

LIFE & STYLE

VALENTINE'S DAY EDITION

BY GRIFFIN MILLER

Over the last year, we've eaten one too many pizza slices, tossed back a slew of unhealthy beverages, watched the love of our life parade around in sweats and underwear, and closed our eyes as we walked by mirrors, knowing the hair horrors that lurk there. Enough, I say! It's February... month of Valentine amore. Let's put some romance back into a romance! After all, we sort of recall how to dress up (Hint: the basics live in our memory banks and closets). And posh dining can be had at home, too! So, dig out that favorite soundtrack and indulge in my favorite Valentine delights—from bonbons to flowers to trivets!

LUXE & LUSCIOUS

When exquisite caviar for two arrives in a handsome cooler, expect the kind of romantic repast in which heart-shaped sparks will serendipitously fly! Or spread the love with a caviar soirée, virtually or in-home, available in sets with crème fraîche, cocktail blini, and mother-of-pearl caviar spoons. San Fran's **The Caviar Co.** holds the key to exquisite taste with their dazzling selection of caviar options and gift boxes, all ready to ship from the West Coast. *Info: thecaviarco.com.*



BROADWAY BY CANDLELIGHT

For thousands of other New Yorkers and me, Broadway and the theater community's absence has been devastating, which is why I was thrilled to learn about **Stagedoor Candles**. Caskey Hunsader founded the company while on COVID hiatus from his work as a stage manager, hand-pouring candles and creating room sprays and diffusers in scents inspired by Broadway characters. For V-Day: "The French Lovers Collection" built around *Les Misérables*. As for setting the mood, Caskey suggests playing the cast album by candlelight, "...and remembering what's so magical about Broadway." Amen. *Info: stagedoorcandles.com.*



HAUTE ALLURE

On the femme side of Valentine's gifting, I'm with Beyoncé: "Put a Ring on It." Over the years, I've added to my ring collection in a significant way. I have to say I am seduced by **Blue Nile's** stunning array of lab-grown diamond rings ranging from engagement, wedding, stackable, to my personal favorite, their **Diamond Round & Princess Bypass Ring**. A wraparound design with two stones that don't quite kiss—forever locked in amorous anticipation. *Info: bluenile.com.*



OURS TRULY

With their varied pink hues and distinctive allure, Rosé wines offer vino connoisseurs and neophytes alike the perfect quaff with which to toast the year's most sensual holiday. A standout in this singular genre is **Rotari Brut Rosé 2014**. Originating in The Dolomites' heart and comprised of both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, this elegant Rosé serves up enticing aromas matched by an irresistible body and flavor. Perfect for sharing via Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, etc. *Info: rotari.it/en-us.*



FOREVER FABULOUS

Anyone who pegs women as the sole recipients of flowers on Valentine's Day should take a page out of my playbook: I had a bouquet sent to my husband in his office—a surprise that revealed that guys appreciate floral gestures as much as, well, the next guy. Should your dude suffer from allergies, or fuss over floral shelf life, opt for **Unwilted**, purveyor of stunning, upscale, handcrafted, to-die-for paper flower arrangements. Pictured is a little number called "Saffron Lust"—a title that says, "resist at your own risk"! *Info: unwilted.com.*



A CUT ABOVE

Leave it to **Omaha Steaks** to create a sumptuous Valentine's Day meal seemingly designed to seduce even the most finicky foodie. Should surf & turf meet your criteria for plated passion, I leave it to you to consider this five-star menu for four: Butcher's Cut Filet Mignons (with a side of their signature steak sauce), Maine Lobster Tail Halves, scalloped potatoes, creamed corn, and a decadent quartet of individual chocolate soufflés. To rearrange the Bard a bit: "If food be the music of love, play on"! *Info: omahasteaks.com.*



LEGALLY FROND

Interested in going a little rogue this Valentine's Day? Then might I propose a little unexpected greenery to grace your tabletop: **Graf-Lantz's Marijuana Leaf Trivets**. Masterfully crafted from crème de la Merino wool felt, these whimsical trivets offer superior thermal protection (they're also antimicrobial and water & stain resistant). Besides, they look cool should you want to purpose them into a distinctively sculpted base for your favorite flower-filled vase. *Info: graf-lantz.com.*



HEARTFELT

A little edgy and extremely eco, the **OMM YEAH!® Heart of Life** Valentine's Day necklace presents the ultimate way to share the love with a one-of-a-kind pewter heart pendant etched with the Tree of Life and backed by a red silk ribbon made from Indian sari remnants. More than a mere fashion statement, the piece and its design serve as a reminder of how valuable tree-planting can be in combating climate change and celebrates the "organic beauty and inherent respect for the earth and its peoples." Beyond beautiful. *Info: ommyeah.com.*



CONFECTION PERFECTION

It would be oh, so very wrong to omit the heavenly essence of Valentine's Day for people like me: chocolate. Skipping the drug store array, I am all for taking the bean of temptation to the stratosphere with **VESTA Chocolate Bonbons** (milk-based or vegan—your choice). Handmade in six Valentine-infused flavors with such evocative names as Passion Fruit, Champagne, Raspberry Rose, and Strawberries & Cream. And do not get me started on the luscious quotient. Little bonbon gems—what could be better? *Info: vestachocolate.com.*

