



Happy Valentine's Day!

Every year on 14 February people celebrate this day by sending messages of love and affection to partners, family and friends. The day is celebrated by sending Valentine's Day cards and flowers and spending special time together with friends and family to the love for each other.

The Early History of Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is named after Saint Valentine, a Catholic priest who lived in Rome in the 3rd Century. There are many stories about St Valentine and over time these stories grew into the legend we know today.

At the time of Valentine's life, many Romans were converting to Christianity, but the Emperor Claudius II was a pagan and created strict laws about what Christians were allowed to do. Claudius believed that Roman soldiers should be completely devoted to Rome and therefore passed a law preventing them from marrying. St Valentine began to marry these soldiers in secret Christian ceremonies and this was the beginning of his reputation for believing in the importance of love.

Eventually, Valentine was found out and jailed for his crimes against Claudius. While imprisoned, Valentine cared for his fellow prisoners and also his jailor's blind daughter. Legend has it that Valentine cured the girl's blindness and that his final act before being executed was to write her a love message signed 'from your Valentine'. Valentine was executed on 14 February in the year 270.

How did Valentine's Day develop?

It wasn't until more than 200 years later that 14 February was proclaimed St Valentine's Day. By this time Rome had become Christian and the Catholic Church was determined to stamp out any remaining paganism. A pagan fertility ritual was held in February each year and the Pope abolished this festival and proclaimed 14 February Saint Valentine's Day, thus establishing this feast day on the Catholic Calendar of Saints.

The poet Chaucer in the Middle Ages was the first to link St Valentine with romantic love. This was the beginning of the tradition of courtly love, a ritual of expressing love and admiration, usually in secret. This custom spread throughout Europe and stories grew about a High Court of Love where female judges would rule on issues related to love on 14 February each year. Historians believe that these meetings were in fact gatherings where people read love poetry and played games of flirtation.

Valentine's Day Symbols

The practice of sending love messages developed into people sending special cards expressing their affection. These cards were beautiful creations handmade by the sender and individually designed to show how much they loved the recipient. Cards would usually contain sentimental verse, proclaiming the beauty of the receiver and how much they were loved.

Saint Valentine's Day cards were decorated with pictures of cupid, hearts and flowers and trimmed with lace and ribbon. These images are still used today to symbolise love and are recognised all over the world.



Source: Valentine's Day 14 February. (n.d.). Retrieved February 9, 2021, from <https://www.rosesonly.com.au/what-is-valentines-day>

HANDPRINT Heart Tree Craft



Place your hand with fingers spread open and arm on a piece of [brown construction paper](#). Use a pencil to trace around the arm and fingers. Cut out the handprint and arm. This makes your tree trunk and tree limbs. Glue it on a piece of [cardstock paper](#). Use adhesive foam sheets and cut out hearts. Stick hearts placing them around the fingers of the handprint to fill your tree branches with hearts.

What is Valentine's Day in Contemporary Times?

While Valentine's Day is celebrated in most countries, different cultures have developed their own traditions for this festival. In some parts of the world Valentine's Day is observed as a day for expressing love between family members and friends, rather than that of romantic couples. Some traditions include leaving lollies and gifts for children and others include acts of appreciation between friends.

Valentine's Day is most commonly associated with romantic love, with millions of Valentine's Day cards being exchanged each year. Gifts of flowers or a single red rose are sent with romantic messages to loved ones and couples spend special time together.

Many couples choose to celebrate Valentine's Day with dinner, a picnic or special home-cooked meal. Many restaurants offer Valentine's Day dinner promotions and food is often presented with symbols of love like hearts and flowers. Another popular Valentine's Day activity is to indulge in a luxury hotel stay in a beautiful location, allowing a couple to get away from it all and enjoy some quality time together. Marriage proposals are also popular on Valentine's Day, and it is often chosen as the perfect day to express their love and commitment. Some marriage proposals are delivered very creatively, such as after climbing to the top of a mountain, or posting a message on a billboard. Whatever the method, marriage proposals made on Valentine's Day are generally romantic and memorable



Traditions

- In some countries, a young woman may receive a gift of clothing from a young man. If she keeps the gift, it means she will marry him.
- If you cut an apple in half and count how many seeds are inside, you will also know how many children you will have.
- In Wales wooden love spoons were carved and given as gifts on February, 14. Hearts, keys were favourite decorations on the spoons.
- If a young woman saw a robin flying overhead on Valentine's Day, it meant she would marry a sailor.
- If a woman saw a goldfish, she would marry a millionaire.



TAIWAN

ROSES

Be careful with the number of flowers you gift to a girl in Taiwan. A single rose is as romantic a gesture as ever, but 99 roses means 'forever' and a whopping bouquet of 108 roses signifies a proposal of marriage.