

## Love Icons

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There is no other time of the year more associated with romance than Valentine's Day. Its traditions and customs go far and deep. Just say Valentine and images of rings and roses, hearts and cupids, flowers and fragrances instantly come to mind. The history behind these tokens of love comes from a time when a gift was more than a mere object, it was a way of communicating one's feelings without having to write them on paper.

Don't simply buy a present because everyone else is. In your relationship, a red rose may have far less meaning than a wild orchid or a handful of daisies. A piece of jewelry might be somewhat trite compared to a wood carving you made just for her. A box of chocolates might scream "drugstore" while a better gift is her favorite batch of pecan pralines you made yourself.

If you choose to celebrate Valentine's Day, don't do it out a sense of obligation — do it as a celebration. Think hard about what customs and traditions are meaningful to your relationship. Don't simply mimic what millions of others are doing.

On Valentine's Day and at every other gift-giving occasion make sure your presents come from the heart and not just from the wallet.