

# Everyone's guide to enjoying **VALENTINE'S DAY**



## **INSIDE:**

- *Helpful ideas for Valentine's Day*
  - *A night of love for every budget*
  - *What has the web done for your love life?*
  - *Express yourself with a mix tape*
-

# What women want: chocolate

by Stefanie Ellis  
of The Current staff

Okay, fellas - it's time. Time to make up for the tootsie rolls and scrap-paper card you made for her in two minutes when you forgot to get her a real card and present last Valentine's Day. Time to make up for the hot dog and soda you sprung for when you took her to see the Schwarzenegger flick the year before that. This year, jelly donuts won't suffice. Give your girlfriend something every woman wants - chocolate. Though chocolate is certainly a welcome gift every day of the year, it's especially welcome on this day. Why? It doesn't have as much to do with the pretty, heart-shaped boxes as it does the fact that you're showing you don't take us for granted, that you celebrate our presence in your life. Okay, okay, we just want the heart-shaped boxes. But that's just for starters. If you want to do the right thing this year, make it an all-chocolate Valentine's Day. How do you do that without totally hating the evening yourself? Don't worry, I've got an evening filled with goodies that will make both genders happy - sexy women, gorgeous

men, yummy food and chocolate, chocolate, chocolate. Or should I say, Chocolat?

While dinner and a movie is an often predictable and typical way of spending Valentine's Day, why not pep it up a bit? My spin on the tried and true begins with fondue. Take your love to The Melting Pot on The Loop, where you're active participants in your dining experience. Meals range from \$13.95 to \$21.95. They've got everything from chicken and steak, to twin lobster tails. All entrees come with a salad and a large portion of fresh vegetables. There's a pot on your table and you can fill it with vegetable oil or bouillon. Go for the oil. You get skewers to hold your food on, and then dip it in the pot until it cooks. There are cooking instructions on the table, and each meal comes with a trio of dipping sauces. You can talk and laugh while your food is cooking. It's a less stuffy way of spending an evening. But please, whatever you do, save room for dessert!

Imagine her surprise when she sees before her, a pool of melted chocolate fondue, filled with pecans and caramel, begging her to dip strawberries, bananas, pineapple, cheesecake, marsh-

mallows, poundcake and brownies into it. Watch her eyes as she takes her first bite - guaranteed ecstasy. This experience cannot be described. You must taste for yourself.

Then, while thoughts of the melted nectar from the Gods is still reeling in her head, step inside a movie almost as good as Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. But there'll be no lickable wallpaper here (unless you count Johnny Depp as wallpaper). There's an actual story line, great acting from lovely Juliette Binoche, a large cameo from melt-in-your-mouth Johnny D, and a lot of chocolate. Binoche's character, Vianne Rocher, is a chocolatier. She goes from town to town, opening up chocolate shops and tempting townspeople with her magical goodies. The problem: she opens shop during Lent in a very religious town. No one patronizes her store. But Vianne is resourceful. She soon befriends everyone and dazzles them with her special recipes. Her concoctions weaken everyone's inhibitions and in the process, teaches them about love, friendship and joy. Binoche is a delight to watch and the 1950s setting of the small French village she inhabits is both charming and scenic. It's perfect for this day of love.

Okay boys, one last step. When your girlfriend isn't looking, place a chocolate heart or chocolate rose on the seat of the car so she'll see it before she sits down. Unless you belch uncontrollably all evening or tell her you hate her mother, I doubt she won't be thinking how this was the perfect end to a memorable Valentine's Day with such a thoughtful man.

This night will redeem you from your past mistakes. But you don't have to follow this recipe. You could just go with plan B. What was it, again? Something about Chili Cheese Fritos and a keg of beer? You probably don't need any of my suggestions anyway. You know what your lady likes. I'm sure you didn't really take her to that Schwarzenegger flick last year and spoil her with hot dogs from the concession stand. You're more thoughtful than that. It was nachos, right?

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## The mix tape

# Express yourself with favorite tunes

by **Emily Umbright**  
special to *The Current*

Recently, the mix tape has become a new addition to the courting ritual. Maybe you have just started dating someone, and you do not know what to get them for Valentine's Day, or maybe you are single but want to give something to your friends. Whatever the case may be, the mix tape, or CD, is the perfect gift for anyone. Everyone has an individual taste in music. The perfect mix will let the listener in on who you really are, as well as expose them to music they may have never heard before. If the tape is for someone you've just met, even better. Mix tapes are wonderful conversation starters. They also give a new couple common ground to build on.

There is something wildly romantic about the mix tape. Maybe it's the hours you spend in your bedroom creating the perfect assortment of sounds for your beloved. From the recipient's point of view, the romance comes in listening. Often times, I have sat listening to a tape and wondered "what did he mean by that song?" The point of a mix tape is to shed some light on your personality, bring the listener closer, and maybe even express some feelings you may vocalize normally. Mixing is an art, so if you're thinking about giving a tape to the one you love, here are some pointers:

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- **Be cheesy!** I love it when a boy puts a nerdy song on a tape because it shows his sensitive side. Girls are suckers for that kind of thing. Just be careful that you don't put on a song that might give the listener the wrong idea. There is a tendency to overanalyze when listening to a mix tape and you don't want to lead the recipient astray. There is a fine line that divides reading between the lines and being psycho, which brings me to my next point.

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## St. Louis' most romantic restaurants

by Stefanie Ellis

special to *The Current*

While romance should be a frequently-celebrated part of every relationship, many people save it all up for February 14, the designated day of love. While there are many ways of showing devotion, most opt for a night on the town. So if you're nervous about picking just the right place, allow me to offer my top five picks for St. Louis' most romantic restaurants. They're arranged in price order to show that no matter your budget, you can still have a memorable (and delicious) evening.

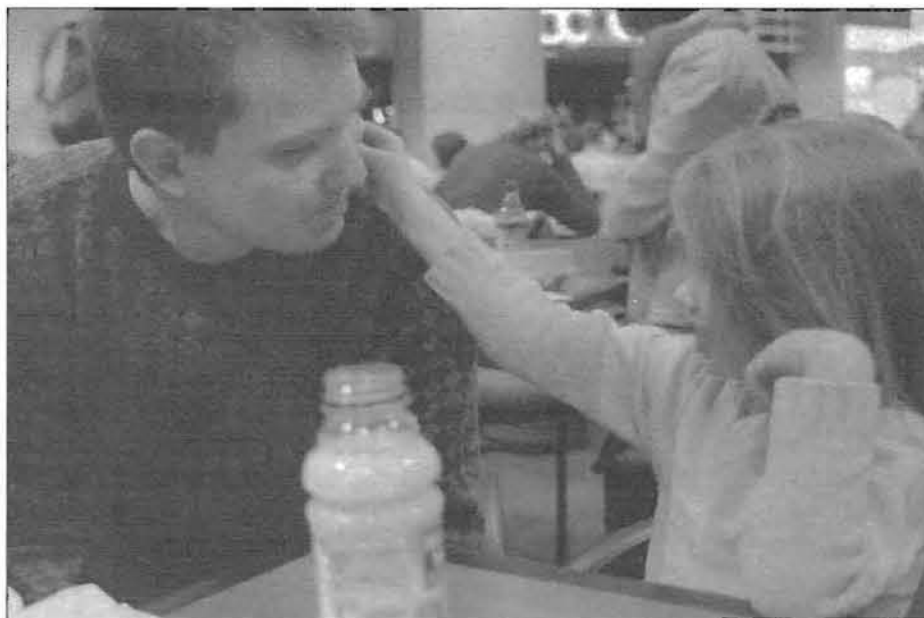
### EXPENSIVE (\$18.95 & UP)

**Tony's**  
410 Market  
(314) 231-7007

Tony's is truly a salute to excellence in dining. The service is impeccable. You can't sneeze without someone handing you a tissue. Your soup comes to you on a golden cart, with a small flame to heat it while you watch. This is a place where, if you wanted a hamburger and it wasn't on the menu, they would make it for you without any hesitation. Anything you order is delicious, though I would recommend a seafood dish. I ordered jumbo shrimp and lobster tail with a butter and caper sauce (per my request), and my companion ordered the Red Snapper with a tomato cream sauce. We were equally delighted by the results. The salad with hearts of palm was wonderful, as was the cream of mushroom soup. Beware, however. Tony's comes by with a lavish dessert cart after your meal, and you are all but powerless to resist. It's okay to give in. It's all a part of the wonderful experience you're sure to have here.

**Grenache**  
7443 Forsyth  
(314) 727-6833

We sat at the front window, peering out onto Forsyth, watching joggers, men in suits and cars speeding past us. The world was outside, and we were relaxing inside Grenache, and having all our whimsies catered to. The environment is elegant, the service unobtrusive, and the food is good. My companion's fish was excellent, covered in a delightful cream sauce and accompanied by a melange of crisp vegetables. While my seafood pasta was a bit fishy, it did nothing to detract from my enjoyment. Grenache is less pricy than Tony's and is a good choice



Mutsumi Igarashi/*The Current*

**Robert Miller, a senior majoring in fine art and philosophy, spends some quality time with his daughter Anais in The Nosh during lunch. St. Louis has lots of options for taking your special person out to eat.**

for a romantic evening in the heart of Clayton.

### MODERATELY PRICED (\$12.95 & UP)

**Remy's Kitchen and Wine Bar**  
222 S. Bemiston  
(314) 726-5757

While I've been here many times, it's not because I enjoy the food. I return, despite my disappointment in the cuisine, because everything else is delightful. I recommend this place for Valentine's because it has three things which outweigh the blasé entrees - great wine, excellent dessert and a charming decor, well-suited for a romantic evening. Remy's is to be praised more for its wine bar than its kitchen, because it offers an extensive selection of wine, along with suitable knowledge from its staff. They make it easy for indecisive types by offering wine "flights" - wine grouped by threes. That way, you can sample half glasses of various wines and pick your favorite. After you find your favorite wine, get dessert. While their chocolate mousse with raspberries (when it's available) is magnificent, I highly recommend the chocolate cherry tart - succulent tart cherries surrounded by mind-boggling chocolate and a rich butter crust, drizzled with cherry syrup and topped with fresh whipped cream. It's to die for! The way to say "I love you" - two pieces!

### INEXPENSIVE (\$6.95 & UP)

**House of India**  
8501 Delmar  
(314) 567-6850

This is my favorite Indian restaurant in St. Louis. I can't say enough about the flavors you'll find here. I would highly recommend the following combination: Aloo Paratha, leavened bread stuffed with potatoes and peas (\$2.50), Chicken Tikka Masala, charcoal-roasted chicken in a seasoned tomato cream sauce (\$10.95) and Vegetable Korma, a flavorful melange of potatoes, green beans, carrots, cauliflower, raisins, and almonds in a mildly-spiced curry cream sauce (\$7.95). House of India doesn't offer as much romance as it does food of unequalled perfection. It's a romance of the taste buds at the very least.

**Brandt's Market and Cafe**  
6525 Delmar  
(314) 727-3663

In the heart of the loop lies a gem of an establishment. While you wait for your food you can shop at the market filled with everything from wines to vegetarian sausage. There are European delights, sorbets, and soups to tempt the palette and that's only half of the goodies you'll find here. The menu itself is a veritable potpourri of Asian-influenced appetizers like the modest spring rolls and offers everything from grilled panini to pasta puttanesca. Brandt's has a charming atmosphere and on weekends provides live entertainment.

## What has the web done for your love life?

by Charlie Bright  
staff writer

It's the invention that lets you do homework in half the time and download the songs you don't feel like buying, but what has the internet done for your love life? Valentine's Day is that special, overly-commercialized holiday when everyone feels the Hallmark conspiracy pressuring them into buying unnecessary things for others. This year, the internet may be able to cut your costs, or even help you find someone to celebrate the holiday with.

The first site I looked at was [www.lovestories.com](http://www.lovestories.com), a site with advice on relationships, poems, prose, and chat-rooms. This is a site primarily for people already in a relationship or with a strong prospect on the horizon.

To save money on cards this year, you might try sending an e-card for Valentine's Day. Two good places to look for e-cards are [123greetings.com](http://123greetings.com) and the entertaining [bluemountain.com](http://bluemountain.com), which has cards to fit any mood and occasion.

For those of you who don't know where to send those e-cards, try [lovecalculator.com](http://lovecalculator.com), a site that can tell you which of your crushes is most compatible with you. This is based only on your names, and has slightly less than zero accuracy, but it's a great way to pass the time. Just for kicks, I checked out the compatibility between myself and "any human female." Fifty-nine percent... at least there's a chance.

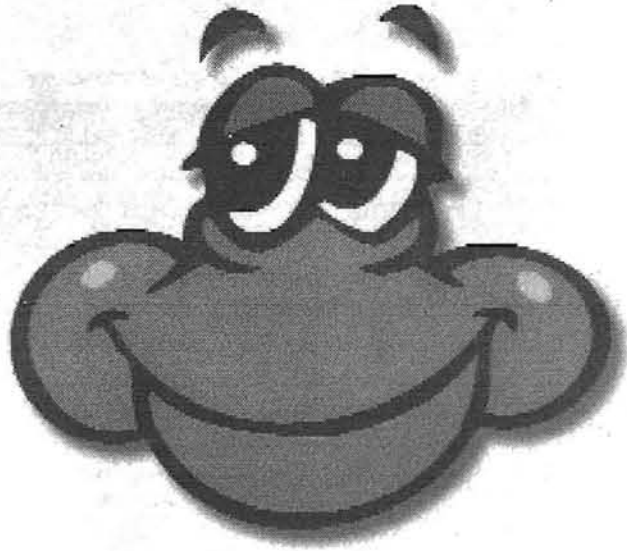
At [askdrlove.com](http://askdrlove.com), I asked Dr. Jamie Turndorf (a.k.a. Dr. Love) all kinds of irrelevant questions just for kicks. Not personally, I just looked up some of her columns of advice from the past. Aside from a pre-occupation with infections, she seems to have sound advice.

Sites designed to help web surfers find other surfers for potential interfacing are countless. Some of the more popular sites of this nature are [peers.com](http://peers.com), [i2isingles.net](http://i2isingles.net), and [romancemakers.com](http://romancemakers.com). A word of warning about these sites, getting overly involved with someone through these services may cause an overweight truckdriver in Ohio (with a screen-name like [girlhottie@scaryoldman.com](mailto:girlhottie@scaryoldman.com)) to come visit you on a regular basis.

Whatever your plan for Valentine's, making the Internet a part of those plans can be easy and rewarding. Maybe you'll even like that trucker who signed up for all those singles sites. Good luck and happy surfing.

**Still waiting . . .**

**for Prince Charming?  
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