

St. Valentine's Day in different countries.




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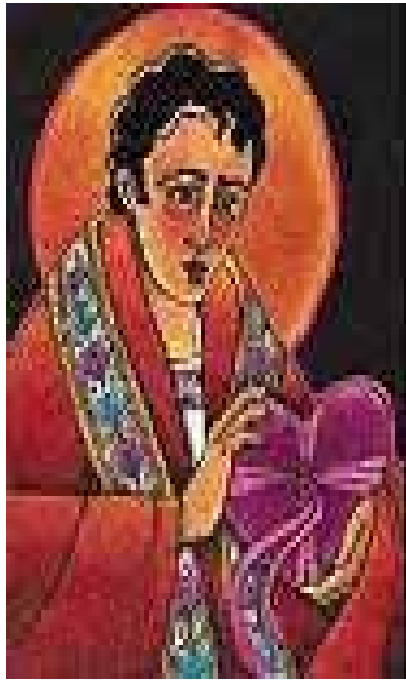
The aim:

To have an acquaintance how people in different countries celebrate Valentine's Day.





Saint Valentine's Day or Valentine's Day is a holiday on February 14. It is the traditional day on which lovers express their love for each other; sending Valentine's cards, donating to charity or gifting candy. It is very common to present flowers on Valentine's Day. The holiday is named after two men, both Christian martyrs among the numerous Early Christian martyrs named Valentine. The day became associated with romantic love in the circle of Geoffrey Chaucer in High Middle Ages, when the tradition of country love flourished.



A beautiful legend

Saint Valentine lived in Rome in the third century AD. At that time the Emperor of Rome was Claudius. He wasn't very popular because he was trying to get more and more people for his army. The men didn't want to go to the army and Claudius thought that it was because they didn't want to leave their wives and children. "If they don't get married, they'll join the army," he thought and passed a law which banned marriage.

Valentine was a Christian priest who didn't like the new law. He secretly married people who were in love. One night the Emperor's soldiers caught him and put him in prison. Valentine was going to die.

Many young people felt sorry for Valentine and visited him in prison. One of them was the daughter of a prison guard. On the day of his execution Valentine wrote a note to her and signed it "Love from your Valentine." This was on 14 February 269 AD.



The USA

In the second half of the twentieth century, the practice of exchanging cards was extended to all manner of gifts in the United States, usually from a man to a woman. Such gifts typically include roses and chocolates. In the 1980s, the diamond industry began to promote Valentine's Day as an occasion for giving jewelry.

The day has come to be associated with a generic platonic greeting of "Happy Valentine's Day."

In some North American elementary schools students are asked to give a Valentine card or small gift to everyone in the class. The greeting cards of these students often mention what they appreciate about each other.

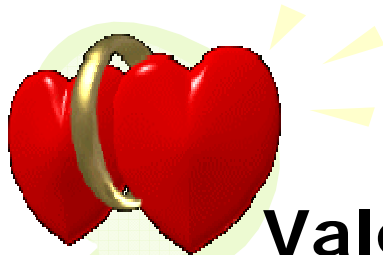
The South America



The exchange of chocolates and flowers is traditional on Valentine's Day.

In Brazil, the *Dia dos Namorados* (lit. "Day of the enamored", or "Boyfriend's (Girlfriend's Day)") is celebrated on June 12, when couples exchange gifts, chocolates, cards and flower bouquets. This day was chosen probably because it is the day before the Saint Anthony's day, known there as the *marriage saint*, when many single women perform popular rituals, called *simpatias*, in order to find a good husband or a boyfriend.

In Colombia, the *Día del amor y la amistad* (lit. "Love and Friendship Day") is celebrated on the third Friday and Saturday in September, because of commercial issues. In this country the *Amigo secreto* ("Secret friend") tradition is quite popular, which consists of randomly assigning to each participant a recipient who is to be given an anonymous gift (similar to the Christmas tradition of Secret Santa).



Valentine's Day also has regional traditions in the UK. In Norfolk a character called 'Jack' Valentine knocks on the rear door of houses leaving sweets and presents for children. Although leaving treats, many children were scared of this mystical person.

In Wales many people celebrate Dyad Sates Dwynwen (*St Dwynwen's Day*) on 25 January instead of or as well as St Valentine's Day. The day commemorates St Dwynwen the patron saint of Welsh lovers.

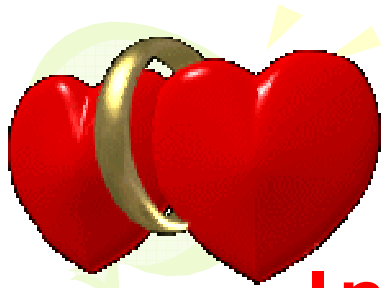
In France, a traditionally Catholic country, Valentine's Day is known simply as "Saint Valentine", and is celebrated in much the same way as other western countries.



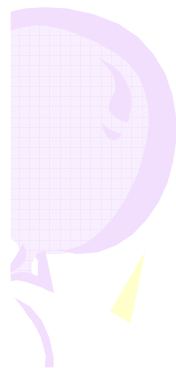
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In Denmark & Norway Valentine's Day is known as *Valentinsdag*. It is not celebrated to a large extent, but some people take time to be romantic with their partner, or send a card to a secret love. In Sweden it is called *Alla hjärtans dag* ("All Hearts' Day") and was launched in the 1960s by the flower industry's commercial interests, and due to influence of American culture. It is not an official holiday, but its celebration is recognized and sales of cosmetics and flowers for this holiday are only bested by those for Mother's Day.

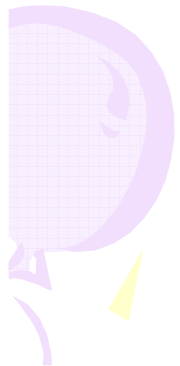


In Slovenia, a proverb says that "St Valentine brings the keys of roots," so on February 14, plants and flowers start to grow. Valentine's Day has been celebrated as the day when the first works in the vineyards and on the fields commence. It is also said that birds propose to each other or marry on that day. Nevertheless, it has only recently been celebrated as the day of love. The day of love is traditionally 12 March, the Saint Gregory's day. Another proverb says "*Valentin - prvi spomladin*" ("Valentine — first saint of spring"), as in some places Saint Valentine marks the beginning of spring.





In Romania, the traditional holiday for lovers is Dragonet, which is celebrated on February 24. It is named after a character from Romanian folklore who was supposed to be the son of Baba Dacha. Part of his name is the word *drag* ("dear"), which can also be found in the word *dragoste* ("love"). In recent years, Romania has also started celebrating Valentine's Day, despite already having Dragobete as a traditional holiday. This has drawn backlash from many groups, reputable persons and institutions but also nationalist organizations like Nona Deana, who condemn Valentine's Day for being superficial, commercialist and imported Western kitsch.





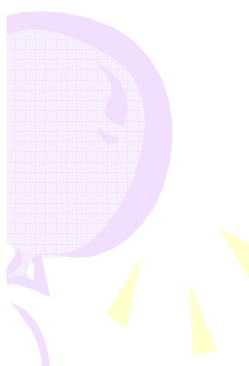
Middle East and Africa

According to **Jewish** tradition the 15th day of the month August is the festival of love. In ancient times girls would wear white dresses and dance in the vineyards, where the boys would be waiting for them.



In modern **Israeli** culture this is a popular day to pronounce love, propose marriage and give gifts like cards or flowers.

In Turkey, Valentine's Day is called *Sevgililer Günü* which translates into "Sweet Hearts Day".




In Persia culture (Iran) Sepandarmazgan is a day for love, which is on 29 Bahaman in the allay solar calendar. The corresponding date in the Gregorian calendar is 17 February. Sepandarmazgan was held in the Great Persian Empire in the 20 century BC.

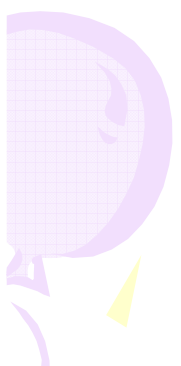


Asia

Thanks to a concentrated marketing effort, Valentine's Day has emerged **in Japan and Korea** as a day on which women, and less commonly men, give candy, chocolate or flowers. It has become an obligation for many women to give chocolates to all male co-workers. In Japan this is known as *giri-choko* (), from the words *giri* ("obligation") and *choko*, ("chocolate"). This contrasts with *honmei-choko*; chocolate given to a loved one. Friends, especially girls, may exchange chocolate referred to as *tomo-choko* (); from *tomo* meaning "friend".



By a further marketing effort, a reciprocal day called White Day has emerged. On March 14, men are expected to return the favour to those who gave them chocolates on Valentine's Day. Originally, the return gift was supposed to be white chocolate or marshmallows; hence "White Day". However, lingerie and jewelry have become common gifts.





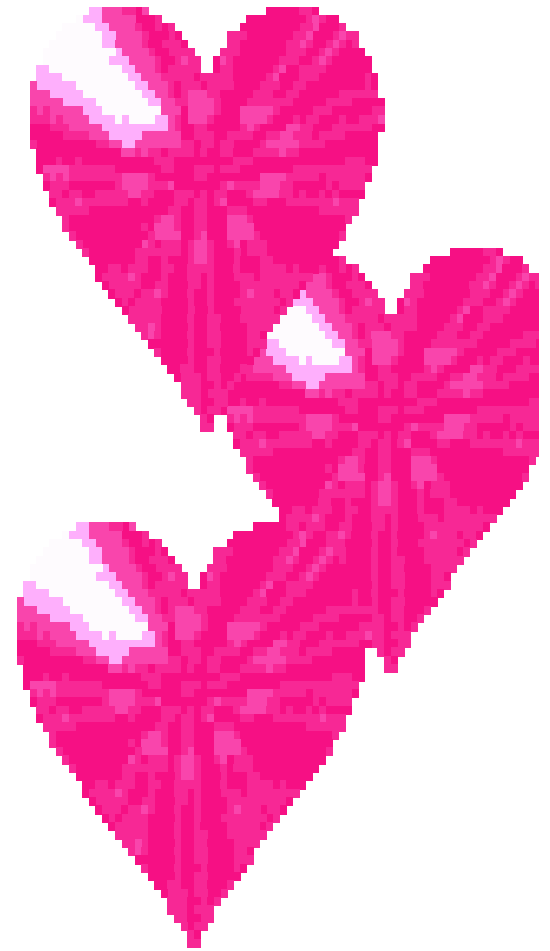
In South Korea, there is also Penury Day, celebrated on November 11, when young couples give each other romantic gifts. There is an additional day for single people, Black Day, celebrated on April 14.

In Chinese culture, there is a counterpart to Valentine's Day, called "The Night of Sevens" (七夕); according to legend the Cowherd and the Weaver Maid meet in Heaven on the 7th day of the 7th month of the Luna calendar. A slightly different version of this day is celebrated in Japan as Ian Bata on July 7th of the solar calendar.



Japan

The Japanese celebrate St.Valentine's Day in a rather unusual way. Women give their men gifts of chocolate (as well as other presents). These gifts of chocolate are divided into two types: Giri choco (obligatory chocolate) and honmai choco (chocolate for the man the woman is serious about). Giri choco is given to bosses and colleagues at work and sometimes a Japanese woman has to buy up to 30 boxes of this obligatory chocolate. However, on the 14th of March, exactly one month after Valentine's Day, men give presents to women. This day is called White Day.



Roses are the traditional gift given on St Valentine's Day. The colour of a rose can be very important.



Red roses say "I love you." They are the universal symbol of romantic love.



Light pink roses express fun and happiness.



Dark pink roses mean "Thank you."



White roses symbolize innocence and secrecy.



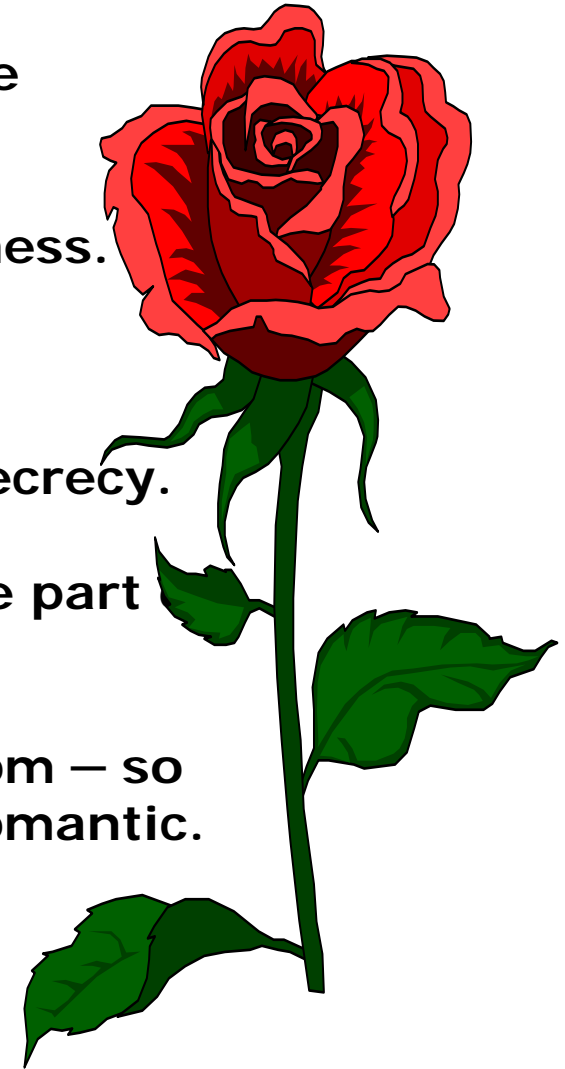
Orange roses communicate desire on the part sender.



Yellow roses show friendship and freedom – so don't send them if your intentions are romantic.



Black roses mean farewell.



Valentine's Day

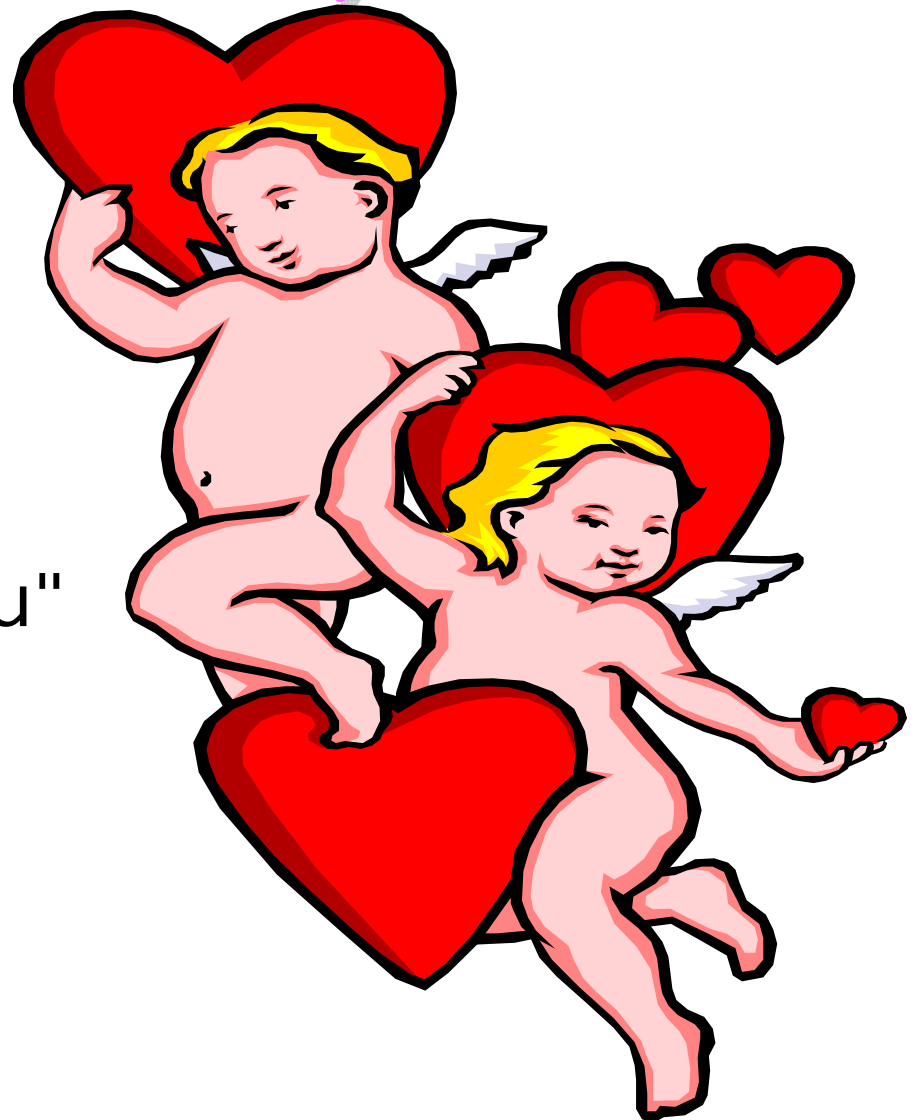
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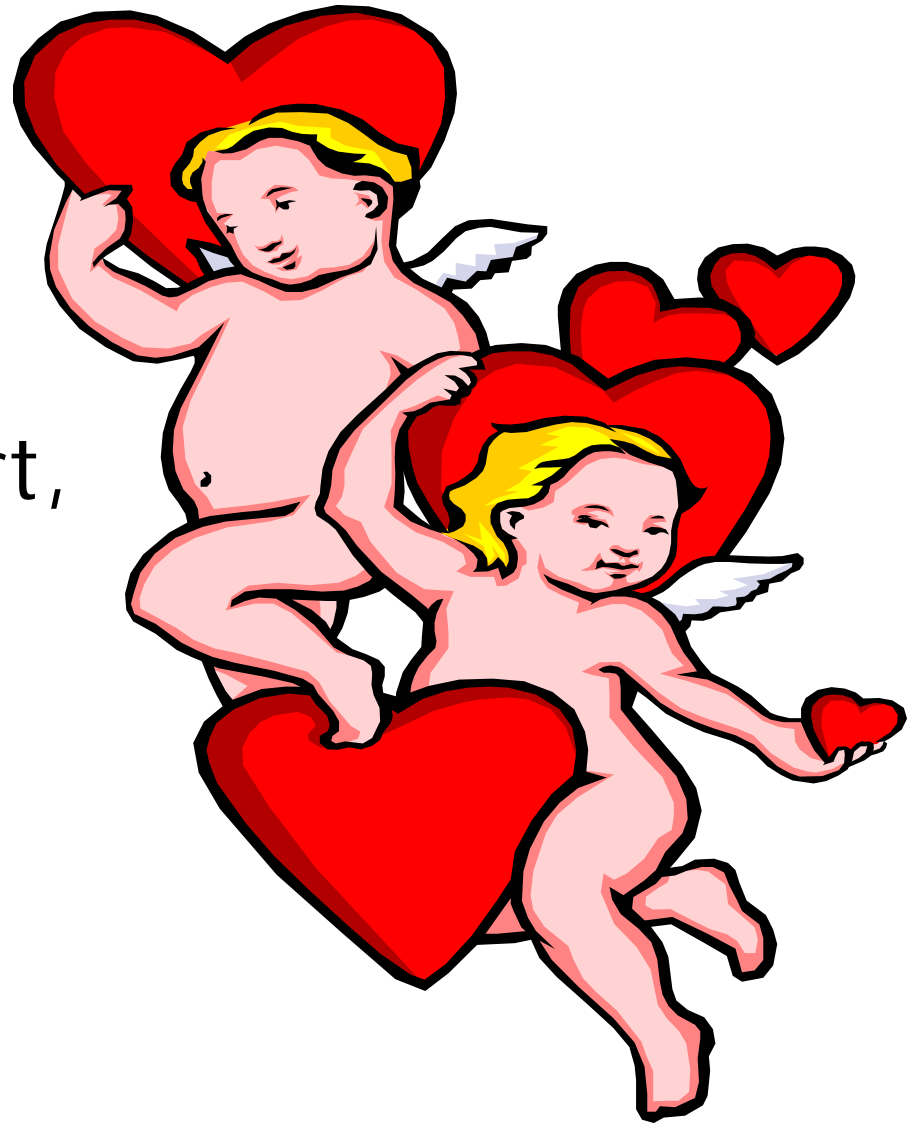
Is a wonderful way

To make "I love you"

Easy to say.



I'll be your sweetheart,
if you'll be mine.
All of my life I'll be
Your Valentine.



Tree decorated for Valentine's Day





Valentine's Day postcard,
circa 1910

Conclusion:

It is the day of loves, and on 14th February young men and women declare their feelings for each other. Valentine's Day cards and romantic flowers such as red roses are sent. These messages are always left unsigned. The cards may be happy or sad, romantic or humorous, serious or ridiculous and may be sent to all people you know.

