

How to celebrate Valentine's Day in Edinburgh

This is the guide for the sweet, the sexy and the downright cynical!

Valentine's Day: loved by makers of cards, growers of roses and sellers of all sorts of short-lived heart-shaped items, loathed by every teenage girl who hasn't got a partner, or even worse, receives a well-meant card from her Dad. Fortunately, in the capital there are lots of ways to celebrate this questionable saint without the need for a Significant Other, or even significant amounts of cash; some events also give you the chance to help a charity. And for those of you who really are In Love, there are plenty of romantic options too; read on....



Racking your brains for a place to propose to your beloved? **The Edinburgh Dungeon** could be your unlikely solution. All you have to do is submit your ideas for a dream proposal; the most ambitious and creative will be chosen to receive the full backing of the Dungeon's performance team. Last year's winner was **Kevin Wells**, who planned a musical proposal inspired by his hero Charlie Simpson; as he says 'without the support of everyone at the Edinburgh Dungeon it wouldn't have been half as amazing as it was. The Dungeon will always hold a special place in our relationship' – for not only did girlfriend **Laura** accept, the couple are now expecting their first baby in July! So if you've got a great idea with which to sweep your partner of their feet, email Edinburgh.Dungeon@merlinentertainments.biz or follow @EdinDungeon on Twitter and send your proposal for a proposal to them via a direct message. All entries must be received by 14th February 2015.

Or perhaps you'd like to pop the question over tea and stickies rather than blood and guts? **Cafe Modern Two** at the **Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art** could be your perfect place – they can serve you a mouth-watering afternoon tea for two for just £30 if you book in advance.



Doesn't it look delicious? Anyone who put that lot in front of me would be on the right track.... If you'd like to book a table, contact the **Heritage Portfolio** people at the cafe or book online [here](#). You can always burn off all that pastry by walking back along the Water of Leith. Or not.



Or maybe you've already proposed and now you're embroiled in plans for the Big Day? Although customs come and go, rings remain somewhat popular; if you'd like something a little bit different, why not head to [Coburg House Studios](#) in Leith? There you can work with one of the resident jewellers to design something special – or you can make your own wedding rings with **Donna Barry** and **Hannah Louise Lamb**, who will guide you through every step of the process in a fully equipped professional workshop, of which you'll have sole use for the day. For more details see www.makeweddingrings.co.uk. Another Coburg House artist, **Lorna Hewitt** can not only design your rings, she can also remodel a treasured antique piece – so if you have inherited a ring but feel it needs an update, contact Lorna via her website [here](#). And if you haven't quite made it to this stage yet.....jeweller [Julie Allison](#) has just the thing; a pendant engraved with 'Will You Marry Me?'



Valentine's Day falls on a Saturday this year; if that's your usual shopping day – or even if it isn't – you might want to head to **Princes Mall**, where **Roaming Romeos** dressed in tuxedos will be handing out **heart shaped chocolates**; you can find

plenty of gift ideas while you're there, plus an outfit for that romantic dinner. Just don't eat *too* many chocolates after you've bought it...



One thing you definitely don't need a partner for is the cinema; gone are the days when the only place courting couples could get any privacy was in the back row. If you'd like to enjoy some romance by proxy, the **Filmhouse** is offering ***Casablanca* (U)** and ***Wild At Heart* (18)** for one day only (14th February, durr...).



Casablanca, starring **Humphrey Bogart** and **Ingrid Bergman**, is 'a classic wartime melodrama...all the more romantic because it doesn't exalt romantic love at all'; it's showing at 5pm. Later – and the 10pm start may give you a clue as to its content – comes *Wild At Heart*, **David Lynch's** 'gloriously dark and twisted romantic melodrama, with a story of true love at its dark core' starring **Nicholas Cage** and **William Dafoe**.



Variety magazine describes the film as 'joltingly violent, wickedly funny and rivetingly erotic'. So now you know. Tickets for both films can be purchased [online](#) or by calling the Filmhouse box office on 0131 228 2688. Meanwhile at 1pm on Sunday 15th February the **Cameo Cinema** is showing ***Breakfast At Tiffany's* (PG)**: **Audrey Hepburn** stars as Manhattan good-time girl Holly Golightly in this adaptation of **Truman Capote's** novel.



The lovely **Sutton Gallery** in Dundas Street is one of the sponsors of the **Edinburgh Iranian Festival**. With inspired timing it has chosen Valentine's Day to host **an evening of**

Persian poetry, music and visual art in conjunction with its Festival exhibition of the work of **Hassan Meshkinfam**. Hassan's mixed-media creations interpret and illustrate the poetry of **Nima Yushij** through arresting, dreamlike images. Yushij (1896-1960) is often regarded as the founder of modern Persian poetry and has inspired many artists and musicians. Members of the Festival committee will read Yushij's poems in Persian and English, with songs from musician **Majid Mokhberi**. There will also be a drinks reception courtesy of the Gallery. The evening will begin at 8.30pm and you can indicate your intention to attend on the [event's Facebook page](#).



Meanwhile on Friday 13th February the **Usher Hall** is offering **Latin Passion**, as the RSN0, with conductor **Jean Claude Picard** and harpist **Xavier de Maistre**, present a concert of De Falla, Rodrigo, Ginestera and some of the greatest movie love themes ever composed, with music from Cinema Paradiso, Superman and Out of Africa. The evening begins with a pre-concert talk at 6.45pm and tickets can be purchased online [here](#) or by contacting the box office on 0131 228 1155.



And after all that, maybe what you're really looking for is a party – with or without Mr/Ms Right – in which case you're going to be spoiled for choice (all of the following events are on **Saturday 14 February** unless otherwise stated)...



Teesh, the 'all you can eat mind buffet' regular club night is holding a **Valentine's Day Dance with DJ Cupid at Sneaky Pete's** in the Cowgate. Entry is £5 (+ booking fee), the fun starts at 11pm and carries on till 3am, Yes, it's one of those things for Young People. You can buy your tickets online [here](#).



Feeling jaded? Fancy sharing the misery? At **Henry's Cellar Bar** in Morrison Street they've got **Full Moon Freaks** (macabre surf, psychobilly junkyard blues), **Norman Silver and the Gold** (morose country and western) and **Temple of the Dead Moth** (sadcore), catering for 'the unrequited and the recently dumped with music specially honed for the bitter unmatchable'. This 'fully unromantic' evening starts at 7pm and tickets cost £5: more details on the event's Facebook page [here](#). Or for something slightly more sedate, what about a **Gin and Piano Evening?** Celebrate Valentine's Day with cupcakes, piano and Daffy's gin at [Sofi's Bar](#), 63 Henderson Street. Starts 7pm.



There's more partying at **Cabaret Voltaire's Think Twice! Valentine's Party**, with **Lay-Far**, **Craig Smith** and **Gary Sbr Ellis**. 11pm-3am, [Cabaret Voltaire](#), 36 Blair Street. Tickets £7/£6/£5. **The Forest** is planning a big night too, with **Robert Sarazin Blake** 'The Beloved and Beardy Troubadour of the Pacific North West', guests **Billy Liar** and **Faith Elliot**, plus **The Lonely Hearts Club Jam** and an installation, **All The Lonely People**, by **Suky Goodfellow** upstairs. 7pm, [Forest Cafe](#), Lauriston Place, Tollcross. Free admission: BYOB.



Meanwhile, Scotland's first recovery cafe, **Serenity**, is holding a **Valentine's DJ Night**: 70s and 80s old school disco with **DJ Mario McMurriel** and guest **DJ Karen Stevenson**, and live performance and singalong with the **Serenity Singers**. 8pm-12 midnight, [Serenity Cafe](#), 8 Jackson's Entry, The Tun, 111 Holyrood Road. £4 per person. Serenity is run by people in recovery for people in recovery, and for public customers who want good value, good quality food in a relaxed space. All events are drink and drugs free.



For something a little different, **Greenpeace Edinburgh** are

asking you to **Make Love Not War!** Go totally hippy and embrace the Greenpeace message at a **70s Disco for Valentine's Day**. Get your funky thread on – Greenpeace will paint your face with rainbows, flowers and hearts so that you can strut your funky moves with the polar bear. 8pm, [The Counting House](#), West Nicolson Street. £5 per person on the door or in advance from [eventbrite](#).



And on Friday 13th February one exclusively for the grown-ups – **LGBT History Month: Dive Presents Broken:** a Valentine's ball complete with caged bar, visual art, performance, blood artistry and burlesque. Strictly for over 18s only: includes strobes, nudity and body art. 'It'll break your heart to miss it'. 9pm-3am, Small Animal Hospital, [Summerhall](#), 1 Summerhall. Tickets cost £12/£10 and can be booked online [here](#) or by calling the box office on 0131 560 1581. For more about LGBT History Month read The Edinburgh Reporter's article [here](#).

Finally, if you'd like to support a very worthwhile cause whilst reeling your socks off, what could be better than **The Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home Valentine's Ceilidh** on Saturday 21st February?



Share the love and have a great evening at Summerhall – which used to be the Dick Veterinary Hospital, where many of the Dog & Cat Home's residents were taken for treatment. Dance the night away with ceilidh band **The Cannongate Cadgers** in this impressive building; all profits will go to help stray and unwanted animals. 7.30pm-12 midnight, [Summerhall](#), 1 Summerhall. Tickets cost £8 (+ booking fee) in advance from [eventbrite](#) or £10 on the door. For more information please call EDCH on 0131 669 5331.

And if you *still* want cards...how about this beautiful paper-cut version, made by Emma Westwater, who grew up in East Lothian

and still lives in Dunbar. Her company is Source Design and her website is [here](#).



Or these colourful creations from local artist **Aimie Brown**, on sale at the [Skylark Cafe](#) in Hamilton Place, Stockbridge:



Cards by Aimie Brown

So whether you want to celebrate True Love, wallow in self-pity, or just have an excuse to party, there should be something for you here. And don't forget that afternoon tea; I can be bought...