

## Checkpoint-Friendly Laptop Bags



Hate having to pull that laptop in and out of your bag at the airport when going through security? Skooba Design has a new slim Messenger version of its original Checkthrough "checkpoint friendly" laptop bag. Checkthrough bags are specially designed and tested to pass through airport security x-ray screening without having to remove the computer. The original Checkthrough bag was developed in close coordination with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). The new Checkthrough Messenger is a slim, "flap-over" style version of the original. Skooba also offers laptop skins, which can be carried alone or inside another bag, and are also checkpoint-friendly when used on their own.

The Checkthrough Messenger Bag looks like any other high-end business case, but opens and hinges in the middle to separate and isolate the laptop compartment from the rest of the bag. For initial, immediate visual reference, the laptop can be seen by the inspector through a clear window that is exposed when the bag is unfolded. With the window facing up, the bag is sent through X-ray screening. The design of the laptop compartment is such that the image presented to the screener is the same as if the laptop were removed and placed in a bin. The Checkthrough bag and all of its contents can be carried securely with or without the hinge zipped shut, so it can be readied in line, prior to screening. Once through, the traveler can simply pick up the bag and go, zipping it back up on the move or at the gate.

The bag has over a dozen compartments, pockets and organizers, including the Doc-Pocket which keeps ticket and passport within instant reach. The laptop section holds all 15/15.4-inch machines, most 16- and many 17-inch models, including all Apple laptops. The adjacent main compartment holds files, papers and books.

The bag also includes a removable, zippered clear pouch for allowable liquids, organizers for portable electronics, business card holder, and more. Durable ballistic exterior, heavy-duty webbing and stitching, and nickel-finish hardware make the bag travel-tough without compromising refined good looks, and it weighs just 40 ounces.

The bag sells for \$129.95 and is available at [www.skoobadesign.com](http://www.skoobadesign.com). Skooba Design has set up a special section of its website at [www.checkthrough.com](http://www.checkthrough.com) for travelers to get more information on the checkpoint friendly program.

## Yep, That's a Candle



HuSimone's Country Candles offers incredibly realistic looking pie and bakery goods candles that are almost always mistaken for the real thing. Choose from a delectable selection including peach pie, pecan tart—even brownies. They look great, smell great and burn 40-80 hours. The strawberry cheesecake (shown) is six inches round, 2 inches tall and sells for \$13.99. Pies come in a variety of sizes from 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9 inches round.

The candles range from \$4.99 to \$25 for a full size pie, and are available at [www.simonescountry-candles.com](http://www.simonescountry-candles.com). Great gift idea for Mother's Day!

## Pot Scrubbing Gets Gentler

Stinky sponges, rusty steel wool scrubbing pads – yuk! Here's an alternative. Restaurants and hotels use Sandclean and Tawashi cleaners because they last longer, are easier on the hands than conventional cleaning items and they're much less expensive.

Sandclean and Tawashi are reusable and multipurpose alternatives to Western sponges, brushes and steel wool. If you hate the way steel wool feels and you can't stand the way the pad looks after one use, try Sandclean. Each Sandclean lasts a minimum of 6 months of tough use and comes in three grains: Fine, Medium and Rough. They're safer and less abrasive than steel wool and you need to use very little or no detergent to scrub dishes, pots and pans, stovetops, grills, broiling pans, ovens, sinks, bathtubs, kitchen or bathroom tile.

One single Sandclean lasts longer than a box of steel wool pads. It doesn't break, tear or shed those teeny, unsafe steel pieces as does steel wool because it's constructed of cloth and is biodegradable. It can also be used for other cleaning projects. Fine costs \$8.95 and comes in deep green. Medium is \$8.95 and comes in soft red. Rough is \$9.95 and comes in rust red-brown.

The Tawashi brush is made from tightly bound natural palm fibers that makes it outlast sponges. Because it's so tough, it requires less soap or detergent than other sponges to be effective, adding further to its environmental friendliness.

It's available in two sizes: small at \$2.30 and large at \$3.20. Great prices, eh? Both items are available only from Korin Japanese Trading Corp. at [www.korin.com](http://www.korin.com).



## Toast Mom on her Big Day

Toast mom on Mother's Day (May 10 in case you forgot—but you didn't forget, of course) with these cool cocktails created by San Francisco mixologist Victoria D'Amato Moran. From coconut and lemon-ginger to pineapple and jalapeño, each recipe adds a refreshing burst of flavor to the traditional margarita cocktail.

Served on the rocks or frozen, the recipes below share the flavor of Yubari, a rare and expensive melon used to make Midori, the Melon flavored Liqueur. Midori is available at most liquor stores and retails for \$21.99.

### MIDORI MAMBO

1 oz Midori Melon Liqueur  
1 1/2 oz Cabo Wabo Blanco Tequila  
1 1/2 oz Coconut Cream  
1/2 oz fresh-squeezed organic Lime Juice



### SPICY YUBARI MARGARITA

1 oz Midori Melon Liqueur  
1 1/2 oz Cabo Wabo Reposado Tequila  
5 slices fresh organic Cucumber peeled and seeded  
2-3 slices fresh organic Jalapeño (to taste)  
1 oz freshly squeezed organic Lime Juice



### PIÑA LINDA

1 oz Midori Melon Liqueur  
1 1/2 oz Cabo Wabo Reposado Tequila  
1 oz Pineapple Juice  
4 Tablespoons diced ripe organic Pineapple  
8 Mint Leaves