Valentine's Day

Read the text then answer the questions below.





Valentine's Day, also called Saint Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine,[1] is celebrated annually on February 14.[2] It originated as a Christian feast day honoring one or two early Christian martyrs named Saint Valentine and, through later folk traditions, has become a significant cultural, religious, and commercial celebration of romance and love in many regions of the world.[3]

There are a number of martyrdom stories associated with various Valentines connected to February 14,[4] including an account of the imprisonment of Saint Valentine of Rome for ministering to Christians persecuted under the Roman Empire in the third century.[5][6] According to an early tradition, Saint Valentine restored sight to the blind daughter of his jailer.[7] Numerous later additions to the legend have better related it to the theme of love: an 18th-century embellishment to the legend claims he wrote the jailer's daughter a letter signed "Your Valentine" as a farewell before his execution;[8] another addition posits that Saint Valentine performed weddings for Christian soldiers who were forbidden to marry.[6]

The Feast of Saint Valentine was established by Pope Gelasius I in AD 496 to be celebrated on February 14 in honour of Saint Valentine of Rome, who died on that date in AD 269.[9][10] The day became associated with romantic love in the 14th and 15th centuries when notions of courtly love flourished, apparently by association with the "lovebirds" of early spring. In 18th-century England, it grew into an occasion in which couples expressed their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending greeting cards (known as "valentines"). Valentine's Day symbols that are used today include the heart-shaped outline, doves, and the figure of the winged Cupid. Since the 19th century, handwritten valentines have given way to mass-produced greeting cards.[11] In Italy, Saint Valentine's Keys are given to lovers "as a romantic symbol and an invitation to unlock the giver's heart", as well as to children to ward off epilepsy (called Saint Valentine's Malady).[12]



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Saint Valentine's Day is not a public holiday in any country, although it is an official feast day in the Anglican Communion[13] and the Lutheran Church.[14] Many parts of the Eastern Orthodox Church also celebrate Saint Valentine's Day on July 6 in honor of Roman presbyter Saint Valentine, and on July 30 in honor of Hieromartyr Valentine, the Bishop of Interamna (modern Terni).[15]

\According to legend, in order "to remind these men of their vows and God's love, Saint Valentine is said to have cut hearts from parchment", giving them to these soldiers and persecuted Christians, a possible origin of the widespread use of hearts on St. Valentine's Day.[41]

Saint Valentine supposedly wore a purple amethyst ring, customarily worn on the hands of Christian bishops with an image of Cupid engraved in it, a recognizable symbol associated with love that was legal under the Roman Empire;[39][42] Roman soldiers would recognize the ring and ask him to perform marriage for them.[39] Probably due to the association with Saint Valentine, amethyst has become the birthstone of February, which is thought to attract love.[43]

Valentine's Day customs – sending greeting cards (known as "valentines"), offering confectionary and presenting flowers – developed in early modern England and spread throughout the English-speaking world in the 19th century. In the later 20th and early 21st centuries, these customs spread to other countries, like those of Halloween, or than aspects of Christmas, (such as Santa Claus).

Valentine's Day is celebrated in many East Asian countries with Singaporeans, Chinese and South Koreans spending the most money on Valentine's gifts.[90]

Americas

Latin America

In most Latin American countries, for example, Costa Rica,[91] Mexico,[92] and Puerto Rico, Saint Valentine's Day is known as Día de los Enamorados ('Day of Lovers')[93] or as Día del Amor y la Amistad ('Day of Love and Friendship'). It is also common to see people perform "acts of appreciation" for their friends.[94]

In Guatemala it is known as Día del Cariño ('Affection Day').[95] Some countries, in particular the Dominican Republic and El Salvador,[96] have a tradition called Amigo secreto ("Secret friend"), which is a game similar to the Christmas tradition of Secret Santa.[94]

Brazil

Main article: Dia dos Namorados

In Brazil, the Dia dos Namorados (lit. "Lovers' Day", or "Boyfriends'/Girlfriends' Day") is celebrated on June 12, probably because that is the day before Saint Anthony's day, known there as the 'marriage saint',[97] when traditionally many single women perform popular rituals, called simpatias, in order to find a good husband or boyfriend. Couples exchange gifts, chocolates, cards, and flower bouquets. The February 14 Valentine's Day is not celebrated at all because it usually falls too little before or too little after the Brazilian Carnival[98] – that can fall anywhere from early February to early March and lasts almost a week. Because of the absence of Valentine's Day and due to the celebrations of the Carnivals, Brazil was recommended by U.S. News & World Report as a tourist destination during February for Western singles who want to get away from the holiday.[99]

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Colombia

Colombia celebrates Día del amor y la amistad on the third Saturday in September instead.[100] Amigo Secreto is also popular there.[101]

United States



Conversation hearts, candies with messages on them, are strongly associated with Valentine's Day.



African American Valentine's school dance, Richmond, Virginia 1956

In the United States, about 190 million Valentine's Day cards are sent each year, not including the hundreds of millions of cards school children exchange.[102]

Valentine's Day is a major source of economic activity, with total expenditures in 2017 topping $18.2 billion in 2017, or over $136 per person.[103] This is an increase from $108 per person in 2010.[85]

for each other with flowers, chocolates, cards and other gifts. On this day, various parks and recreation centers of the country are full of people of love.[107][108] No public holiday is declared on this day in Bangladesh.

Some in Bangladesh feel that celebrating this day is not acceptable from a cultural and Islamic point of view.[109] Before the celebration of Valentine's Day, February 14 was celebrated as the anti-authoritarian day in Bangladesh. However, that day is forgotten by people to celebrate Valentine's Day.[110][111][112]

normally separated by the Milky Way (silvery river) but are allowed to meet by crossing it on the 7th day of the 7th month of the Chinese calendar.[113]

In recent years, celebrating White Day has also become fashionable among some young people.[114]

India

Main article: Valentine's Day in India

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In India, in antiquity, there was a tradition of adoring Kamadeva, the lord of love; exemplificated by the erotic carvings in the Khajuraho Group of Monuments and by the writing of the Kamasutra.[115] This tradition was lost around the Middle Ages, when Kamadeva was no longer celebrated, and public displays of sexual affection became frowned upon.[115] This repression of public affections began to loosen in the 1990s.[116]

Valentine's Day celebrations did not catch on in India until around 1992. It was spread due to the programs in commercial TV channels, such as MTV, dedicated radio programs, and love letter competitions, in addition to an economical liberalization that allowed the explosion of the valentine card industry.[115][117] The celebration has caused a sharp change on how people have been displaying their affection in public since the Middle Ages.[115]

When we give attention to Valentine's Day we find that 68%, including Hindu,[118] Muslim[119] and Christian of people of India do not support of Valentine's Day.[120]

Valentine's Day has been strongly criticized from a postcolonial perspective by intellectuals from the Indian left. The holiday is regarded as a front for "Western imperialism", "neocolonialism", and "the exploitation of working classes through commercialism by multinational corporations".[124] It is claimed that as a result of Valentine's Day, the working classes and rural poor become more disconnected socially, politically, and geographically from the hegemonic capitalist power structure. They also criticize mainstream media attacks on Indians opposed to Valentine's Day as a form of demonization that is designed and derived to further the Valentine's Day agenda.[125][126] Right wing Hindu nationalists are also hostile. In February 2012, Subash Chouhan of the Bajrang Dal warned couples that "They cannot kiss or hug in public places. Our activists will beat them up".[127] He said "We are not against love, but we criticize vulgar exhibition of love at public places".[128]

Israel

In Israel, the Jewish tradition of Tu B'Av has been revived and transformed into the Jewish equivalent of Valentine's Day. It is celebrated on the 15th day of the month of Av (usually in late August). In ancient times girls would wear white dresses and dance in the vineyards, where the boys would be waiting for them (Mishna Taanith end of Chapter 4). Today, Tu B'Av is celebrated as a second holiday of love by secular people (along with Valentine's Day), and it shares many of the customs associated with Saint Valentine's Day in western societies. In modern Israeli culture Tu B'Av is a popular day to proclaim love, propose marriage, and give gifts like cards or flowers.[132]

Japan

In Japan, Morozoff Ltd. introduced the holiday for the first time in 1936, when it ran an advertisement aimed at foreigners. Later, in 1953, it began promoting the giving of heart-shaped chocolates; other Japanese confectionery companies followed suit thereafter. In 1958, the Isetan department store ran a "Valentine sale". Further campaigns during the 1960s popularized the custom.[133][134]

The custom that only women give chocolates to men may have originated from the translation error of a chocolate-company executive during the initial campaigns.[135] In particular, office ladies give chocolate to their co-workers. Unlike western countries, gifts such as greeting cards,[135] candies, flowers, or dinner dates[136] are uncommon,

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and most of the gifts-related activity is about giving the right amount of chocolate to each person.[135] Japanese chocolate companies make half their annual sales during this time of the year.[135]

Many women feel obliged to give chocolates to all male co-workers, except when the day falls on a Sunday, a holiday. This is known as giri-choko from 'giri' ("obligation") and 'choko', ("chocolate"), with unpopular co-workers receiving only "ultra-obligatory" ('chō-giri choko') cheap chocolate. This contrasts with honmei-choko lit. "true feeling chocolate"), chocolate given to a loved one. Friends, especially girls, may exchange chocolate referred to as tomo-choko from 'tomo' meaning "friend").[137]

In the 1980s, the Japanese National Confectionery Industry Association launched a successful campaign to make March 14 a "reply day", where men are expected to return the favour to those who gave them chocolates on Valentine's Day, calling it White Day for the color of the chocolates being offered. A previous failed attempt to popularize this celebration had been done by a marshmallow manufacturer who wanted men to return marshmallows to women.[133][134]

In Japan, the romantic "date night" associated to Valentine's Day is celebrated on Christmas Eve.[138]

Lebanon



Valentine's Day themed bouquet of cupcakes

Saint Valentine is the patron saint for a large part of the Lebanese population. Couples take the opportunity of Valentine's feast day to exchange sweet words and gifts as proof of love. Such gifts typically include boxes of chocolates, cupcakes, and red roses, which are considered the emblem of sacrifice and passion.[citation needed]

Lebanese people celebrate Valentine's Day in a different way in every city. In Beirut, men take women out to dine and may buy them a gift. Many women are asked to marry on that day. In Sidon, Valentine's Day is celebrated with the whole family – it is more about family love than a couple's love.[citation needed]

Pakistan

Main article: Valentine's Day in Pakistan

The concept of Valentine's Day was introduced into Pakistan during the late 1990s with special TV and radio programs. The Jamaat-e-Islami political party has called for the banning of Valentine's Day celebration.[123] Despite this, the celebration is becoming popular among urban youth and the florists expect to sell a great amount of flowers, especially red roses. The case is the same with card publishers.[147]

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In 2016, the local governing body of Peshwar officially banned the celebration of Valentine's Day in the city. The ban was also implemented in other cities such as Kohat by the local governments.[148]

In 2017, the Islamabad High Court banned Valentine's Day celebrations in public places in Pakistan.[149] More than 80% of Dawn readers polled on its website agreed with this decision.[109]

In 2018, because of a petition by a citizen, Abdul Waheed, the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority advised broadcasters and newspapers against airing any Valentine's Day celebrations.[150][151]

Singapore

According to findings, Singaporeans are among the biggest spenders on Valentine's Day, with 60% of Singaporeans indicating that they would spend between $100 and $500 during the season leading up to the holiday.[90]

Europe

United Kingdom

In the UK, just under half of the population spend money on their Valentines and around £1.3 billion is spent yearly on cards, flowers, chocolates, and other gifts, with an estimated 25 million cards being sent.[166]

In Wales, some people celebrate Dydd Santes Dwynwen (St. Dwynwen's Day) on January 25 instead of (or as well as) Valentine's Day. The day commemorates St Dwynwen, the Welsh patron saint of love.[167] The Welsh name for Saint Valentine is Sant Ffolant.

In a 2016 poll conducted by Channel 4 for Valentine's Day, Jane Austen's line, "My heart is, and always will be, yours", from her novel Sense and Sensibility and said by Edward Ferrars (Hugh Grant) to Elinor Dashwood (Emma Thompson) in the acclaimed 1995 film adaptation, was voted the most romantic line from literature, film and TV by thousands of women.[168]

Ireland



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On Saint Valentine's Day in Ireland, many individuals who seek true love make a Christian pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Valentine in Whitefriar Street Carmelite Church in Dublin, which is said to house relics of Saint Valentine of Rome; they pray at the shrine in hope of finding romance.[169] There lies a book in which foreigners and locals have written their prayer requests for love.[170]

Finland and Estonia

In Finland, Valentine's Day is called ystävänpäivä, which means "Friend's Day". As the name indicates, this day is more about remembering friends, not significant others. In Estonia, Valentine's Day was originally called valentinipäev and later also sõbrapäev ('Friend's Day') as a calque of the Finnish term.[171]

France

In France, a traditionally Catholic country, Valentine's Day is known simply as "Saint Valentin", and is celebrated in much the same way as other western countries.[172] The relics of Saint Valentin de Terni, the patron of the St Valentine's Day, are in the Catholic church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste and Saint-Jean-l'Evangéliste located in the southern France town of Roquemaure, Gard. The celebrations of "Fête des Amoureux" takes place every two years on the Sunday closest to February 14. The village gets dressed in its 19th-century costume and put on the program with over 800 people.

Greece

St. Valentine's Day, or Ημέρα του Αγίου Βαλεντίνου in Greek tradition was not associated with romantic love. In the Eastern Orthodox church there is another Saint who protects people who are in love, Hyacinth of Caesarea (feast day July 3), but this was not widely known until the late 1990s[173] In contemporary Greece, Valentine's Day is generally celebrated as in the common Western tradition.[174]

Poland

Saint Valentine's Day was introduced to Poland together with the cult of Saint Valentine via Bavaria and Tyrol.[175] However, it rose in popularity only in the 1990s.[175] The only (and the biggest) public celebration in Poland is held annually from 2002 in Chełmno[175] under the name „Walentynki Chełmińskie" (Chełmno Valentine's). Because Chełmno's parish church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been holding the relic of St. Valentine since the Middle Ages, local cult of the saint has been combined with the Anglo-Saxon tradition.[175]

Portugal

In Portugal, the holiday is known as "Dia dos Namorados" (Lover's Day / Day of the Enamoured). As elsewhere, couples exchange gifts, but in some regions, women give a lenço de namorados ("lovers' handkerchief"), which is usually embroidered with love motifs.[176]

Romania

In recent years, Romania has also started celebrating Valentine's Day. This has drawn backlash from several groups, institutions,[177] and nationalist organizations like Noua Dreaptă, who condemn Valentine's Day for being superficial, commercialist, and imported Western kitsch. In order to counter the perceived denaturation of national culture, Dragobete, a spring festival celebrated in parts of

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Southern Romania, has been rekindled after having been ignored during the Communist years as the traditional Romanian holiday for lovers. The holiday is named after a character from Romanian folklore who was supposed to be the son of Baba Dochia.[178] Its date used to vary depending on the geographical area, however nowadays it is commonly observed on February 24.[179]

Scandinavia

In Denmark and Norway, February 14 is known as Valentinsdag, and it is celebrated in much the same manner as in the United Kingdom.[180] In Sweden it is called Alla hjärtans dag ("All Hearts' Day") but is not widely celebrated. A 2016 survey revealed that less than 50% of men and women were planning to buy presents for their partners.[181] The holiday has only been observed since the 1960s.[180]

Spain

In Spain, Valentine's Day is known as "San Valentín" and is celebrated the same way as in the rest of the West.

with distributors of goods with symbols associated with Valentine's Day.[183] In 2021, prosecution of Qom declared that it will fight with those who disseminate and provide anti-cultural symbols like those of Valentine's Day.[184] Although Valentine's Day is not accepted/approved by any institution or rule in the country and has no official status, it's highly accepted among a large part of the population.[185] One of the reasons for Valentine's Day breaking out into the general population in Iran is the change in relations between the sexes, which are no longer bound to marriage for two decades.

Questions

1. Explain briefly in 100 words the meaning of Valentines Day?

2. Choose 4 countries and explain briefly in your own words how it is celebrated in that country.

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3. What does Valentine's Day mean to you? A paragraph in about 100 words.

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