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creating new valentine's day traditions...

Posted in All posts on 3rd February 2013

Valentine's Day is just around the corner, and it's not just an occasion to swap cards and chocolates with your partner, but it's also the perfect time to celebrate the love you have for family and for your close friends. One of my lovely friends, Sally, who lives in Canada, always sends a card this time of year to share how much we mean to her, and it's always been such a lovely gesture to receive.



Given that about half the population are actually single (that's a very rough statistic from a quick Google search), why not take this Valentine's day to give gifts to your single friends and family as well as your partner? A cute colourful packet of seeds sent with a card is a lovely gesture, or bake some cakes or take round some daffodils to someone you know is a little lonely.

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Obviously, many of you will think it's just a commercial holiday with no real meaning, that's been romanticised in movies and overtaken by greetings card companies. However, there is a definite opportunity to bring this holiday back to being something rather special and creating lovely traditions, in order to anticipate and enjoy the day and feel loved, whether that be in a romantic way or not.

As it happens this is the first year I'll be celebrating Valentine's day as a married woman - so we're sort of establishing our own rules for this year. We're kind of looking at convention and trying to work out how we want to fit in with that - does he need to take me out to dinner and buy me chocolates and flowers and a card? Hmm. Maybe. But wouldn't it be nicer if he bought me the indoor [Streptocarpus collection](#) I've wanted for ages (when you work at SR you end up wanting everything, but I've had my eye on this since Christmas), a bar of Lindt and cooked for me instead?

Anyway, I challenge you to think outside the box this Valentine's Day - don't brush it off as unimportant, instead see it as an opportunity to give to others and to create new, lasting, meaningful traditions. Did you know that French women traditionally cook apple or pear dishes to let a man know that she likes him? Or did you know that in Japan it's tradition for the woman to be the gift-giver - it's the one day of the year where she can be very open about who she likes. Or, in Iraq, it's tradition to pin a red apple with cloves (like you would do an Orange at Christmas) - I love this idea! Or, in Wales it used to be tradition for a man to carve a 'love

spoon' for the one he loved and to give it to her on this day?

At Sarah Raven we don't have any particular 'Valentine's' products for you, but I wanted to share a selection of our bestselling things that might just be the sort of thing you'd like to receive or send, and are wonderfully cheesy but practical too...



So, how about our [heart shaped bird feeder](#) , or our [Sweet Pea Seed Collection](#) in a tin - yes we realise that this is totally cheesy, but 'sweet pea' is a cute romantic nickname, or one of our [rose plants](#) delivered to the door with full planting instructions (the one pictured is [Rosa 'Felicia'](#))?

How do you celebrate Valentine's day, and what are your family traditions?

Thanks for reading!

Alissa

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