

# Valentine's Day Advice: Romantic Home-Dates for Busy Parents



 By Rebecca Garland

Forced to stay home for Valentine's Day with the hubby? You're not alone, as many celebrity families prefer to stay close rather than head out on romantic dates while dealing with the hassles of a babysitter or, in the celebrity case, overtime pay for the nanny.

Can you imagine Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie turning up for a special with the paparazi underfoot looking for clues about the latest celebrity plastic surgery? No – celebrity parents, especially in big families like the Jolie-Pitts, are looking for a bit more privacy when it comes to celebrating Valentine's Day. And you can enjoy romance at home, too. Here's how:

## **Cook Together**

Often parents focus on getting food on the table rather than the simple joys that baking can bring. Feed the children early, and pack them off to bed. Then, come back to the kitchen for an evening with entrees and wine just for the grown-ups. Cooking together can be intimate by preparing the meal together, setting the table for two and feeding each other bites in exactly the same way you would if you were paying \$100 per plate.

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## **Dinner and a Movie**

If the idea of cleaning the kitchen twice is overwhelming, take the easy road and send out for take-out. While one of you puts the kids to bed, the other drives to the local steakhouse or seafood restaurant for some delicious food to go. Those waiting for a table might realize you have the right idea as you hurry home with your fine dining. Set the table in the living room, and enjoy the meal by candle light. Then, with the leftovers put away, pop in your favorite romantic comedy and put your home theater to good use.

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### **Casual Romance**

Valentine's Day deserves a bit of special treatment, but if setting tables and driving out for food doesn't put you in the mind for romance, why not keep it casual? Busy parents know that the most romantic thing you can do is simply spend time together without any obligations or interferences. Order a pizza with your favorite toppings – you don't need to make concessions for the kids this time – and kick back to watch an uninterrupted marathon of all of those shows the two of you have recorded on the DVR.

Picture the two of you on the couch, your feet in his lap while both of you hold a container of delivered Chinese food or pizza for dinner. If you think the evening needs a bit more of a kick, throw your normal sweatpants over some silky lingerie, and use those commercial breaks wisely...

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