

beautiful books

These brilliantly colored repros will warm up your winter

Taschen, an international fine arts book publisher, has just released two tomes that are actually centuries old, in editions that mark the first reprints ever for each. In both *Shells: Conchology or the Natural History of Sea, Freshwater, Terrestrial and Fossil Shells* and *A Chronicle of the Crusades*, the artwork is exquisite and the subject matter is educational. And in *Crusades*, the opportunity to plunge

into history headfirst instead of from the emotionally dry distance of six centuries is sharply exhilarating.

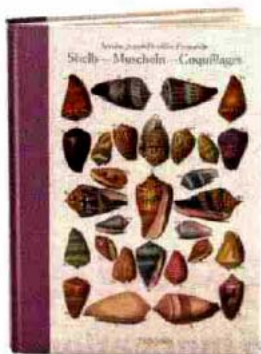
Shells features 216 pages with 80 hand-colored, copper-engraved plates of shells. Modern readers won't be disappointed in the splendid magenta, rose, pink, orange, emerald, aqua, turquoise, and amber hues that, after the introduction, brilliantly dance across every other oversized page.

Plan to spend some time with *A Chronicle of the Crusades*.
Appreciation of Volume



One's 277 parchment folios and their 66 finely detailed miniatures can't be absorbed in a single sitting—maybe not even in an entire season of them.

Crusades is not for the faint of heart. Battles during the Middle Ages were the most gory and gruesome in history, and the book's illustrations tell all. —Candace Manroe



Shells, a reproduction of the 1780 French hand-colored *La Conchyliologie* by Antoine-Joseph Dézallier d'Argenville; \$39.99. ■ *A Chronicle of the Crusades*, a facsimile of the 1472 French manuscript by Sébastien Mamerot and illuminated by Jean Colombe; \$150.