bottled in numbered, ceramic brew kettle-shaped decanters, filled from just 53 barrels, only the \$150 price tag may keep it on the shelves into winter.

## Cases Do Bang-Up Job on Phones

Cell phone owners can likely recall the first time they dropped their new phones. Gasps, breath holding, motion slows till the plastic hits the pavement. Or worse, that horrible knocking sound on the roof of your car as you reach for that familiar lump on your belt or in your purse.

A Colorado company has the gear that will keep your phone functional and protected at the same time. OtterBox boasts a variety of protection levels for most phones and PDAs on the market. We tested Defender Series cases for a pair of BlackBerrys. The Defender uses a three-part system: First, a clear silicone sheet that perfectly covers the screen and keyboard without hampering usability. Next a hard, polycarbonate kind of skeleton snaps over the phone like a clam shell with openings for the screen and keyboard. Finally, a silicone skin holds it all together. Sealable flaps allow users to access to charging, USB and headset ports. In fact, the protection is designed to put on and leave in place unless you



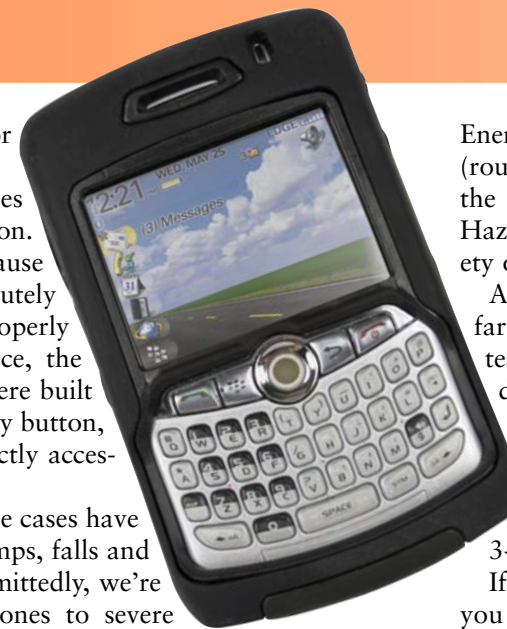
need to change a battery or other internal parts.

We found one of the two cases to be slightly difficult to put on. But part of the struggle is because each OtterBox case is absolutely phone-model specific. Once properly aligned and snapped into place, the cases look and feel like they were built with the phone. Every key, every button, every port and jack is as perfectly accessible.

Over the last few months, the cases have protected our phones from bumps, falls and a fair amount of dirt, too. Admittedly, we're not up for subjecting the phones to severe treatment, but OtterBox has testimonials from customers who've accidentally dropped their phones off multi-story buildings or from cars at highway speeds. The phones showed some surface damage but still worked.

Defender Series cases average about \$50; the slimmer, less-protective Impact Series is basically a screen protector and silicone skin for about \$20; and the new Commuter Series sports an external shell but no keyboard protection for about \$35.

For more information, visit [www.otterbox.com](http://www.otterbox.com)



## How Green is Your Air (Purifier)?

An Austin company has decided it can clear the political air and indoor air at the same time.

Alen Corp. boasts its Paralda is the only eco-friendly air purifier on the market. Like other portable premium purifiers, the Paralda has all the right stuff – HEPA filter with 99.97% efficiency; four fan speeds; and an ultraviolet lamp that kills bacteria and viruses like the flu. Extra nice touches include the light-touch 24-hour programmable timer and relatively quiet motor.

The purifier's environmental conscience comes through with an

Energy Star rating, thanks to consuming just 55 watts on high (roughly equivalent to an incandescent light bulb). Every piece of the Paralda even adheres to Europe's tough Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) Directive, which prohibits a variety of heavy metals and plastics byproducts.

Admittedly, we're not scientific enough to test this purifier as far as how much dust, pollen and other nasties it pulled from our test bedroom, but the filter showed a surprising amount of debris after a week of running some six hours a day. And the 11-year-old that lived there seemed to suffer less from her usual allergies.

The filter (\$49 to replace) has a lifespan of 6-9 months if used 24/7. The ultraviolet lamp (\$59 to replace) should last 3-5 years.

If you're truly serious about the air you breathe, Alen is betting you won't mind shelling out some serious green (\$499) for this purifier with a conscience. They even offer 4-, 6- and 8-month "subscription" plans to automatically send a filter without the usual shipping fee. Available at [target.com](http://target.com) and [alencorp.com](http://alencorp.com).

## Coffee Goes Back to the Can

Freeze, refrigerate or leave at room temperature? Ground or whole? Coffee fans have likely debated storage techniques since the first bean met the roasting fire.

Moisture and light have long been known as culprits. More recently, connoisseurs have pointed out that bringing your favorite roast from cold to room temperature condenses moisture in the container. *Faux pas*, Folgers lovers!

The latest wisdom adds yet another enemy, carbon dioxide, which is released during and after roasting. But don't leave the lid off the coffee jar just yet – CO2 is also in the air.

The \$22 Friis Coffee Savor sports a patented one-way valve atop its lid that lets CO2 out but no air back in. Yes, the valves seem much the same as those built into many pricey bags of beans you can buy at many stores.

And yes, you could just keep pouring new coffee into that same old bag. But that's not so pretty on your countertop next to your fancy European coffee maker is it?

Available at [friiscoffee.com](http://friiscoffee.com).

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