How to Impress Your Date for Valentineâ??s Day (Without Breaking the Bank)

Description



I quite like the idea of Valentineâ??s Day â?? a celebration of love and two peopleâ??s appreciation for one another. What I donâ??t like, however, is the sheer number of retailers, restaurants and consumer businesses who ride on this celebration and try to capitalize from the occasion.

It is pretty common to see Singaporean girls aged 16 â?? 24 parading their balloons or expensive bouquets of flowers publicly on this day, ~~to show off that they have lots of suitors perhaps~~, but I personally think it is a bit insensitive (to the singles) and immature. After all, if youâ??re truly a catch, you donâ??t have to publicly proclaim it, do you?

Anyway, rants aside, I thought I would share with you guys some of my own ideas on celebrating the true spirit of Valentineâ??s Day without having to break the bank. Previously I blogged on whether guys are spending too much on Singaporean girls, and if you read it, you would know by now that Iâ??m someone who believes love does not have to be expensive. In fact, quite the contrary. Here are some ideas (for both the guys and girls!), some of which Iâ??ve used myself before as well:



1. Celebrate Valentineâ??s Day on another day
Donâ??t get me wrong, Iâ??m not a cynic. But this is my ultimate, money-saving tip that I use on not just V-Day, but pretty much any other occasion. In fact, I hardly celebrate any mass holidays on its actual day, because prices outside are bound to get marked up. During my days in advertising, everything would go up. Not only product prices, but even your Facebook ads, radio or TV spots, etc.

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My boyfriend and I are using this tip this year (okay, partly because heâ??s not free on the actual dayâ?¦) and I donâ??t see a problem with it at all. In fact, he apologized to me a few weeks ago when he came to me and said, â??Sorry darling, Iâ??m not free to celebrate Valentineâ??s Day with you next month, but Iâ??ll compensate you!â?• I actually didnâ??t mind one bit. Valentineâ??s Day does not have to be restricted to February 14 alone; it can be *any day.* Likewise, if you and your partner are not picky about the date, celebrating V-Day later can save you quite a bit. In fact, birthdays, anniversaries and personal milestones are the only occasions I celebrate on the day itself, where retailers donâ??t get to mark up prices at all.



2. Make your own candlelit dinner at home
Guys, I assure you that if you go the extra mile to prepare a homemade candlelit dinner for your girl, youâ??ll impress her more than bringing her out to a fancy expensive restaurant. Girls want to feel special, and putting in effort signals to her that you care enough about her to go through all this trouble just to make her smile.

It doesnâ??t even have to be a fancy dinner either. There are tons of easy-to-follow recipes online for making pastas, steaks, soups, desserts, etc. Or if you really have no faith in your cooking abilities, why

not cook together? You can both have fun shopping for the ingredients and preparing the dinner menu. Bonding over the kitchen is an amazing experience, and I highly encourage all couples to try this out if you havenâ??t already done so.



3. Compile a customized playlist on her iPod

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Borrow her iPod for one day, and put all her favourite songs / love songs that tell her how you feel about her. This ranks highest on my list of sweetest gestures a guy can do for a girl. You can make it more meaningful by selecting and arranging songs to really tell your story, because thatâ??s something that is unique to just you and your partner.

Here are some of my personal all-time favourites:

- Because You Loved Me â?? Celine Dion
- All of Me â?? John Legend
- Yellow â?? Coldplay
- My Love â?? Justin Timberlake
- Best I Ever Had â?? Drake
- Chasing Cars â?? Snow Patrol
- I Stand By You â?? The Pretenders
- The Only Exception â?? Paramore
- A Moment Like This â?? Kelly Clarkson
- Two is Better Than One â?? Taylor Swift
- By Chance (You and I) â?? JRA
- Youâ??re Still the One â?? Shania Twain



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4. Give her a DIY bouquet / Fold felt flowers

This is not only romantic, but also saves you from the exorbitant prices of roses during V-Day! Why spend $50 or more at the florist on something that will wither in a few days when you can make your own? Buy stalks of roses and make your own floral arrangements (there are tons of tutorials online for this as well, or search Pinterest for some ideas).

Alternatively, you can even cut and fold your own felt roses, which can last forever! Iâ??ve included a simple visual tutorial above, but feel free to research on other more detailed methods and step-by-step instructions online. Talk about forever loveâ?¦



5. Make DIY chocolates truffles / cake jar / some sweet dessert

I made this for my first boyfriend on Valentineâ??s Day. It was a fairly simple recipe, and something that chocolatiers will charge you crazy prices for when it is mostly just chocolate and cream. Hereâ??s my recipe, but again, there are tons of (better) recipes out there, so pick your own and experiment!

Ingredients (good for 30 truffles)

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 pack of Hersheyâ??s chocolate chips
- 1/3 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup of chocolate powder (substitute this with Milo if you prefer)
- Optional: gold chocolate dusting

Steps:

1. Spread butter over your saucepan
2. Melt the chocolate chips over light to medium fire
3. Combine the rest of the butter and cream into the melted chocolate mix and stir well
4. Remove the saucepan from the fire and add in vanilla extract
5. Transfer to a plastic bowl and cover with plastic wrap
6. Refrigerate for about 2 â?? 4 hours. Youâ??ll want the mixture to be hard, but not too hard such that you cannot roll it into balls.
7. Remove chilled mixture from the fridge and roll into small balls.
8. Roll the balls individually in chocolate powder (and gold choc dust if you wish) and set aside on tray
9. Refrigerate overnight. Youâ??re done!

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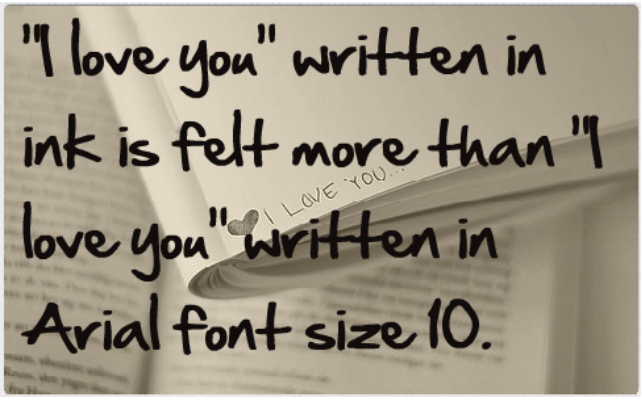




6. Bring her on an outdoor photoshoot at your memorable dating spots

Remember where you guys first met? Or where you first asked her to be your girlfriend? Or when you celebrated your one-year anniversary?

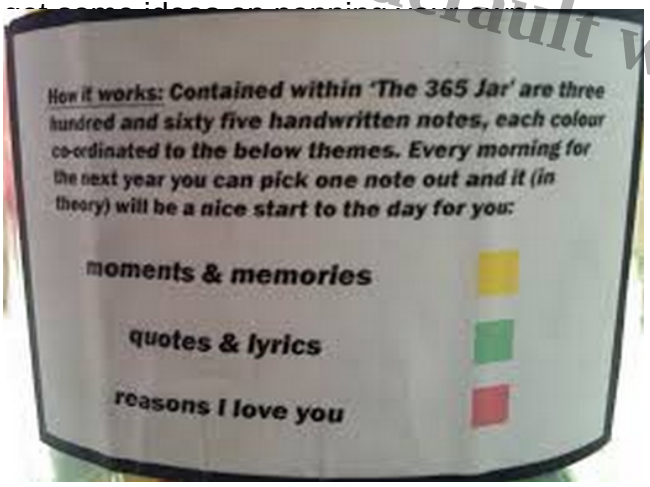
Every couple has their own story and memorable dating spots. Bring her to revisit these places and reminisce about these moments in your relationship. Itâ??ll not only make her smile, but also strengthen your bond as you reflect back on the moments that brought both of you to where you are today.



7. Pen down your appreciation for her

Iâ??m a sucker for handwritten love notes. Enough said.

Donâ??t know what to write? Google for some romantic movie quotes and add your own spin to it. Or read some romance novels (I love Nicholas Sparksâ?? books, he has plenty of love letters in there) to



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8. Give her a glass jar of love notes

Did you read about the guy who wrote his girlfriend 365 love notes in a glass jar, 1 for every day of the year? If you have time, this would be a really meaningful gift, and I assure you that your partner will be keeping these notes for much longer than just a year! Plus, the only cost to you would be the note paper, the glass jar (Ikea sells gorgeous Mason glass jars for $10 and under) and the pen ink. Oh, and of course your time.



9. Go to the beach to catch the sunset

Sentosa, Changi Boardwalk, Punggol Waterway, Sembawang Beach, West Coast, etcâ?¦there are so many choices to choose from in Singapore. You can even bring your own picnic if you want to add a little extra touch to it.



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10. Surprise her with a weekend getaway

This can be pretty awesome if done well! Iâ??m not promoting the above hotel or package (this was a random image I found off Google), but Groupon has lots of discount packages for such occasions. If youâ??re not one for package tours, just buy your own ferry tickets and plan the itinerary yourself!

Call up your girlfriend, give her instructions to bring her passport, a bag of clothes and toiletries for 2 days, and basically not tell her where youâ??re going until you reach the jetty. I guarantee you this will impress her more than a romantic (and expensive) dinner date / hotel staycation.



11. Create an indoor spa

Buy your own massage oils and bath salts to create your own in-house pampering spa treatment. You can even light up aromatic candles to add a bit more romance to the whole setting. Give her a back massage (my boyfriend does this for me sometimes when dance rehearsals leave me aching) or a foot rubâ?¦you can even take turns or soak in together.



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12. Go for a nice drive around Singapore

I did this recently, where my boyfriend borrowed a friendâ??s car to bring me around for some midnight dating (when I casually mentioned to him that we hadnâ??t gone on a proper date for some time, since weâ??ve both been pretty busy since the year started). He brought me to see aeroplanes, Changi Village for nasi lemak, Udders for ice-cream, and a couple of other places in between. While the places were great, it was more of the thought behind his gesture that I really appreciated (and what I will remember in time to come).



So there you go! I hope you find some of my ideas helpful. Since this yearâ??s V-day falls on a Saturday, thereâ??s quite a few things you can do (although that also means that you are wayyyyy over-charged for couple menus and activities outside!). Most importantly, go back to the basics and remember why youâ??re celebrating Valentineâ??s Day in the first place. This is an occasion for two people, not the over-commercialized festival that it has now become. Classic gifts like roses, bears and jewellery will never go out of fashion, but if you canâ??t afford it for the moment, thatâ??s really OK. Be creative, be thoughtful, and your partner will remember these 10 years from now (rather than that expensive restaurant you brought her to).

After all, itâ??s the little things that count.

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With love, and happy Valentineâ??s Day,
Budget Babe

Category

1. Family
2. Savings

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