

Celebrate St Valentine's in the heart of Scotland!



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Love is in the air and Valentine's Day is on its way. What better way to celebrate such a remarkable day than spending some quality time with your partner doing the things that you both love doing!

Few UK cities could be more romantic than Edinburgh and with so many Valentine's plans to choose from, it can get a bit hard for you to decide what to do. Whether you are planning a romantic day out with your loved one or perhaps hoping to meet someone special on the day, The Edinburgh Reporter is here to help you with this guide to the best deals and romantic events to be held at several venues across Edinburgh on Valentine's Day!

VALENTINE'S EVENTS:

Why not propose to your loved one on Valentine's Day at Edinburgh Castle?

It you were already planning to propose to that special someone, how about adding that extra bit of magic by popping the question at Edinburgh Castle, one of Scotland's most romantic locations?



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This year, Edinburgh Castle offers a **Proposal Package** to help you create that special moment. The historic Minstrel's

Gallery, high above the spectacular setting of The Great Hall, can be yours for 30 minutes to create a private setting. Champagne and flowers can also be ordered to add to the special atmosphere and will be ready and waiting for you.

Nick Finnigan, Executive Manager of Edinburgh Castle said: "Edinburgh Castle is located in such a romantic setting that it is the ideal location for a marriage proposal." And added: "Everyone loves to help out in a love story and our staff have assisted in many of the proposals, from hiding flower bouquets from unsuspecting girlfriends, to arranging a table with a bottle of champagne in one of the castle's restaurants."

If you are interested in the Proposal Package you can either purchase your entry tickets on-line in advance from the [Edinburgh Castle website](#), or in person on the day from the ticket office.

The team will then work closely with you in the run up to the day itself to formulate the all important plan, and confirm the exact timings for the use of the Minstrel's Gallery during your visit.

For more information, please contact hs.weddings@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

"Café Voices: Vile Valentines" at the Scottish Storytelling Centre

Date: 13 February 2013 / Time: 19:00 / Duration: 2hrs. / Entry Fee: £5

Australian storyteller Ariadne Cass-Maran brings you tales of love, in all its bitter, tragic and glory. Also an open floor evening for long-time tellers and those new to storytelling.

For further information, please check the [Scottish Storytelling Centre's website](#).

Address: 43-45 High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1SR

“Dating in the Dark” at The Edinburgh Dungeons

Date: 13 February 2013 / Time: 17:30 / Duration: 2hrs. / FREE

This year, The Edinburgh Dungeons is hosting a free Valentine’s speed dating event specially aimed at all those “singletons” tired of mourning their single lives year after year! If this sounds familiar to you, don’t hesitate it and join this dating event with a difference at one of the city’s most scarily fun attractions. Who knows, your other half might be just around the corner!

Attendees should arrive at the Dungeon at 17:15 to start their tour, which brings 1000 years of Edinburgh’s dark history to life. Apart from encountering colourful characters such as Sawney Bean and William Wallace, guests to this unique dating event will also meet the attraction’s latest character the Love Doctor. As well as playing his role as host, the Love Doctor will be dispensing out old-fashioned live and dating advice to anyone who crosses his path. On completing the tour, visitors will be served refreshments and led down the dimly lit courtroom to be ‘judged’ by their fellow guests as they start their 4 minute speed dates. Everyone will be provided with dating cards to note their comments between dates.

Please note that spaces are limited and ticket bookings will run on a first-come-first-served basis. To book, call 0131 240 1001. For more information, visit [The Dungeon website](#).

*You must be over 18 to attend this event.

Valentine’s at Maddie & Mark’s Play Town (Ocean Terminal)

Every child that visits Play Town on 14th February 2013 will

receive a free chocolate heart and sticker! To book your child's place, call 0131 555 1900

For more information on how to book and prices, please click [here](#).

Valentine's events at Edinburgh Zoo

- **Panda to your Valentine:** This year, Edinburgh Zoo is offering an exclusive



© Edinburgh Zoo

Valentine's Gift Package in honour of its well-known panda Tian Tian, where you can get a personal message broadcast on our panda cam for your loved one. The package includes: a Panda soft toy, Love heart chocolates and a Valentine's Card asking your loved one to log on to the Edinburgh Zoo Panda Cam Page where your Valentines message will appear on a loop throughout the day. There are only 50 Panda Valentines available. Only available through the [Zoo's online gift shop](#).

- **Online Love:** Edinburgh Zoo's Facebook page is offering panda fans the chance to win a Valentine's Day weekend break in the capital city. Simply 'like' [Edinburgh Zoo's Facebook page](#) and privately submit your email address by following the instructions and you could win a weekend break for two on Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th February. The package includes two nights B&B at the Holiday Inn Corstorphine and a panda viewing slot on Sunday 17th February at 12 noon.
- **Visit the Panda on Valentine's Day:** Although virtually all panda ticket times are booked up already for Valentine's Day, there will still be walk up tickets

available on the day on a first-come-first-served-basis. Visitors are encouraged to be quick to avoid disappointments.

- **Valentine's Weekend Lunch and Dinner:** Treat your loved one to a special Valentine's meal in the Mansion House from £20/person, or enjoy arrival drinks and canapés followed by a 3-course dinner and entertainment at 7pm from £25/ person. You can make the weekend more romantic by including an overnight stay at the Murrayfield House for £99 bed & breakfast. For more info about the menus, click [here](#). Booking is essential so please either confirm your place by phoning Jenna Bradley on 0131 314 0336 or emailing events.edinburghzoo@compass-group.co.uk

"Wiff Waff Womance" at The Out of the Blue Drill Hall

Date: 14 February 2013 / Time: 18:00 – 22:30 / FREE

For those sports lovers who are looking for alternatives to celebrate Valentine's Day in a more active way this year, "Wiff Waff Womance" is their solution. Taking place at one of Edinburgh's most versatile community arts centre, this special Thursday edition of Wiff Waff night features all the usual table tennis, eclectic music, beer and good food. Whether you attend with or without a partner, Wiff Waff Womance promises not to disappoint those in the mood for an enjoyable Valentine's night out with a difference. If you are single, you might even meet your match! And everything without having to spend a penny!

For more info, please visit the [event's Facebook Page](#) or [The Out of the Blue website](#).

VALENTINE'S DAY RESTAURANT SPECIALS:

If eating out is your preferred way to break up the monotony

of the week and celebrate the most romantic day of the year with your loved one, Edinburgh has lots to offer as it is full of good places to dine out in style.

For those looking to enjoy a nice menu without spending a fortune, here are a few restaurant options with **Valentine's menus under £20**:

Hawes Inn, at South Queensferry, will be offering a special 3-course menu for just **£17.95** between Wednesday 13th and Saturday 16th February 2013. Their selection of romantic dishes to choose from include a Tasting Platter with baked brie, cranberry and coconut crumbed chicken among other gourmet specialities; Mushroom focaccia; Seared salmon Aubergine cannelloni; and a delicious Trio of puddings. Full menu can be seen [here](#). For more information or to book online, visit the [Hawes Inn website](#).

Chez Jules Bistro, at 109 Hanover street, will be serving a good value 3 course menu for **£19.50** per person. If you want a rustic provincial French atmosphere at an affordable price, this might be the place for you. The menu includes some of the typical items in the traditional French cuisine: good wine, lobster, steak, frites, etc... Promising a thrilling night out with music and candles, Chez Jules will delight customers with a cheerful atmosphere and Gallic feel, perfect for any romantic *soirée*. For more information or to book a table, contact the restaurant on 0131 226 6992 or email info@chezjulesbistro.com

Located in Edinburgh's emblematic North Bridge, **Prezzo** has also launched a 3 course Valentine's Day set menu for **£19.95** per person which will be available on 14th February from 6pm. Having been recently named as 'Restaurant Company of the Year' at the inaugural Eat Out Awards 2013, Prezzo is renowned for offering a quality menu at value for money prices. The chain, which has more than 160 restaurants across the UK, has also been named as 'The Italian restaurant chain of the year' in

the 2011 and 2012 PAPA awards. Prezzo's full Valentine's 2013 menu, can be seen [here](#). For more info or to book online, visit their [website](#).

Following the Italian trace, Italian food lovers will be delighted to know that **Zizzi Ristorante** will be serving an affordable Valentine's Day 3course set menu for **£19.95** on 14th February 2013. Apart from enjoying Zizzi's contemporary Italian cuisine and buzzing ambience, guests will also be offered a glass of Prosecco for only £1. This will run at the three branches of the restaurant in Edinburgh. [Book online](#) to avoid disappointment. Full menu [here](#).

Valentine's Day menus under £30:

Those who can afford more pricey Valentine's menus, might be interested in one of the following options.

The Voodoo Rooms is hosting a Valentine's Day special which includes a glass of bubbly and a single red rose. Customers will be able to choose between a 2 course dinner for **£24.95** or 3 courses for **£29.95** per person. The menu includes oysters, grilled sea bream, chargrilled steak and dark chocolate garnache with strawberries and chantilly among others. [Full menu here](#). Please call 0131 556 7060 to make a reservation or for further information.

Zucca will be serving a 3 course set Valentine's Menu for **£25.95** per person. Located in the heart of Edinburgh's Theatre District, this stylish Italian Café & Restaurant is renowned for serving fine Italian food and good quality wines at a reasonable price. The Valentine's menu include dishes like duck and pistachio terrine, beetroot and dolce latte risotto and classic Italian tiramisu with ice cream. Full menu can be downloaded [here](#). Reservations can be made [online](#), on 0131 221 9323 or by email: info@zuccarestaurant.co.uk.

Maison Bleue has a romantic 3 course Valentine's dinner on offer for **£27.50**, which includes their secret surprise calamari recipe, free range chicken wrapped in *Ibérico* Spanish ham and 'The one and only Maison Bleue' sticky toffee pudding.

Reservation is mandatory and can be made by phone on 0131 226 1900. A fee of £10 per person will be required to secure your booking. Further information and the full menu can be seen [here](#).

Valentine's Day menus up to £50:

The following alternatives are aimed at those with a more flexible budget who are looking for an added touch of luxury to celebrate Valentine's Day at some of the most exclusive restaurants in Edinburgh.

The Jam House, at 5 Queen Street, is hosting a fully-packed Valentine's evening of good food, romance and entertainment for **£39** per person. Their 3 course set menu includes a glass of sparkling wine per person and a complimentary cocktail of a French Martini or choco-mint Martini. Couples will enjoy this intimate dinner accompanied by The Maria Speight Jazz band. Prior booking is essential and can be made by phone on 0131 226 4380. [Sample Valentine's Menu here](#).

Located in the city's prestigious George Street, **The Living Room** will be serving a high quality 3 course set menu for **£45** per person. Sit down and relax listening to some smooth tones from their live pianist Leighton J, who can serenade you both while you indulge in the culinary pleasure their menu will provide. The £45 spread includes dishes like 'Oysters served with bloody Mary and a wasabi and pineapple verdita', 'Red mullet with a Kaffir lime and lemongrass bisque' and a dessert share board. [Full menu here](#). To book, please call them on 0131 226 0880 or email edinburghpa@thelivingroom.co.uk

* £1 will be donated to Bowel Cancer UK from every sale of

their Valentine's Day Menu.

The Scotsman is presenting an exclusive 'Four Course Valentine's Extravaganza' menu for **£45** per person in the award-winning **North Bridge Brasserie**. Join Executive Head Chef Paul Hart this Valentine's and experience one of the finest romantic nights out in Edinburgh. The menu will be served on 14th, 15th and 16th February between 5:30pm and 10:00pm. It features innovative dishes such as 'Shetland mussel and saffron soup', 'Roasted halibut loin with cucumber, clams, avocado and pink champagne sauce' or 'Acai berry and banana sorbet'. Your romantic Valentine's dinner can only be booked by calling the North Bridge team directly on 0131 622 2900. [Paul Hart's Valentine's full menu here.](#)

The Balmoral will be serving a superior 5 course Valentine's Day menu for **£45** per person in its chic and stylish **Hadrian's Brasserie** to please the palate of their romantic customers on 14th February 2013. In addition, everyone dining from the Valentines menu will be included in a special draw on the evening to win a dinner for two in The Balmoral's Michelin starred fine dining restaurant, Number One. See [Hadrian's Valentine's Menu here](#). Reservations can be made [online](#), by phone on 0131 557 5000 or emailing hadrians.balmoral@roccofortehotels.com.

Steak, at No.12 Picardy Place, will be offering a set 4 course menu for **£50** per person, which includes oyster, smoked salmon tartare, steak, white chocolate cheesecake with strawberry sorbet and two complimentary glasses of champagne. For more information or to book a table, contact the restaurant on 0131 556 1289 or visit [Steak's website](#).

Last but not least, here you are a final recommendation to brighten up your loved one's Valentine Day and express your love in an effective and romantic way:

Red roses are the ultimate expression of love and affection so why not surprise your other half sending flowers with a personalised card? Whether you are looking for a luxurious large romantic bouquet or a simple single red rose, [Clare Florist](#) has a wide selection of Valentine's options to suit all tastes and pockets.



© Clare Florist

The Edinburgh Reporter would like to draw your attention to a bouquet of vibrant red flowers personally created by Clare Florist's team of experienced florists to help spread awareness and raise funds for [Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research](#) charity. It is the only UK charity dedicated to improve the lives of patients with all types of blood cancer.

By sending [this bouquet](#) to your loved one, you will not only be purchasing a gorgeous romantic arrangement of flowers but most important, you will be contributing to a good cause. Clare Florist is donating all the profits from every one of these bouquets to help the amazing people at L&LR charity keep up their good work. Clare Florist's full range of Valentine's Day Flowers can be seen [here](#) – all with free standard delivery!