

Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day (Saint Valentine's Day) is an occasion celebrated on February 14. It is the traditional day on which people express their love for each other by sending Valentine's cards, presenting flowers, or offering confectionery.



Who is St. Valentine?

There were many Christians named Valentine. According to the Catholic Encyclopaedia, at least three Saint Valentines are mentioned who are associated with 14 February. One is described as a priest at Rome, another as a Bishop of Interamna (now Terni in Italy) and the other lived and died in Africa.

The Valentine that most experts believe as the actual one remembered on St. Valentine's Day was a Roman who was martyred for refusing to give up Christianity.

What happens on Valentines day in Britain?

Each year in Britain, we spend around £503m on cards, flowers, chocolates and other gifts for Valentine's Day. Traditionally these were sent anonymously, but nowadays we often make it clear who is sending each 'Valentine'.

Valentine's Day Superstitions & Traditions

Traditionally, spring begins on St Valentine's Day (February 14th), the day on which birds chose their mates. In parts of Sussex Valentines Day was called 'the Birds' Wedding Day'.

There are many other traditions and superstitions associated with romance activities on Valentine's day including:

- the first man an unmarried woman saw on 14th February would be her future husband;
- if the names of all a girl's suitors were written on paper and wrapped in clay and the clay put into water, the piece that rose to the surface first would contain the name of her husband-to-be.
- if a woman saw a robin flying overhead on Valentine's Day, it meant she would marry a sailor. If she saw a sparrow, she would marry a poor man and be very happy. If she saw a goldfinch, she would marry a rich person.
- In the Middle Ages, young men and women drew names from a bowl to see who their valentines would be. They would wear these names on their sleeves for one week.
- In Wales wooden love spoons were carved and given as gifts on February 14th. Hearts, keys and keyholes were favourite decorations on the spoons. The decoration meant, "You unlock my heart!"