**ST. VALENTINE’S DAY**

**HISTORY**

- **>800 BC**
  - The Roman festival of Lupercalia was celebrated the festival of Februa.

- **400 - 800 BC**
  - The oldest surviving valentine is written by Charles, Duke of Orleans to his wife. “I am already sick of love. My very gentle Valentine...”

- **500**
  - Valentine’s Day is officially established by Pope Gelasius I. The feast day of Saint Valentine is removed from the Roman Catholic Calendar of Saints.

- **1382**
  - The first diamond ring was given by Archduke Maximilian of Austria to Mary of Burgundy in 1477.

- **1450**
  - The first mass-produced valentines are produced and sold in the US by Esther Howland.

- **1969**
  - The feast day of Saint Valentine is removed from the Roman Catholic Calendar of Saints.

- **1996**
  - The first e-valentine is sent giving rise to a new tradition of e-cards, love coupons and printable cards.

- **2011**
  - The Iranian printing works owners’ union issued a directive banning the printing and distribution of any goods promoting the holiday.

**BILLIONS SPENT LAST YEAR IN THE US**

- **$10 greeting cards**
- **$17 chocolate**
- **$30 candy**
- **$6.2 flowers**
- **$15 Valentine’s day total**
- **$30 Valentine’s day total**
- **$4.4B**
- **$2100**
- **$15**
- **$566**

**CARDS**

- 15M e-valentines
- 190M traditional valentines
- 1000M valentines including valentine-exchange cards made in school

**HEARTS**

- The seed of the silphium plant has been suggested as the source of the heart symbol.
- In mathematics, the implicit curve $(x^2+y^2-1)^3-x^2y^3=0$ yields an approximation of the heart shape.

**CANDY**

- Americans eat 46 lbs of candy per year. Roughly 1/4 the body weight of an average person.
- 8 Billion candy hearts will be produced this year. Laid end to end they would stretch for 250,000,000 feet.

**LOVE POTIONS**

- **AFRICA**
  - rhinoceros tree bark + hot water
  - an increase in desire for men and women

- **UGANDA**
  - gray crowned crane egg + herbs
  - an increase in affection and monogamy

- **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**
  - various concoction of herbs
  - mama juma: gives an increase in desire for men and women

- **ROMANIA**
  - smile + heat
  - soup: used to make young girls more desirable to their husbands

- **FINLAND**
  - blueberries + fermentation
  - Lappish love potion that gives an increase in desire

**AROUND THE WORLD**

- **Brazil**
  - Brazil celebrates Lover’s Day, called Dia dos Namorados, on June 12. It happens to come right after the feast of St. Anthony, known as the saint of matrimony.

- **Finland**
  - In Finland, citizens celebrate “Friends Day” on February 14. It’s not just a day for romance—it’s also a day when friends send cards and gifts to each other.

- **US**
  - On February 14th, people in Bulgaria celebrate Tifon Zarazan (Viticulturist’s Day), a centuries-old observation of the cult of Dionysius, the god of wine and merriment.

**SOURCES**

- Wikipedia
- National Geographic
- US Census Bureau