

Buying Flowers on Valentine's Day--Some Specific Suggestions

By Dr. Stephen Rittner

1. Roses of course are the traditional choice on Valentine's Day. They are great!! But you don't have to feel tied in to a specific number. You can buy your sweetie six roses, a dozen roses, two dozen roses or even more. Even a single stem can be romantic for the right individual (though we feel that more is better!). And how about an appropriate lovely container for that single flower if you choose that option.

2. Don't restrict yourself to only red roses. Roses do come in other colors. Consider sending her some of the many other exciting colors that are available. Most guys choose red roses because they figure it is safe. But often she may like other colors as well. In fact many guys are surprised to find that she may prefer **anything but** red. Hey, You care enough about this person to send flowers....By now you should have some sort of idea as to tastes!!!

3. Flowers may be designed different ways. Flowers may be sent arranged in foam in a container. They may also be sent arranged tastefully in water in a nice glass vase. Or a lovely bouquet of tied stems is also quite lovely. In other words, there are many floral design options to present your loved one with those flowers that you want to give.

4. Consider arrangements incorporating roses mixed with other flowers. The sentiment and appeal of roses is always there, but greater visual variety may be provided when mixing roses with other flowers. (eg. Roses mixed with tulips are interesting.) Mixing some roses with other flowers can also help provide flower arrangements that are far more interesting and dramatic, yet more practical for your budget.

5. In fact any lovely vase arrangement of flowers should be appreciated and can be created to meet most budget requirements. (not only those with roses!)

6. How about exotic flowers for the girl who is adventurous??? They can be in the same price range as roses, yet be novel, and different. Incidentally there are red and pink anthurium that are heart shaped, and striking heliconia in red/orange. Orchids are never out of style!

7. Concerned about longevity? You shouldn't be. It is true that flowers are a very transient media, but how long does that play or movie last? Or that lovely meal? Not as long as the flowers, but that still doesn't minimize our enjoyment of the experience. The bottom line is that flowers are a wonderful expression of romance, and the memory will linger long after the flowers themselves are gone.

8. Permanent Botanicals are still an option. OK. if the transience of flowers still bothers you, consider giving her a lovely arrangement using exotic dried materials. Or, how about a really spectacular arrangement using permanent botanicals. Some permanent materials can be very realistic and expensive!!!

9. Gift or fruit baskets are another great choice. Everybody enjoys fruit. A fruit basket is a fun way to present a wide assortment to a loved one. Gift baskets can incorporate all kinds of things, ranging from fruit, to flowers, to candy, to fancy jams, etc. They can also be personalized to reflect your sweetie's hobbies or interests.

10. Consider sending plants. Does she like plants? Many folks love to collect them. They enjoy the natural touch that plants add to a home. Plants are pleasant to contemplate and visually enjoy. Perhaps she likes to collect a particular kind of plant (eg. cactus) or she feels great with all kinds of large floor plants giving her home a "forest effect." If you do give her a plant do try to make sure that it is big and fancy enough to make an impression!

Don't forget flowering plants. In that way she can have both the enjoyment of flowers and the lasting quality of plants!

11. What about a nice dish garden? These can be very elaborate combinations of all kinds of great plants. You can get her one of these to grace her home, or perhaps one for her work station, or even several!!

12. Florists carry balloons as well as flowers. Consider a lovely vase arrangement with a cluster of balloons. Or how about decorating her apartment with a combination of balloons and flowers?

13. Stuffed animals are real sentimental favorites with grown ups as well as kids.

Many local florists carry stuffed animals as well as flowers! A lovely vase arrangement that incorporates stuffed animals along with flowers is quite novel and romantic too!

14. Today's flower shop carries all kinds of gift items. Ask your florist to include them in floral designs. Consider a floral design in a fancy container. Later after the flowers are gone, your loved one still has that lovely vase that will be saved and cherished as a keepsake.

15. Don't be afraid to send multiple gifts on Valentine's Day. It is certainly appropriate to combine more than one gift together. It is never wrong to cook her dinner and also give her flowers, or to give her that lovely bouquet and a movie. Romance need not be limited to just one item!

16. Are you very daring? Buy some flowers and try your own hand at arranging them. She should appreciate not only the flowers, but also the fact that you thought enough of her to try making something special for her. Note: this is far more effective when you use very upscale (fancy, expensive) flowers--not something that looks like it was bought on a budget. It is also best done if you create something that looks professional and lavish, and not mangled. **You don't want your loved one to feel it was a way to be economical. You want that person to feel that you took more time and effort and expense (which you should) to make something extra special for him/her.**

17. The card is also very important. I am not just talking about an elaborate card (Though they certainly can be wonderful.) This can be a simple enclosure card that your florist will provide free. Take a few moments to carefully consider what you want to say on that card. It is very important. This person obviously means something to you. Tell him/her how you feel on that card! Mushy is ok. Be genuine and be nice!