

A Peek into Cupid's Goody Bag

By: Amanda Zantal-Wiener

In an episode of *Sex and the City*, Carrie Bradshaw greeted her viewers with a simple statement: "Welcome to the age of uninnocence." Her straightforward yet dismal sentiment that romance is dead has spread to much of humankind. Today, when it comes to love, its disbelievers are definitely feasting on their long-held skepticism. Even the romantics are starting to give up, only to augment the disbelievers' hopeless population on a constant and rapid basis. But we at *City Living Magazine* think Valentine's Day still has a valid place in society—and with good reason. Why, you ask? What other holidays are created specifically to allow us to indulge in chocolates, champagne, jewelry and romantic getaways? Not many. Plus, the history behind the day itself is quite interesting.

In 498 A.D., Pope Gelasius officially designated February 14th as Valentine's Day. Some historians say that this particular day was chosen because it marked the death of St. Valentine, a man from ancient Rome who was eventually martyred. The holiday largely stemmed from the Roman practice of young men drawing the names of the city's bachelorettes out of an urn, leading to a yearlong courtship and, in most cases, marriage. By the 1840s, however, Valentine's Day was fully revitalized by Esther A. Howland, a Mount Holyoke College student who began to sell the first Valentine's Day cards. By putting together greetings made of lace and colored paper, she eventually built a business earning \$100,000 per year.

Valentine's Day remains a holiday that promises a great deal of excitement. Not only do couples still get together and celebrate the bond they are lucky enough to have found, but there's also a little something out there for all of us who wish to express our love for any of the special people in our lives...not just boyfriends or girlfriends! This year, we're going to follow in Esther's fun-loving, revolutionary footsteps and welcome you to a world where romance is alive and well. We've got tons of great items, from the finest champagnes to luxurious bath and body products that will be sure to rejuvenate your belief in romance. We even threw in a little bit of "uninnocence" from *LaPerla*...just for fun. CLM



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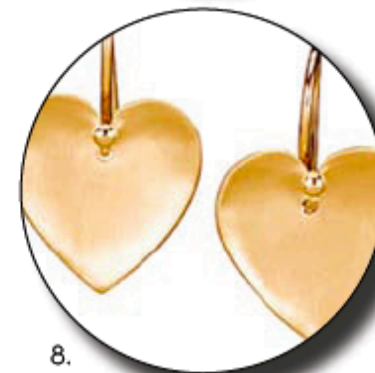
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1. Crabtree & Evelyn - Folly Eau de Parfum, \$45. www.crabtreeandevelyn.com 2. Xperience Days - Air Combat Dogfight, \$1195. www.xperiencedays.com 3. Swarovski - Cognac heart pendant, \$75. www.swarovski.com 4. Red Envelope - Couples Key Chains, \$45. www.redenvelope.com 5. Bath and Body Works - Aromatherapy Sensual Massage Oil-Jasmine & Vanilla, \$16. www.bathandbodyworks.com 6. La Perla - Demi Sheer Bra, \$228, Thong, \$112. www.laperla.com 7. Blue Nile - 18k White Gold Open Filigree Diamond Bracelet, \$3,650. www.bluenile.com 8. Adina Reyter Designs - Small Disc Heart Earrings, \$338. www.adinadesign.com 9. Louis Roederer - Champagne. www.champagne-roederer.com 10. Vosges Haut-Chocolat - Exotic Truffle Collection Heart Box. \$42 www.vosgeschocolate.com 11. Rolex - Cellini Cellinium Men's Watch. \$15,4000, Call 1.800.36.ROLEX for an official Rolex Jeweler near you.