

## The Truth Behind Valentine's Day - Past and Present

It is not true that Valentine's day is a holiday invented by greedy greeting card companies eager to sell more stock or by candy companies to sell more chocolate, or general retailers to create more business once Christmas is over. It is easy to imagine that Valentine's Day was created by them because as soon as the stores put away their Christmas merchandise, out comes the Valentine's Day items - even though Valentine's is still more than six weeks away.

In a blink Rudolph and Santa are replaced with red ribbon and pink hearts and mass produced Valentine's Day cards in thousands of designs and sizes - large, small, serious, silly, inexpensive, expensive, musical (my least favourite because they sound so tinny) and traditional ones. Valentine's Day is the biggest single twenty hour period for florists, a huge event for greeting card companies and a boon for candy makers.

Valentine's Day began more than 1,500 years ago. According to legend, Valentine was a priest who performed marriages in continued defiance of the orders of the Roman emperor Claudius. The emperor had realized that no young men wanted to join his army and then leave their wives and sweethearts. When it was discovered that Valentine was still performing marriages in secret, he was cruelly sentenced to death.

Valentine allegedly cured the jailer's daughter of blindness and on the night before his execution, he sent a note to her signed "from your Valentine". Reportedly he died on February. 14, 269 A.D.

More than 200 years later in 496 A.D., February 14 was named by Pope Gelasius to honor St. Valentine. Today more than 1,700 years have passed since the real Valentine died, and people are still celebrating Valentine's Day in a big way. A staggering 180 million Valentine's cards were sold last year.

It may never have occurred to you that Valentine's Day is a major crisis day for anyone who is having an affair. After all, Valentine's Day is the one holiday when everyone is expected to do something romantic for their spouse or lover -- and if someone has both, it's a serious problem and a logistic nightmare.

Not surprisingly then one of the most busiest groups of professionals on Valentine's Day is the private detective when their workload can quadruple. Most people figure if anything suspicious is going on it will show itself around Valentine's Day. Apparently it is a huge mistake for a cheating husband to book a business trip over Valentine's Day. It rates really highly on the scale of suspicious activity.

The competition element of what your spouse did for you on Valentine's Day is another highly disconcerting fact. Some people believe the main event is the day after when some women get together and the comparisons begin.

The competition factor can be particularly acute on the night as well if you go out for a meal on Valentine's Day - what you basically have is a collection of couples spending the whole night discretely observing each other in a restaurant, trying to reassure themselves that their relationship is less dysfunctional than the others.

Last year at a flash restaurant in London on Valentine's Day night a couple started arguing and the wife stood up, slapped the husband across the face and then stormed off in a huff. The husband composed himself, took a few more sips of his red wine and then proceeded to loudly call his mistress on his mobile. Within 15 minutes the immaculately dressed younger mistress turned up at the restaurant and sat down delighted that her lover had arranged the restaurant meal especially on Valentine's Day.

The first course arrived and then you would not believe it but guess who should walk back into the restaurant but the wife. Heated words flew, culminating in the wife pouring the rest of the bottle of red wine all over the husband's head and then the wife and mistress leaving together joined arm in arm in their thorough disgust with the sod of a man in their lives.

All this occurred whilst the other diners were sitting there quietly totally bewildered but secretly impressed with how fabulously functional their own relationship was.

The interesting twist that all came out in the newspapers the week after is that the colourful threesome were actors hired by the restaurant specifically to entertain the diners and make them feel grateful about the state of their own relationships.

This year you can avoid the actors and private detectives by stealing away somewhere quiet with your special someone. Do not whatever you do go away on a business trip over Valentine's Day, or for that matter go on a conference on the preceding or following weekend since Valentine's Day falls on a Wednesday this year.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

#### About the Author

Corina Clemence runs Chateau du Guerinet, near Blois an exclusive luxury chateau for up to 15 people perfect for an intimate romantic Valentine's Day getaway. Rent a castle in France <http://www.loirechateau.com> Rent a french chateau