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Food is Love

Have an off-the-beaten-track Valentine's Day.

Wednesday, February 3, 2010



The heart holiday is upon us. That's right. It's the season of smooch. You can't beat it, so why not join it? Here are a few of my favorites for bringing a little romance to the table this Valentine's Day. Reservations are a must with most, so don't delay. The time for love (and calling for availability) is now.



Cheryl Fenton

We stumbled upon [the Red House](#) on our first Valentine's Day together, when my husband forgot to make reservations anywhere. By stumbled, I mean we walked in after being laughed out of 10 other Harvard Square restaurants. Although the dining room was packed, we grabbed a spot in the wonderfully romantic bar area, with a roaring fire and intimate first-come seating. This holiday's four-course prix fixe menu (\$50 per person) includes gourmet apps; a hearty pasta course; savory entrées (think grilled bison or roasted rabbit); and passion-filled desserts like chocolate-flecked macadamia nut cake or passion fruit sorbet.

Amore is alive in A-town. Arlington's [La Buona Vita](#) welcomes lovebirds to this intimate suburban restaurant for a prix fixe of \$70 per couple. The three courses, which come with a complimentary glass of wine, include Italian treats—eggplant involtini, tiger shrimp stuffed with heart-shaped ravioli, even prosciutto rosettes (perfect if you forgot the dozen roses). Sicilian cannoli and nutella bread pudding are lovable dessert options. [Call ahead](#) to book.

Snuggle, snuggle, snuggle. Chef/owner Jim Solomon welcomes you to do just that in front of the fireplace at [The Fireplace](#). Gaze into each other's eyes while sharing tasty morsels from a special a la carte menu. Try the "Kissing Appetizers": oysters Rockefeller, grilled shrimp cocktail, butter-roasted clams, two of everything, side-b y-side. For entrees, the grilled filet mignon with cheesy potatoes or the lobster mac 'n' cheese salute the cheesy side of love. If things get too steamy for public views, ask about the "In Bed Caviar Picnic"—a portable feast of Little Pearl caviar (\$45).

I ask you, What's the perfect match? You and your beloved, you reply. I ask, How about caramel and chocolate? You suddenly question your relationship with your beloved. Don't fret. Even if you and your sweetie aren't quite as perfectly suited as this pair, you can bask in its glory at [Finale Desserterie](#). The

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Chocolate Caramel Tryst (\$26.99) debuts on Valentine's Day—chocolate molten cake, caramel sauce, caramel pastry, passion fruit gelee, praline crisp, chocolate covered marshmallows, dark chocolate bark. I wish love was always this sweet.

Like my suggestions? Consider them my Valentine's Day gift to you. Come on. Give us a big smooch.

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