



Valentine's Day In The UK

Valentine's Day, celebrated annually on 14th February, started being celebrated across the UK back in the 17th century. Some of the traditions from those times are still carried out today, including writing handwritten notes or cards to your loved ones. In fact, around 25 million cards are sent around the country for this event alone. Historically, expressing emotions and true inner feelings to your loved ones was deemed absurd in British society therefore sending cards on Valentine's Day with messages of love was outside the norm for these times.

The date itself is steeped in Roman history, when Emperor Claudius II banned marriages and even relationships for his Roman soldiers. It was seen as a distraction and Claudius believed that single soldiers would fight better. Contrary to these rules, a priest, named Valentine, secretly continued conducting marriages between Roman soldiers and their loved ones. Upon finding out, Claudius II sentenced Valentine to death by execution on 14th February. On the eve of this date, Valentine wrote a letter to his own partner and signed it "Your Valentine". To this date, many Brits sign off their cards with the same wording or a question mark, leaving the recipient to sometimes guess who their admirer is.

Unlike some other countries, Valentine's Day isn't a public holiday in the UK, many couples celebrate together in the evening after work. Instead, it's a commercial day that dupes millions into spending money on expensive meals in restaurants, nights away in luxurious hotels and exchanging gifts, such as flowers, chocolates, fragrances and teddy bears. In Wales, wooden love spoons are exchanged too.

There are plentiful historical symbols of this day; the bouquet of red roses, Cupid and his arrow, love poems, pretty much anything heart-shaped, doves, the list goes on.

Spending on Valentine's Day appears to be going up across the UK but the number of people buying gifts for their loved ones in advance is going down. The numbers also vary across gender and generation with younger people a lot more likely to

spend more on their partners and men looking to impress with high-value gifts. The day has since evolved from spending between couples to also sending gifts and cards to family members and friends too.

Review some cute phrases and words you can use for your loved ones:
<https://virtually-fluent.com/useful-phrases-for-valentines-day/>

References;

- <https://www.history.com/topics/valentines-day/history-of-valentines-day-2#:~:text=During%20the%20Middle%20Ages%2C%20it,the%20first%20to%20record%20St.>
- <https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/uk/valentine-day#:~:text=It%20is%20common%20for%20couples,show%20their%20love%20and%20appreciation.>