

Valentine's Day SURVIVAL KIT FOR MEN

Romance is an experience, and it's something YOU can create. It's not the price of the gift, or even the gift itself that "does it" for a woman. It's her experience; the care and thought that you put into it. Doing Valentine's Day right takes a two-pronged approach: 1) Getting the gift and 2) Creating the experience.

GETTING THE GIFT

The best gift is not the most expensive gift, it's the gift that shows you think about her, you have paid attention to her, and you are willing to spend time and effort to please her. Here we address a few traditional gifts that are always winners (lingerie, jewelry, flowers, and spa treatments), but don't let this limit you. Find a way to incorporate something you know she loves into it somehow. **Before you start shopping, you must go on a fact-finding mission.**

✓ Know the basic facts about her. What is her hair color, eye color, and skin tone? What is her favorite color? When is her birthday (which will give you her birthstone and astrological sign)?

✓ Know her sizes and preferences. Take our handy wallet card with you to her underwear drawer and closet. Sneak a peak at the sizes, colors, and styles and write them down. What kind of fabric does she prefer (cotton, silk, velvet, etc.)? Does she like thongs, G-strings, bikinis, or boyshorts? Don't forget to get her bra size! You can find the bra size on the back band; it should read with a number and a letter, i.e. 34B. Peek in her jewelry box, or make a point to notice her jewelry-wearing habits over the next few days: Does she prefer silver or gold? Do her earrings dangle or do they have posts? Is her jewelry delicate or bold? What is her favorite stone? What length of necklace does she wear?

✓ You don't have to be sneaky; you can always just ask her about her sizes and preferences. Avoid ruining any surprises by asking her about ALL her preferences at once and avoid showing any reaction to her answers. She won't know which piece

of information you actually plan to use. Keep the completed wallet card in your wallet to use for future surprises, like birthdays and anniversaries.

♥ Tip for later: Put her birthday, your anniversary, and any other important dates in your electronic calendar (Outlook or whatever you use) as annually recurring appointments with a reminder 7 to 14 days before the event. That should give you enough time to plan something nice for her.

♥ Tip for later: Women change. They lose weight, they cut their hair, their tastes change, styles change. It's perfectly fine for you to ask her to update your wallet card every so often. She'll appreciate it if you are curious about how things may have changed for her. Be sure to compliment her in some way on a change that you like or on something you've always liked about her.

✓ Now, go shopping. Nob Hill is great for this purpose because there are so many boutiques in such a small area that offer truly unique quality gifts. We recommend:

- ✓ Seventh Goddess at Central & Amherst for lingerie and other fun stuff for the bedroom
- ✓ Ooh! Aah! Jewelry at Amherst & Silver
- ✓ The Flower Shop at Nob Hill at Central & Wellesley
- ✓ Gambei Wellness Spa at Wellesley & Silver

✓ While you're shopping, use the experts. As much as it is against your nature to ask for directions, this is one of those times when consulting the experts in each shop is the right thing to do. Pull out your wallet card, share the information you have, tell them as much as you can about what you're looking for, and let the shop employees show you possible gifts. This is their

profession, they know everything in the store, and they really can help. All that said, YOU must feel good about what you buy her and you'll know when it's right. It's okay to say "no" to 100 possibilities if it gets you to the perfect single gift.

✓ You've selected your gift, now it's time to work on the presentation. Make sure the gift is beautifully wrapped. Seventh Goddess and Ooh! Aah! Jewelry both provide gift-wrapping services. And don't forget the card, it's an inexpensive but important part of the gift. Select a card that expresses the mood you are trying to create with the gift. Avoid cheesy and avoid tacky humor. Also, you're better off writing your own note on the inside of the card rather than buying one with a long message. What you

W A L L E T C A R D	⇒ Dress size: _____ Pant size: _____	Favorite stone: _____
	H Top size: _____ Shoe size: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Silver or <input type="checkbox"/> Gold? Ring size: _____
	A Bra size: _____ Panty size: _____	Jewelry style: <input type="checkbox"/> Delicate or <input type="checkbox"/> Bold?
	N Panty style: <input type="checkbox"/> G-string <input type="checkbox"/> Thong	Earrings: <input type="checkbox"/> Post or <input type="checkbox"/> Dangle?
	D <input type="checkbox"/> Bikini <input type="checkbox"/> Boyshort	Bracelets: <input type="checkbox"/> Cuff or <input type="checkbox"/> Link?
	Y Favorite brands: _____	Necklace length: _____
	Favorite fabric: _____	Favorite scent: _____
	W Favorite fabric colors: _____	Favorite food: _____
	A Wish list items: _____	Favorite dessert: _____
	L _____	Favorite flower: _____
	E _____	How does she take her coffee/tea? _____
	T Eye color: _____ Skin tone: _____	_____
	Favorite color: _____	Food allergies/dislikes: _____
	Birthday: _____	_____
C Anniversary: _____	Favorite bands/songs: _____	
A Other important date: _____	_____	
R _____	Other preferences: _____	
D _____	_____	
⇒	_____	

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write on the card could end up being the best part of the whole day for her, and something she'll keep as a reminder of how much you care. Write her a poem, quote a line from "your" song, or just spill your guts about the way she makes you feel. Being vulnerable is very moving to her and is much more important than being perfect.

✓ Once you have a beautifully wrapped, carefully selected gift and card with a personal romantic message, it's time to think about how and when you will present it. Which brings us to the next phase: Creating the experience.

CREATING THE EXPERIENCE

Be a man with a plan. This will require some effort and forethought. This year, Valentine's Day is on a Sunday, which may mean you two can have the whole day to spend together. She'll appreciate it if you ask her permission to reserve certain chunks of the day in which you'll run the show, and how she should prepare. For example, you could say, "I'd like to surprise you for Valentine's Day. Can you block out 5pm until 9pm for me and wear something fancy? Your life will be in my hands for those four hours, but you can trust me." Say this with a mischievous gleam in your eye.

✓ Your plan should include a series of things. Dinner reservations are an important part of your plans, and need to be made as soon as possible. Nob Hill offers a bunch of great restaurant options, including Scalo and Zinc. Select something you think she will really like. Maybe she has a favorite dish, and you could browse menus online until you find a restaurant that serves it. You could also think outside the box, and get a hotel room and order room service, cook for her, or get take-out from her favorite restaurant and have a picnic in a beautiful spot.

✓ Now, think about how you can create an experience before and after dinner. Maybe you start the evening with cocktails in an upscale bar or with a visit to where you first met or where you had your first kiss. Maybe there's a show you can get tickets to, a poetry reading you can attend, or a live music performance she'll like. Check the Alibi or IQ for events and show schedules. Instead of having dessert at the restaurant, you can make a stop at Ecco Espresso and Gelato or Cold Stone Creamery in Nob Hill. Maybe you could

have her favorite dessert from Flying Star already purchased and at home, and you can have dessert by candlelight in bed.

✓ If you want flowers to be part of your plan, this should be arranged in advance also. Will they be delivered to her or will you pick them up and bring them to her?

✓ Think about when and how you could present your gift or gifts. Maybe it's after dinner, maybe it's during dessert, or maybe it's once you are home alone together. Will she be comfortable opening it in public or should it wait until you're alone? Maybe you have multiple gifts, and she could open one in each place you go.

✓ Don't be in a rush to get home, but once you are home, make that experience special too. Light some candles to set the mood. Take a hot bath together or gift her some massage oil and use it to give her a massage. Kama Sutra (available at Seventh Goddess) is famous for their edible oils of love, chocolate body paints, and honey dust (comes with a feather duster to use for applying) and now is an excellent time to use them.

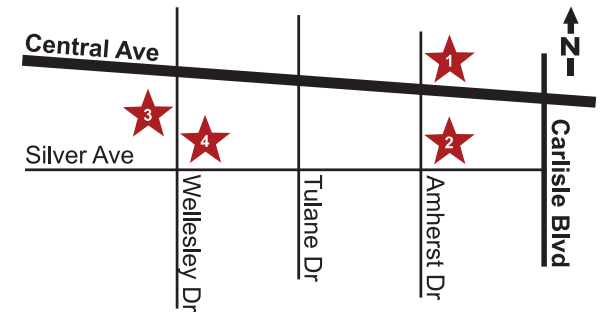
✓ Don't think you can forget Valentine's Day at any point during the day. Find little ways to remind her she is your Valentine all day long. Bring her coffee in bed, give her a back massage in the shower; never let her forget that today is Valentine's Day, and she is your special one. If you're not together all day, call her first thing in the morning to tell her you love her, that she is your Valentine, and that you can't wait to spend your special time together later in the day.

WHAT IF YOU TOTALLY SCREW UP?

✓ If you totally screw up on the gift and wait until the last minute, you can buy gift certificates online at www.seventhgoddess.com and at www.oohaahjewelry.com. Make the message on the gift certificate special, maybe quote a line from a romantic song you both like.

✓ If you totally screw up and don't get dinner reservations in time, head to the grocery store and prepare to cook for her, or order take out from her favorite restaurant. Light candles for the table and play romantic music while you serve her.

♥ Tip for later: Any day is a great day to romance your partner! Don't limit yourself to only creating romance on certain days or in grandiose ways. A small and thoughtful gift for no apparent reason, or leaving love post-it notes where she'll find them during her day are great ways to keep the spark alive.



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