

Expert Dating Advice for How to Manage Valentine's Day Expectations



By Joan Barnard

When it seems like every woman you know is getting the royal treatment on Valentine's Day, it's easy to feel disappointed when the man in your life does not meet your expectations—and you wouldn't be the only one.

According to a new study published by the National Retail Federation,

Americans are expected to spend over \$18.9 billion on Valentine's Day gifts this year.

With jewelry commercials on loop and Valentine's Day card nostalgia in full swing, it's no surprise that people feel the pressure to spend—and that the spending adds up to almost \$150 for the average person.

Related Link: [Relationship Expert Shares Hot Valentine's Day Gifts](#)

Spare yourself (and your guy) Valentine's Day stress by following these three pieces of expert dating advice. They're sure to keep your expectations in check:

1. Let him know how much (or little) you care about Valentine's Day: Men understand that women have expectations for Valentine's Day, but many have a hard time distinguishing just how high (or low) those expectations are. If it's your first Valentine's Day together, give him a heads up that you're looking for an evening fit for a Hollywood couple, or if you'd rather just stay home, let him know—the earlier the better.

2. Make suggestions: Saying, "I want to do something fun on Valentine's Day" won't cut it; it's too subjective. Making concrete suggestions about what you want will set the tone. You might say, "Wouldn't a couples massages be fun?" or "This would be the perfect time to try that cute French restaurant." Sharing suggestions will give him some parameters: how much to spend, how romantic the gift should be, etc.

3. Make sure your suggestions match the level of your relationship: If you have suggestions in mind, make sure they match where you are in your relationship and love. If you're

expecting a card and receive a diamond necklace, you'll feel overwhelmed—the same way your partner would feel if he's expecting to give you a card and you ask for a diamond necklace. Be realistic. Save expensive gifts for your serious established relationships.

Related Link: [Love Advice: 3 Signs He's the Right Guy to Be Your Valentine](#)

When it comes to your relationship and love, don't let one day decide how things will or won't progress—think about the big picture. Does your partner value you? Do they value your happiness? Do you feel consistently happy with him? My expert dating advice would say that if the answer is “yes,” a bouquet of flowers—or nothing at all—won't change that.

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