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Where you can buy insurance for that rare -- and expensive -- gift

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Now that the tough part is over -- the perfect Christmas gift has been tracked down, bought, wrapped and handed over to the worthy recipient -- comes the easy-to-forget, but essential part: insuring it. If this was the year to go all out -- procuring that rare print or painting for a loved one, that antique car or historical townhouse, that sculpture that cried out for its own addition to the house for optimum viewing, perhaps even a retractable roof to get that special moon lighting -- it's also time to make sure the item is protected. For the well-heeled market, insurer Chubb Corp. provides such services. The insurance company, probably best-known for its sponsorship of PBS hit *The Antiques Roadshow*, specializes in covering life's finer things, with expert art appraisers and conservationists on call. The company recently announced a policy of giving an extra 50% worth of coverage for items on a client's schedule. If a \$10,000 painting gets damaged, but between the appraisal and the damage it has appreciated, the insurer will cover the new market value of the painting. Art appraiser **Renee Vara** says appreciation can happen quickly in the art market, and the new policy takes that into account. The insurer not only appraises and insures established art collectors' priceless items, but also offers novices research and advice. Moreover, industry observers add that the company's greatest strength may be its willingness to help a collector repair an item if the unthinkable should happen. Coverage for these higher-ticket items costs more than 'off-the-rack' policies, company spokesman Christoph Ritter says; but, he adds, the company provides extra perks, such as the services of top conservationists or paying the cost of rebuilding period homes at current cost, not the original appraisal price. The company allows clients 90 days to add items to the coverage. Ms. Vara, the art appraiser, says this is a useful perk for wealthy clients who go to Europe for the summer. 'When you go away, you buy things; that's part of a vacation.'

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