

Seasonal Guides

February 2018

Season of Love



Jenn Campus Author

Newsletter Subscriber Exclusive Monthly Guide

jenncampusauthor.com

Seasonal Guide : February 2018

Season of Love

By Jenn Campus

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Getting Ready for Valentine's Day

Yes, I know what you are thinking, and I can hear your groan of discontent. I know, Valentine's Day is a Hallmark holiday. It is a day that puts the pressure on - it means money spent on frivolous gifts and cards, all wrapped up in hearts and a red bow.

It means expressing platitudes of love to your heart's desire, sometimes in the form of poetry, most likely on a card. It can also mean making sure that you have a perfect evening with your beloved, complete with champagne and strawberries. It is enough to make even those of us who are the staunchest and most devoted to love shudder.

If we learned anything from the rigors of the Winter Holidays, it is that we can choose to slow down, and make this time ours. We don't have to succumb to the marketing of big box stores, or to the commercialism of the day. We don't even need to spend a lot of money.

We can choose to put down the Hershey's kisses, candy hearts and the plush teddy bears to make this day our own day to celebrate and express love in the way we want to show it. I mean, if you can't be yourself in how you choose to express your love, and you can't stand the commercialism of the holiday, are you sure you are expressing your love to the right person?

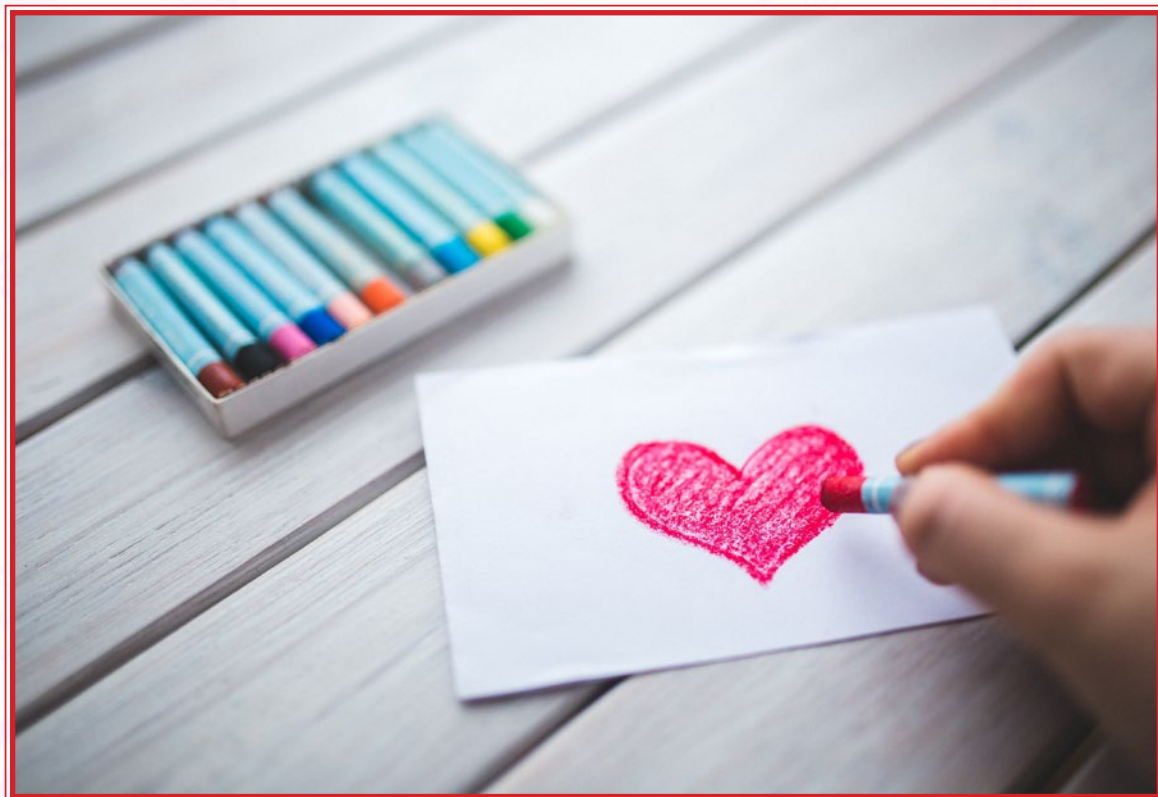
Honestly though, even if the holiday comes with a palpable "cheesiness", isn't it nice to take a day to celebrate love in its many forms? Your Valentine doesn't have to be a romantic partner. For many years, when I was little, my Valentine was most assuredly my mom!



I also agree, one shouldn't need a special day to show their love, it should be shown everyday. But life is short, and I for one love an excuse to set a day apart for creating ritual, and to relish in sharing traditions with my family, especially the ones we make up for ourselves. Plus it really brightens up this typically bleak part of winter.

If you approach the holiday of Valentine's Day in this way, does it change your perspective at all?

It's OK if it doesn't, no judgement. But if it does, even in a small way, I invite you to put aside all the "shoulds" of Valentine's Day, and just see it as a day apart from other days, a special day, and look in your own heart to see how you can express the love you hold there for your loved ones.



Valentine's Day Folklore

As with most modern holidays, there are ancient origins, and Valentine's Day is actually no different. Even if it is now seen as a Hallmark holiday, in the past it was anything but. The history of Valentine's Day brings us back, once again to a pagan festival. If you've been following me for a while, this is starting to sound really familiar now, isn't it?

This particular holiday was celebrated in Roman times and was called Lupercalia. Lupercalia actually took the place of an even more ancient festival, Februa, which the month of February is named for. Lupercalia honored the god Lupercus, a Pan-like deity, and the she-wolf Lupa, mother of Romulus and Remus, the founders of the great and bella city of Rome. It was celebrated from the 13th of February through the 15th.

The celebration began with the Luperci, male priests who were part of the "brothers of the wolf" sacrificing two male goats and a dog in a cave at the bottom of the Palatine hill in Rome, the place where Lupa suckled Romulus and Remus.

Once the blood of these animals ritually anointed the priests, Roman women, especially those of high status, lined up from the Palatine hill, to the Forum, to be whipped by the Luperci with the hides of these animals believing it increased their own fertility, prevented sterility and eased the pains of childbirth.

Talk about "hitting on" women.

Lupercalia was still practiced even after Christianity came to the Roman empire, signifying its importance to the populous, and why it later became the foundation for a christian holiday, per usual.



More historical events occurred in conjunction with Lupercalia and relating to Valentine's Day during the 3rd century. Two different priests by the name of Valentinus, or "Valentine" (a popular moniker derived from the Latin word "valens," meaning strong or worthy) were executed by Roman emperors on February 14th of different years. One was a priest who performed secret marriages defying Roman Emperor Claudius II, who forbade young men to marry in attempts to bolster his army. This Valentine was executed on February 14 in A.D. 270.

Due to the popularity of these pagan celebrations, the Catholic church declared both executed priests martyrs, and February 14th was known thereafter as the celebration of St. Valentine's Day.

During the 5th century, the Normans celebrated Galatin's Day, meaning "lover of women", which sounds like Valentine's Day, which likely also confused the two, but helped to solidify the holiday with its overtones of love.

Chaucer and Shakespeare romanticized the day in their works, and it became known as a day of love during the middle ages, where gifts of handmade cards were given to express love...and we all know what the holiday has become in modern times, over the top and often cringe-worthy. But it doesn't have to be!



Love in Every Bite

Since you are a newsletter subscriber, you should receive the FREE sample of my book **Love in Every Bite: The Secret to Cooking Healthy Recipes with Positive Energy**. It contains _____pages from the book, including 7 delicious recipes designed to bring more love into your life and magic into your kitchen.

This month, I invite you to serve up some of those recipes to your loved ones. While you cook, think of how much you love the people you are cooking for, and how you want them to feel your love when they eat what you've prepared. I wrote an entire section of the book devoted to visualization and cooking with intention, but this suggestion is enough to get you started.

The recipes I included in the free sample don't just promote romantic love (although some are specifically designed for that!) but all kinds of love - the love between parents and their children, between friends. So you can decide who you want your Valentines to be this year and what you will prepare for them.



A Quick Kitchen Ritual

You can take the process of intentional cooking beyond the recipes included in the sample, beyond the recipes in the book, too. I invite you to check out the spices in your cupboards. This is a fun activity to do with children too.

Place the spices on the counter and look at them individually, then open the containers and smell them, then take a small taste. Do this with each one individually. How does each spice make you feel? Which are your favorites?

For example, cinnamon makes me feel warm and happy. That is probably why it is my favorite spice and why I add it to dishes both sweet and savory, I just love having that energy around as much as possible. I also love juniper, it is cooling and earthy and makes me feel grounded. I add it often to hearty meals - stews and roasts, which are very grounding foods. Peperoncino, or spicy red pepper of any kind is obviously physically warming, and it also fires me up emotionally, giving me a lift when I need one.

What are your favorite spices? How do they make you feel when you look at them, and smell them? Don't worry about what the traditional connections or meanings are, it is more important how you feel.

When you understand the relationship between your energy and the energy of the ingredients you work with, you can see how someone eating the food you prepare can also feel that energy. This is cooking with intention, this is kitchen magic.

If you need more, please [check out this video](#) I made about "5 Herbs To Bring More Love Into Your Kitchen".

I would love to know what your favorite spices are and why. Please [join me over on my Facebook page](#) to talk about spices.





A Spicy Experiment

Once you have discerned how your favorite spices make you feel, try using them in more of your recipes, intentionally. As I mentioned, Peperoncino gives me a lift, so when I feel like I need a lift, I might make myself a cup of Spicy Mayan Hot Chocolate, or add it to Lovely Lentil Loaf (both recipes you will receive in the free sample) when I feel like I need it.

Feel free to go outside what your favorite recipes suggest, and make modifications as needed. If your meal plan and pizza night is on Friday, but you feel like you need cinnamon's warmth and sweetness, make a sweet pizza with nutella and bananas, and shake some cinnamon on top.

Why not?





A Ritual for Families and Friends

Studies show that single people tend to feel depressed on Valentine's Day and that those who are coupled feel stressed. There are plenty of well-established ways to celebrate Valentine's day with a beloved, and I have given you other ideas in this guide. So let us focus on family. Or if you don't have family near you, this can also be done with a group of friends.

Materials:

- Red construction paper**
- Scissors**
- Pens**
- Optional: stickers, red and white candles**

Light the candles, and get to work.

Each person cuts out a heart to represent all of the people in the group. So if there are 5 people participating, each person will have 5 cut out hearts.

Each heart represents a person. On that heart write what you love most about that person. Then decorate the heart as you like, maybe with symbols that you feel represent that person. For example my daughter has a deep connection to owls, so I would decorate her heart with owl imagery.

Once all the hearts have been created, exchange them. So again, if there are 5 people participating, each person will end up with 5 hearts, because of course you are going to write a heart for yourself!

I suggest keeping all your hearts in a jar somewhere at home. When you feel sad, or lonely, or need a bit of an emotional lift, read the hearts outloud to yourself.

Thank you!

I hope that you enjoy this Seasonal Guide.

If you know someone else who might enjoy this type of guide, please tell them about my website and invite them to sign up for the newsletter so they can receive their own copy.

*Thanks,
Jenn*

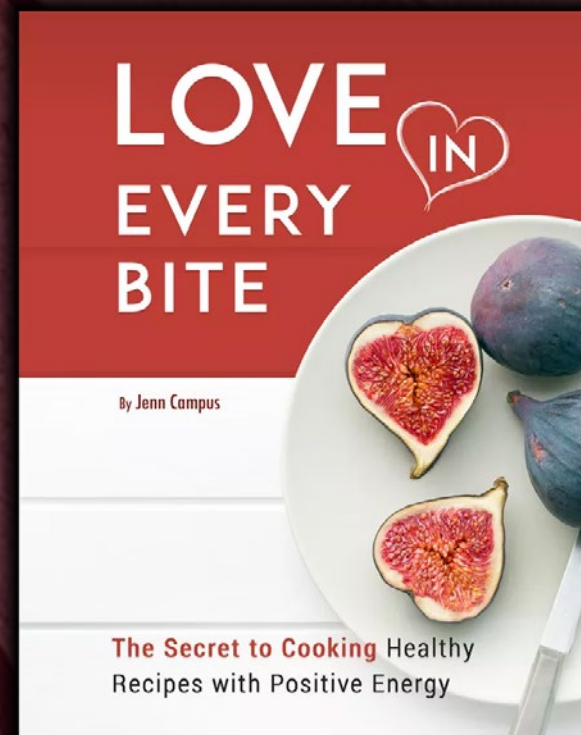
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And if you need more help around celebrating Valentine's Day, feel free to get in touch with me, or start a discussion on my [Facebook Page](#).

Thank you!

PERFECT FOR VALENTINE'S DAY



WHAT'S INSIDE:
35 DELICIOUS,
NATURALLY GLUTEN
FREE AND EASY TO
PREPARE RECIPES TO
BRING MAGIC INTO
YOUR KITCHEN AND
LOVE INTO YOUR
LIFE.

BUY NOW ON AMAZON

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About the Author

**STORYTELLER, HISTORY & MYTHOLOGY GEEK, MYSTIC,
KITCHEN WITCH, MODERN PEASANT, HEARTH KEEPER**

I am an author and American expat, a matriarch and hearth keeper. I moved my whole family (my husband, 2 children under 5, my father in law, myself and our dog) to my husband's ancestral homeland, the mysterious and ruggedly beautiful Italian island of Sardinia. In order to make that move, we downsized our Vermont homestead into 33 small boxes (50% books!) and 6 suitcases for our new life. We learned to live on very little money, in a tiny space and with a whole new set of cultural norms. In essence, we have eased into a life amidst chaos.

I long for simpler times and quiet joys. As a Sagittarius I am hardwired to seek out truths (professional translation: I am a great researcher). I enjoy food, art and cultural traditions. I am deeply drawn to creating ritual (professional translation: pays great attention to details) and through the art of writing, also a form of ritual, I am able to share with others (professional translation: good communication skills) long held traditions, different perspectives and practical modern tips for navigating this often chaotic and unsettling world. In this global world, traditions can help everyone to feel that they have a place to come "home" to, even if that place is not a physical location.

In my writing I look for ingenious ways to bring together my favorite fiction and nonfiction genres which are fantasy/mythology, culinary arts and the many uses of herbs. I am passionate about the wild places, where my food comes from and sustainability, as well as the stories, foods, culture and mythology of Europe.

I have a degree in Anthropology from Hampshire College in Amherst, MA. I have traveled extensively to and lived in Italy, Norway and the Navajo Reservation in Arizona. I also have a decade worth of experiences creating rituals and traditions for my family and myself. I have written 2 books on the subject of bringing more ritual into your life to help you connect with family, nature and where you are in the present moment.

