

Immune System Booster Vitamin D (D3 Serum) and Vitamin K (MK-7) | Gabriel Cousens MD

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Here in week 339, we are sharing crucial information from an authority and a great healer, please enjoy and share so other people can also be safe and healthy, much love, health, and joy to you and yours.

A Transcript of the video

– Okay, so vitamin D. Vitamin E. Vitamin K. What's the other one?

– [Voiceover] A.

A, right. These are fat soluble, and they actually work together as a team.

How much is of the team? Literally, they all affect certain gene patterns, the same gene pattern.

They're all working and affecting it. That's how much of a team they are. D is getting a lot of press these days.

Vitamin D is a tremendous immune stimulator, and moderator. In the immune systems it's vitamin D receptors are just all over the immune system.

Some people estimate if we have adequate vitamin D,

70%, it helps protect against 70% of cancer.

Of all types. That's a pretty good immune statement right there, isn't it?

70%? I would say that's pretty good.

It also helps with mental functioning. It helps protect against senility.

It helps with bone. But not as directly, see, without K,

Vitamin E brings in it but it will deposit calcium anywhere.

One of the worst places is they, it deposits calcium in the arteries, right?

K says, "No." K directs where the calcium for D goes.

It brings it into the bones. In other words, you need K to direct, the best K is MK7, we do carry it, and it's really, what?

– [Voiceover] No, and doctors do exactly the opposite when you have like a, when your blood is, they tell you not to take any formulas, not eat any lettuce, and (voice muffled) and you're saying it's the opposite

'cause then there's gonna be more calcium deposits.

– Right. K directs D. The calcium.

– [Voiceover] You mentioned MK7?

That was the name? MK7, it's a British spy agency, right?

– [Voiceover] Yeah, exactly.

– MK7 is the specific form of vitamin K that's the most potent and the most active.

And we do carry it and it is in a capsule. Okay. K2 you get from the more vegetable, you know, just eating vegetables. But it doesn't, it helps more with clotting, anti-clotting, you know, or it acts as a coagulant.

But we're talking MK7, which is really about directing the calcium. Vitamin D is important in the regulating the secretion of insulin. Low D has been associated with Type I and Type II Diabetes. So with the diabetes we really make an effort to make sure people get adequate vitamin D. It also has a hormone, calcitonin, and what that does is it kind of regulates a kind of growth, and it also, the balance of calcium and phosphorous in the system. So that's just again, another thing that happens with it.

D seems to be very important in protecting against neurological disorders. The most famous of that is multiple sclerosis, which is something that tends to happen

morein colder, less sunny climates. Sun is the main way of getting vitamin D, right?

– [Voiceover] But we have a lot of sun in here,

– Yeah, well, there's reasons for that. But just hold on, you know. I want to get back to, vitamin D is made by the sun. If you get 20 minutes a day of sunlight for three days, you're gonna start taking in about 20,000 units a day.

Then what is really happening when you ask that question, is maybe people aren't getting so much sunlight. Maybe we're too much inside playing with our computers. But here's where we go to protocol. The best levels are between 50 and 70, in the blood. To really see how you're doing, you really need to check it a few times.

Now there is a question of how much should you have? 400 milligrams, 10,000 units, and I think it's variable. Myself, I had been taking 10,000, and I was in low-normal vitamin D. Well, I don't want to be low-normal. I want to be optimal. So now I'm taking more. Now that's more than they recommend, now what's the point?

I'm out in the sun. I get 20 minutes of full body sun all the time, I live in Arizona. So what's happening is there's a very big variation, and the only way to do it correctly is get your sunlight, take your certain amount of vitamin D, and get a blood test.

– [Voiceover] Trial and error, trial and error until you find–

– Until you find the right level. It takes about three blood tests to figure it out. The other thing is, people with darker skin absorb less vitamin D.

So if you're Afro-American you will be getting less vitamin D from the sun as a protective device, but, and that's so good, so they actually need to supplement more.

And I think you want to look at Israel, you have more dark-skinned people, they're more likely to have a lower vitamin D because of the genetic part of that. So that's part of the answer too.

Computers and darker skin.

(laughing in audience)

audience members speaking over each other)

What I was saying is 20 minutes a day should be sufficient. For myself, I get 20 minutes, I'm out in the sun without much clothes, or in clothes, 20 minutes, and I take vitamin D supplement, and my vitamin D was low-normal. So what I'm trying to say, there's that little bit of trial and error.

So the protocol is, get a standard, take 10,000 and do what you're doing, and then measure it and see where you stand. Oh, it's too low, it's too high, well fine. It's too high, I take less.

– [Voiceover] If it's too high what can happen?

– Well, if you're, you can get a calcification in your tissues. Excess calcification. And you can get a little, I don't want to say vitamin D toxicity, but 10,000 is a safe place. People basically, somewhere between 2,000 and 10,000 is pretty safe, where you should be doing your experimenting.

– [Voiceover] How do you translate that to drops, or–

– Well, in the DC we have it's 2,200 per drop.

– [Voiceover] Drop or dose?

– Drop.

– [Voiceover] Per drop. Okay, so what would be,

- Well, 10 drops is gonna give you 10 or 11,000.
- [Voiceover] So 10 drops a day would-
- I would start at five a day.
- [Voiceover] Five drops a day.
- And that's gonna give you about 10,000 units.
- One drop is 2,000.
- [Voiceover] One drop is 2,000.
- Five is 10,000.
- [Voiceover] I thought it was a thousand, but...
- [Voiceover] All my life my mother is telling me to keep away from the sun in the hottest hour or whatever, and less than a year ago somebody said that the only way you can absorb the vitamin D is if the sun is perpendicular to the ground, which is a bad hour?
- No, I don't think it's like that. If you just get out, obviously the more when the sun's hot the better, you know, if you live, in US they say between San

Francisco and Baltimore, which is kind of the lower part of the United States in a way, above that line everybody should take a vitamin D supplement.

What's the point? You've gotta be out in the sun, when you're northern, if you're up near Lebanon it's gonna be not as much sun quality as down here.

But still, you know, between 10 and 2 is reasonably good. But the truth is, it's kinda, you have to do trial and error, really. And the only way you're gonna get accurate is do a blood spot-test.

You can just take a, we have at the Tree, you just prick your finger and you do the blood spots and then they...

– [Voiceover] Like a litmus paper or something like that?

– No, it's paper, and you have to send it in. Or they can draw your blood but it's more expensive to do it that way.

– [Voiceover] The vitamin D, it's just vitamin D, the drops, or vitamin K?

– [Dr. Cousens] Yeah.

– [Dr. Cousens] No, just D. The D and K don't really come together.

– [Voiceover] So where do we get MK7?

– We carry it. And you just need one capsule a day.

(audience members mumbling)

And that's gonna get you depositing the calcium in your bones, not in your tissues or in your heart. That's not what you want. Yeah.

– [Voiceover] If you could speak more about the dosage because I don't think people are familiar with the dosage here.

In Israel you have the drop, which is 400 units,

– [Voiceover] 200.

– [Voiceover] 200 to 400. Most people they don't take it all, or they take maybe two drops which are 800, and there is a law in Israel now, they took off the shelves the one with 1,000. Now there is only 400. It is not allowed to take,

– Yeah.

– [Voiceover] that was on the shelf, the 1000.

– [Voiceover] They're not allowed on the shelf.

– [Voiceover] Okay, and so they're very, the people that they take vitamin D, maximum, with doctor order, 2,000 to 2,500.

Maybe and you're talking about 10,000.

– It's being totally safe. According to the research. It's not revolutionary, it's, the world research says mostly people to take 10,000 it's gonna be totally safe.

Again, the only way you're gonna know is what?

– [Voiceover] Blood test.

– Get the blood test. Then you'll know where you stand. The high-normal is 50 to 70. You need to be 50 to 70 to get optimal effect. That's it.

Now, is there a philosophical point to this? Yeah, there is.

(audience member mumbles)

Wait a minute, please. Here's the thing I want you to understand. If you're getting really adequate D what does that mean?

Means you're gonna have a great immune system. It means you're gonna be really healthy. It means you're not gonna, you know your chance of getting

cancer is greatly cut down. Your chance of getting diabetes is greatly cut down. You're gonna have less colds and flus. You're actually gonna be healthy.

– [Voiceover] So they

don't want that. (laughs)

– I just left it with that.

(loud laughing in audience)

So they're always trying to find the minimum for what? Hypothetical minimum. And we know, the research is very clear. 50 to 70 is what you need.

And what, that's it, it's not that complicated. So whether you need 15,000, or 10,000 or 5,000 or 1,000, that is what you have to figure out. Now, one of the things you look at is, if people used vitamin D, you wouldn't need, you don't need vaccinations anyway, but 0 to 4% of vaccinations work. And some of that research was done in Israel, believe it or not. You know, for the flu, it's 0 to 4% effective. Well, I can tell you, the vitamin D is a whole lot more effective than that, and a whole lot more safe.

So you gotta understand what is really happening in the world today. There is an explicit movement against anything that's (mumbles)

Why, you know, you take vitamin D. There's no, you shouldn't even think about taking vaccinations. Do you see what I'm trying to say? So there is definitely

a struggle going on, and it's one about those who want health, culture of life, and those who want you to be in ill health so you can have to buy their medicines.

That's really what's going on without a lot of management. Now you had a question.

**Click the link to purchase any of the
Vitamins in the video.**

<https://www.drcousensglobal.com/refer/?st-code=WX2w>

DIY Face Masks and Body Scrub Recipes

DIY Face Masks and Body Scrub Recipes

Welcome to our blog we are so thankful for all your visits, likes and shares without you we wouldn't be here. On week 338 we are sharing information on DIY Face Masks and Body Scrub Recipes.

There are many products from various cosmetic companies in the world for you to choose from that are widely available in stores and online. This means you can afford to be picky when it comes to buying products that you're going to use on your skin. Everyone's skin is different and requires different care, but one thing is certain: exfoliation is a key component to beautiful glowing skin.

The market is flooded with skin products loaded with unhealthy

chemicals, so it can be tricky to find products for the health-conscious consumer. Skincare manufacturers are forced to add artificial flavors, dyes, chemicals, and preservatives to prolong the shelf life of their products. Many of these ingredients may cause irritation, inflammation, and allergic reactions. So, should reading labels and selecting the right skin product require a master's degree in biology?

Thankfully, the negative effects of additives and preservative chemicals in store-bought scrubs can all be avoided!

In this article, you won't be making commercial-grade scrubs found in stores or the ones you have tried in the past, such as coffee, oatmeal, sugar, etc. Instead, you will learn about lesser-known scrub recipes with organic ingredients that you already have in your fridge. Each ingredient has four recipes you can try that will do absolute wonders for your skin.

These proven recipes are effective for any skin type, and the components were given to us by nature itself! You don't have to head to the beauty superstore or go online to get your hands on these scrubs; you can make them yourself at home.

Always perform a patch test before you use any skincare, including the ones you make at home. Make sure you are not allergic to any of the fruits, vegetables, or herbs that are used in these recipes before you apply or rub them on your skin.

Strawberries



Strawberries contain salicylic acid, which is a beta hydroxy acid useful for problematic skin. This makes it a wonderful ingredient for people who are battling with acne and blemishes. The powerful antioxidants in strawberries help skin stay healthy and radiant, especially improving the texture and appearance of aging skin by promoting the production of new cells. Not only are these strawberry recipes great for exfoliating skin, but they also have a pleasant aromatic property that will make your skin routine more enjoyable. This scrub is worthy of you!

Strawberries and skin

A high amount of vitamin C found in strawberries also helps to lighten the skin. One serving of strawberries has over 50% of your daily value of vitamin C that is a really good amount. When used topically, this amount of vitamin C is said to help reduce the appearance of dark spots while also helping to make dull skin look more refreshing and radiant.

I've dabbled in DIY beauty treatments myself all the time I love the idea that I can make a fresh product and apply it to my skin, the sweet beautiful be

"Strawberries, or *fragaria chiloensis* extract, it is wonderful at hydrating the skin due to the high amount of carbohydrates it contains and skin protectant due to the antioxidants," says Dr. James Heskett, holistic MD, author of *The Well Path* and consultant for HydroPeptide. "It contains alpha-lipoic acid which is a potent antioxidant, which slows the aging of collagen elastin. Vitamin C is a potent antioxidant as well as being a key player in collagen synthesis."

In fact, strawberries give vitamin C superstar oranges a run for their money they have more of it. "It's different than orange vitamin C, which is more acidic, and therefore more exfoliating and less hydrating," says Dr. Heskett.

Varika P. even worked with skin-care brand Volition to capture her fave DIY beauty ingredient in the ease of serum for your skin's benefit. You can take the strawberry slices, apply to your face, and it would leave a thin, red, serum-like film it makes the skin glow. Every time, I always noticed an

improvement immediately after—my face would glow and look so much brighter.”Strawberries are acidic in nature and this is effective to remove the excess sebum on the skin.

1. Strawberries and Fresh Cream Mask:

Take strawberry puree, mix with fresh cream (dry skin) or yogurt (oily skin) and add a tablespoon of honey. Apply all over the face, and leave it on for 10 minutes and wash with warm water. You can deep freeze and store this mask like how I regularly do. This Mask helps reduce Acne.

2. Strawberries & Lime Face Pack:

It helps in de-tanning your skin and lightens pigmentation marks on your skin. Mix strawberries and a tablespoon of lime juice. Apply all over the face for 15 minutes and wash off with warm water.

3. Strawberry & Chocolate Mask:

Mash strawberries along with a tablespoon cocoa powder and honey. Apply on face for 15 minutes and wash off with warm water. It helps to make your skin glow and also makes it soft.

4. Honey and Strawberry Face Mask:

Mash a few strawberries with a fork until it turns into a smooth paste. Add a tablespoon of honey and apply this mask for 15 minutes and wash with warm water. Honey is an antioxidant that helps to fight skin impurities and acne.

5. Blemish prone skin Strawberry Mask:

Mash quarter cup of ripe banana and strawberries, add to it, a quarter cup of sour cream or yogurt and a tablespoon of honey. Apply all over face; let it on for 1

6. Rice flour and Strawberry Face Pack:

Blend a few strawberries with a tablespoon of rice flour. Apply on face for 15 minutes before washing it away.

7. Strawberry Scrub:

Slice up a berry and rub it all over your face, its alpha hydroxyl acids have the excellent exfoliating ability. Let it sit on your face for a minute and wash off.

Recipe: 1

Strawberries. 6 pcs

Sweet almond oil. 3 tablespoon

Brown sugar* 3 tablespoons

Using a blender or food processor, blend the ingredients until the consistency is creamy and contains no big chunks of strawberry. Apply to wet skin in a circular massaging motion making sure to apply to areas that feel rough and dry. Rinse with warm water. This scrub is great for smoothing your

complexion and adding a radiant glow to your skin.

Recipe: 2

Strawberries 10 pcs

Lemon 1 pc (juice)

Honey 2 tablespoons

Yogurt 4 tablespoons

Use a blender or food processor to whip all these ingredients together into a foamy cream texture. Massage onto wet skin, focusing on problem areas and rinse with warm water. Pat skin to dry. This scrub is helpful for lightening discolored areas of skin, exfoliating dead cells, and has important antibacterial properties for blemishes or acne.

Recipe: 3

Strawberries 7 pcs

Fried oatmeal 2 tablespoon

Honey 2 tablespoons

Yogurt 2 tablespoons

Blend of food process these ingredients together into a mousse and lightly massage onto your wet skin, rinsing with warm water after application. This scrub is very calming and healing for the skin, helping rejuvenate irritated skin from acne or other conditions.

Recipe: 4

Strawberries 3 pcs

Heavy cream 1 tablespoon

Honey 2 tablespoons

Mix all ingredients and blend until smooth. Apply to wet skin, lightly massaging the scrub into your skin and then rinse off with warm water. The cream in this scrub nourishes and gives your skin softness and shine. The honey provides a natural antiseptic, helping cleanse the skin of microbes and dirt.

Bananas



Bananas are an excellent natural ingredient you can use to maintain the freshness and softness of your skin on your face and body.

The properties in bananas are an alternative to harmful chemicals found in many skincare products on the market.

Banana scrubs are useful for people with normal to dry skin, as well as for sensitive skin. Bananas contain a considerable amount of vitamin E, ascorbic acid, and antioxidants, which all provide rejuvenating effects, and help stop the inflammatory processes in the body. They can also help restore the cellular exchange, which can make small wrinkles appear less noticeable. Bananas can also help contribute to the regeneration of new cells, and restore the skin after exposure to sunlight.

Recipe: 1

Pureed Banana 2 teaspoons

Fried oatmeal 2 tablespoon

Honey 1 tablespoons

Milk 1 tablespoons

Blend everything in a blender or food processor until smooth. Massage lightly onto wet skin, and then rinse with warm water.

Recipe: 2

Pureed Banana 1 pcs

Plain yogurt 3 tablespoons

Honey 2 tablespoons

Recipe: 3

Pureed Banana 1 pcs

Cream 2 tablespoon

Honey 2 tablespoons

Recipe: 4

Pureed Banana 1 pcs

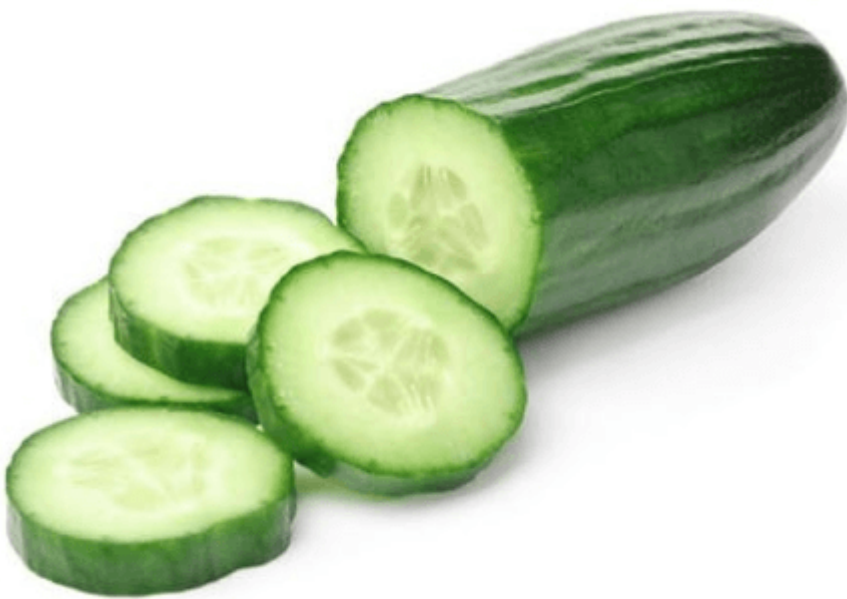
Lemon 1 pc (juice)

Honey 2 tablespoons

Plain yogurt 1 tablespoons

Banana scrubs are not recommended for storage in the refrigerator. They are best if used fresh, right after all ingredients are blended together.

Cucumber



Cucumbers are a wonder in the beauty world, and they are often found in cosmetics, especially skincare. They can smooth fine lines and wrinkles while supplying the skin with B vitamins.

Cucumbers can also help stimulate the production of collagen, while also helping tone the skin and moisturizes it. Cucumber juice is not only refreshing, but it can also brighten skin,

helping reduce the visibility of acne, freckles, and pigmented spots. Historically, it's been said that Cleopatra used to take long relaxing cucumber baths; clearly, she was on to something! The pH balance of a cucumber is similar to that of human skin; making it a gentle and natural ingredient you can use safely. With these recipes, you can use cucumbers for many years to come to keep your skin looking youthful, fresh and maintain the elasticity of your skin!

Recipe: 1

Cucumber 1 pc (chopped)

Fresh basil 5 leaves

Brown sugar* 5 tablespoons

Coconut oil 5 tablespoons (liquid)

Pulse ingredients in blender or food processor for 1 minute until the mixture becomes homogeneous. Light massage it on your wet skin, and rinse with warm water. This scrub exfoliates and moisturizes the skin, which can be done 2 times a week to maintain smoothness and elasticity. Enjoy the light and refreshing aroma of cucumbers as you scrub impurities away.

Recipe: 2

Cucumber 1 pc (chopped)

Fresh mint 6 leaves

Brown sugar* 6 tablespoons

Honey 1 tablespoons

Mix ingredients thoroughly, let it stand for 15 minutes, massage on the wet skin, then rinse with warm water. This scrub with mint reduces skin irritation, removes oil, and refreshes the skin.

Recipe: 3

Cucumber 1 pc (chopped)

Brown sugar* 5 tablespoon

Mix all the ingredients in a blender or food processor and apply it to a wet face, carefully going around the eyes. This mask can improve the appearance of wrinkles. Keep the scrub on your face for 15 minutes, then rinse with warm water.

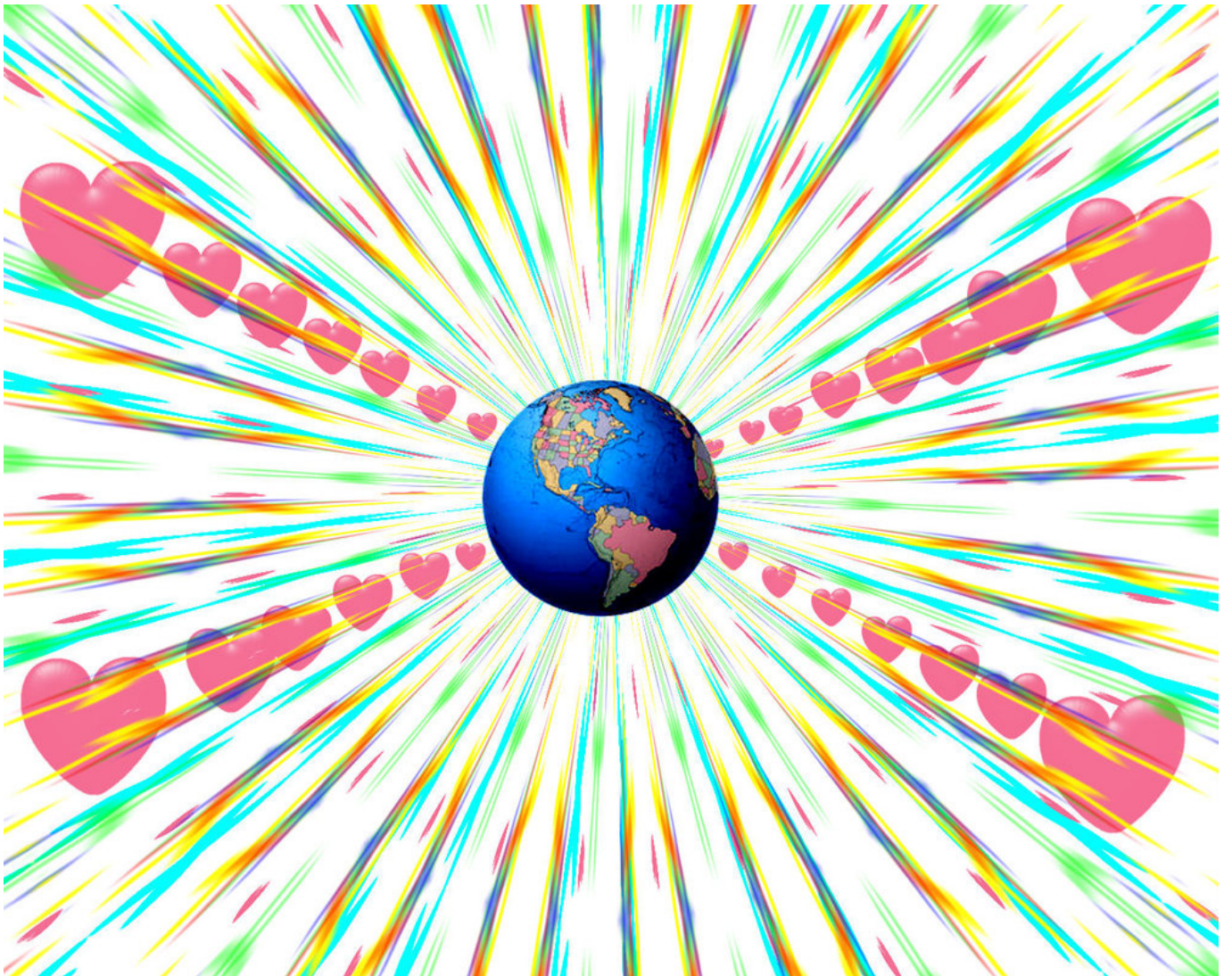
Use these scrubs after taking a shower using the warm water to open your pores, essential for enabling your skin to absorb ingredients. Using fruits and vegetables that are full of water on your skin can help improve the function of the epidermal layer and maintain the optimal moisture balance of your skin.

A healthy moisturized epidermis responds better to inflammation and helps to prevent and reduces the occurrence of blemishes. The application of these scrubs should be performed with a gentle massaging motion on the skin, helping to increase circulation while also toning rough areas. As the scrubs are washed away, so are impurities. Exfoliating regularly with these natural, homemade scrubs can help prevent your pores from becoming clogged with dead skin and oil. Moisturizing is responsible for 60% of your skin's appearance making these organic body scrubs great for anti-aging efforts. Well-moisturized skin retains softness and elasticity, and exfoliating your skin is the first step for optimal moisture retention. These wholly and all-organic scrubs are going to change your skincare routine for the better with every use!

**Valentine's celebrations from
around the world**

Valentine's celebrations from

around the world



On week 336 Happy Valentine's Day to the world!!!!!! We wish you all the LOVE that you deserve. Enjoy the day and feel the love for everything around you, let your sense of love and joy expand to everything including the universe. We thank you again for the support, the likes, and shares. We are very grateful to them. Much love to you from all of us.

This post contains affiliate links which may generate revenue for the site when a purchase is made.

<https://youtu.be/CaRgHQjC1WE>

Valentines Day Facts & History

When I think of any celebrations I am always curious about the customs of people all over the world, so for that reason, we did this post in honor of many cultures. We would like to include every culture of the world, but for obvious reasons, it is not a true possibility due to the fact that not all cultures celebrate Valentine's day for one and the other reason we discover along the years of sharing posts is that peoples attention span is short. So we decide to keep the posts to a certain length, so if we skip your culture celebration please contact us through email and we will be glad to add it, it feels right. Many people have commented on how much they have learned in past years about different traditions and many are mixing theirs with the new information of other cultures and now they have a whole different unique way to celebrate their Valentine's day. We love it, being the fact that it should be unique, that's what love is about. We all have different perceptions and needs, that is why we are INDIVIDUALS, right? Anyway, we love to share these different cultures and their celebrations with you, and please share and like it if you do.

When we look at the history of Valentine's Day what we see is obscure, and further clouded by various fanciful legends. Research shows that the holiday's roots are in the ancient Roman festival of **Lupercalia**, a fertility celebration commemorated annually on February 15. Pope Gelasius, I recast this pagan festival as a Christian feast day circa 496, declaring February 14 to be St. Valentine's Day.

Most scholars believe that the St. Valentine of the holiday was a priest who attracted the disfavor of Roman emperor Claudius II around 270. And at this stage, the facts end and the mythic begins. So according to one legend, Claudius II had prohibited marriage for young men, claiming that bachelors made better soldiers, how about that for control! Valentine continued to secretly perform marriage ceremonies but was eventually apprehended by the Romans and put to death. Another

legend has it that Valentine, imprisoned by Claudius, fell in love with the daughter of his jailer. And before he was executed, he allegedly sent her a letter signed "From your Valentine." Probably the most plausible story surrounding St. Valentine is one not focused on [Eros](#) (passionate love) but on [agape](#) (Christian love): he was martyred for refusing to renounce his religion.

In the year 1969, the Catholic Church revised its liturgical calendar, removing the feast days of saints whose historical origins were questionable. St. Valentine was one of the casualties and that is one of many stories about St. Valentine that we came across.

<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/valentinesdayhistory.html>

Valentines Day in the Middle Ages

Valentine's Day festival gained much popularity during the Middle Ages. It is said that lovers began to celebrate the day by exchanging love notes and simple gifts such as flowers. The idea of linking Valentine's Day with love in the Middle Ages was strengthened by the notion that birds began to look for a mate during this time interesting comparison wouldn't you say?. Various legends related to the festival including that of Feast of Lupercalia and martyrdom of Saint Valentine further lead to the increase in the popularity of Valentine's Day festival.

The beginning of Birds Mating Season

During the Middle Ages, it was commonly believed in France and England that birds mating season began from February 14. This popular notion added to the idea that the middle of the February celebration of Valentine's Day should be celebrated as a day of love and romance. Fourteenth and fifteenth centuries English and French poets and litterateurs through their romantic verses further promoted the concept of linking Valentine's day with romantic love. For instance, a verse by **Dame Elizabeth Brews** says,

And, cousin mine, upon Monday is Saint Valentine's Day and every bird chooses himself a mate, and if it like you to come on Thursday night and make provision that you may abide till then, I trust to God that ye shall speak to my husband and I shall pray that we may bring the matter to a conclusion.

Geoffrey Chaucer in the 14th century, "**Parlement of Foules**" writes

"For this was sent on Seynt Valentine's day"

When every foul cometh there to choose his mate"

These popular verses further helped to create a romantic image of Valentine's Day festival during the Middle Ages. Lovers, therefore, began to celebrate Valentine's Day by expressing love to their sweethearts with an exchange of love notes and simple gifts such as flowers and the gifts of the heart.

The First Valentine's Day Card

Legends influencing Valentines Day Celebration in Middle Ages

One very popular legend of Valentine's Day states that the festival originated from the Feast of Lupercalia – a fertility festival celebrated in mid-February by ancient Roman during pagan times. The festival paired young boys and girls through a lottery system who would fall in love and marry.

Another legend states that a priest called St Valentine lived in Rome during the reign of Emperor Claudius II. Valentine defied the orders of Claudius order that banned engagements and marriages in Rome and secretly married young boys and girls. Saint Valentine was executed by Claudius on February 14, 498 AD. Over the period of time, St Valentine became the patron saint of lovers and they began to celebrate his martyrdom by expressing love for their beloved and exchanging love notes, so many legends.



The Meaning of Cupid

from: <http://www.romanceclass.com>

While Cupid is not believed to be a real person, Cupid was the cherub of Love to ancient Romans, and many Italians believed in his powers. Even in the modern world, references to Cupid and his bow and arrows of love are found everywhere on Valentine's Day's cards, candy, pastries and much more.

Cupid was not initially the cherubic, happy little angel that we think of today. In his original incarnation, he was a very mischievous, sometimes dark cherub of love and desire who enjoyed matching 'odd couples' and seeing how they worked out.

Cupid eventually fell under his own spell of odd matches. He fell in love with Psyche, a mortal. In the Greek language, Psyche means "butterfly" and also means "soul". In many ways, what Psyche goes through is symbolic of the path of each woman's soul in life.

Cupid had actually been sent by his mother, Venus, to punish Psyche for her beauty. Instead, he was captivated by her and fell deeply in love. He will arrange to have her brought to his mountain home to live with him, but he hid his identity from her, and only visit her at night. Their time together was so tender and full of gentle talk and loving moments that Psyche fell in love with Cupid.

Psyche's jealous sisters were angered by her wealth and love and convinced Psyche that her lover must be a bad person to so hide. The sisters persuaded her to sneak up on him after he left her one evening, armed with a knife. He awoke and saw her there, and said sadly, "I inflict no other punishment on you than to leave you forever. Love cannot dwell with suspicion."Wow that is so true love never lives were is

suspicion, doubt or any kind of negative feelings that contradict the concept of love, good lesson.

Psyche realized how foolish she'd been, and decided the only way to be with Cupid again was to go talk to Venus and ask for her blessing. Venus was delighted at having Psyche kneeling down before her, and set forth many tasks for Psyche to perform to prove her worthiness, Humm! that's one way to get things done. Each task was more than Psyche thought she could manage, but in each case, a God stepped in to assist her. Finally, Psyche and Cupid were allowed to be married. They were very happy together, and had a child, named Pleasure., what a heartfelt story.

From: <http://www.novareinna.com/festive/valworld.html>

Australia



It is said during the Australian gold rush period, miners who were suddenly in possession of money from the new-found wealth of the Ballarat Mines were willing to pay a princely sum for elaborate valentines and merchants in the country would ship orders amounting to thousands of pounds at a time. The most extravagant Australian valentines were made of a satin cushion, perfumed and decorated in an ornate manner with flowers and colored shells. Some might even be adorned with a taxidermied hummingbird or bird of paradise. This treasure, contained within a neatly decorated box, was highly valued, being both fashionable and extremely expensive.

Austria



Austria celebrates Valentine's Day in the way any other developed country enjoys it. The American influence on Austrian culture is profound and it's believed that Americans introduced the whole concept of Valentine's Day to Austria. Austria is famous for the dance to waltz and hotels offer three nights from Valentine's Day in Vienna with a fairytale ball thrown in. The fun will take place in a beautiful Italian Renaissance building in Vienna's Stadtpark named 'Wiener Kursalon', with holidaymakers dancing to famous waltzes of Johann Strauss' along with popular opera as well as modern pop music. Austria follows the popular customary rituals of

Valentine's Day such as greeting cards, flower bouquets, and gift baskets.

It has become a tradition in Austria for a young man to present his loved one with a bunch of red flowers on Valentine's Day. Red flowers are considered as the symbol of love from ancient times. It still rules the valentine minds in Austria as it does in another part of the world. Lovers exchange flower bouquets on Valentine's Day in Austria. Red roses and red tulips are the most favorite flowers that make the most valentines's flower bouquets on Valentine's Day. As flowers, chocolate candies draw smiles on Austrian sweethearts' faces. Austrian women give chocolate candies as Valentine's gifts. People prefer homemade chocolate cookies than the ones which they can purchase from the stores. Austria being a land of music, where Beethoven and Mozart breathed music, has a lot of musical concerts takes place on Valentine's Day.

Musicians of different bands and of different genres come to Vienna, the capital city of Austria to play the music of love on that day. Restaurants in Austria offer romantic valentine dinner arrangements on the day. These restaurants get decorated to make them look slicker for lovers. They offer a delicious and exotic food menu on the day. Austrian food is almost a mixture of Bohemian, Hungarian and Austrian dishes, like goulash, different kinds of veal and beef and sweet dessert. This helps the lovers to enjoy Valentine's evening with soft romantic music and nice food. When a lot of people are using the traditional gift methods of Valentine's Day while Austrian youngsters use email, SMS, and E-cards to send their love messages. Austrian nightlife is rocking with umpteen number of beer pubs welcoming lovers on Valentine's Day. It is an exotic experience to celebrate Valentine's day in Austria.

Austria has some rather obscure courtship customs that may or may not be associated with Saint Valentine's Day. Nonetheless, it is customary for a young man to present his beloved with a bunch of flowers on February 14.

Bohemian, Hungarian and Austrian dishes, like goulash, different kinds of veal and beef and sweet dessert. This helps the lovers to enjoy Valentine's evening with soft romantic music and nice food. When a lot of people are using the traditional gift methods of Valentine's Day while Austrian youngsters use email, SMS, and E-cards to send their love messages. Austrian nightlife is rocking with umpteen number of beer pubs welcoming lovers on Valentine's Day. It is an exotic experience to celebrate Valentine's day in Austria.



United States

In the United States of America, there have been so many varieties of cards given over the course of the years. In the times of the Civil War, cards were flagged with rich colors

accompanied by patriotic political motifs. Early American valentine cards were especially lithographed and hand-colored, beautiful and very distinctive in design, they were produced with intricate lace paper and decorated with such ornaments as beads, seashells, cones, berries twigs and all manner of seeds. Cards were also available decorated with seaweed or moss, in addition to dried artificial flowers, all of which were attached to a string that was pulled and could then be suspended, thereby creating a three-dimensional picture. For the most part, many early American cards were imported from abroad, given the poor quality of American paper at the time which was not particularly suitable for embossing.

In the United States and Canada, Valentine's Day is an extremely popular festival. Here, the day is observed as a holiday. Originally held to honor St Valentine and express love to sweethearts, the theme of the day has come to be so widened that it has now become an occasion to express gratitude and love to not only sweethearts and spouses, but also to teachers, parents or any other close relation or acquaintance. The modern celebrations of the day see people complementing their dear ones with gifts that include popular items as cards, fresh flowers like rose, chocolates and candies jewelry and much more. Dinner and dance parties are specially organized all over the country to celebrate the occasion. Many couples hold private celebrations in homes or restaurants and gift flowers, a box of candy, or some other present to one another. Sending candies on Valentine's Day has been a very popular tradition and it still is.

In the US, children celebrate Valentine's Day with great enthusiasm. To keep their interest, many schools hold Valentine's Day programs where little students perform songs, dance, skits, and plays. Kids handcraft gifts and cards on this occasion and present them to their friends and teachers. In some schools, the children organize a classroom party and put all the valentines into a box they have decorated. In dos

cases, the celebration culminates with a teacher or child distributing the cards. Older students construct candy baskets and gifts, and place on them cards trimmed with hearts, cherubs winged children called cupids. They also organize dances and parties. A collective endeavor is made to make the day a special one.

Canada



Valentine's Day festival is celebrated with much enthusiasm in

Canada. Valentine's Day balls and parties are organized all over the country where people express love for their spouses and sweethearts and enjoy to the hilt. Roses, chocolates, candies, and cards are the most popular gifts for the romantic occasion.

As a tradition, children in Canada exchange Valentine's Day gifts with their friends. In several schools, classroom Valentine's Day Parties are organized where children put all the valentines in a decorated box. Later, a teacher or a child distributes the cards. Kids are encouraged to prepare handmade valentine as a school activity. Many children also gift fancy Valentine's Day cards to parents and teachers. Songs, skits, plays, and concerts are also organized by schools and societies to celebrate Valentine's Day. Students in senior school hold Valentine's Day dance parties to cherish the joyful festival, how fun.

Britain



The poets of Britain have probably written the majority of the best-loved romantic verses that are associated with Saint Valentine. In the different regions of the nation, they celebrate their own customs to honor this day, the sending of cards and gifts, flowers and chocolates is, for the most part, the standard procedure throughout the entire country. One custom that is uniform is the singing of special songs by children, who then receive gifts of candy, fruit or money. In

some areas, valentine buns are baked with caraway seeds, plums or raisins yum!.

In Britain, St Valentine's Day is celebrated with great fanfare. Like in many other countries, the common celebrations of the day with gifts like flowers, cards, chocolates and so many more special items. The traditions of the celebrations of Valentine's Day differ in different regions of the country but one uniform custom is the singing of special songs by children. All over Britain, many children sing special songs related to the occasion and are rewarded with gifts like candy, fruit, and money. This is believed to be a way of celebrating agrarian productivity. This connection with fertility and similar date of celebration are probably the reasons why many writers link the festival of Lupercalia with Valentine's Day.

Composing a great variety of verses is another very well-known Valentine's Day custom of Britain. About a month earlier to Valentine's Day, leading tabloids and reputed magazines publish sonnets and verses to commemorate this occasion. The tradition owes its origin to the British poets who have written some of the best love poems and the majority of the romantic verses associated with Saint Valentine.



Denmark



The Danish valentine card is known as a "lover's card." Older versions of this greeting came in the form of transparency which, when held up to the light, depicted the image of a lover handing his beloved a gift and still you can find it. One custom in Denmark is for people to send pressed white flowers called Snowdrops to their friends. Danish men may also send a form of Valentine known as a gaekkebrev (or "joking letter") leave it up to you guys right?. The sender of this gaekkebrev pens a rhyme but does not sign his name. Instead, he signs the message with dots...one dot for each letter in his name. If the lady who receives the card guesses the name of the sender, then she is rewarded with an Easter Egg later in the year, pretty playful I love it.

In Denmark, February 14 is mainly a day for the young. It's a time for romance and exchanging of love tokens. Here, the festival is celebrated in a very conventional manner. Young people send to their beloveds a valentine's card on this occasion. The Danish valentine card is famously known as a "lover's card". Earlier, these came in the form of transparent cards which, when kept before light, reflected the picture of a lover handing over a wonderful present to his beloved. Nowadays, many newer varieties of lover's cards have come up and every year before Valentine's Day card shops all across the country are seen to be stacked up with colorful and musical lover's cards containing lovely Valentine messages. Another Danish Valentine's Day custom is to send pressed white flowers called Snowdrops to friends. The season of love is also a time for fun what with many Danish men sending to their ladylove a form of Valentine known as a gaekkebrev (or "joking letter"). This gaekkebrev is a type of romantic letter that contains a rhyme penned by the sender himself. The fun part of this custom is that the letter doesn't have the name of the sender. Instead, the lover signs the message with dots...one dot for each letter in his name. If the lady whom he sends the gaekkebrev correctly guesses his name, he rewards her with an Easter egg during Eastertide.

France



In France, a custom known as “drawing for” once occurred. Unmarried individuals, both young and not so young, would go into houses facing each other and begin calling out across from one window to another, pairing-off with the chosen partner. If the young man failed to be particularly enthralled with his valentine, he would desert her. As a result, a

bonfire would be lit later where the ladies could burn images of the ungrateful sweetheart and verbally abuse him in a loud tone as the effigy burned. This ritual was eventually abandoned since it left much room for nastiness, ridicule or even outright malice and the French government finally handed-down a decree officially banning the custom. Elegant French greetings cards known as cartes d'amities, which contained tender messages, were given not totally as a Valentine but chiefly as a result of a fashion which was popular in England at the time.

Valentine's Day Festival is celebrated with joy and enthusiasm in France. People take the opportunity of the occasion and express love to people close to them. Just as in several other countries people in France exchange Valentine's Day greetings through cards, fresh flowers, and gifts of love.

History of Valentine's Day in France

History of Valentine's Day Festival has a strong association with France. It is said that during the Middle Ages, there was a popular belief in France and England that birds began to mate halfway through the second month of the year. For this reason, lovers saw the day special and considered it auspicious to exchange love letters and tokens of love on Valentine's Day. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, French and English poets and litterateurs too stressed on this idea and created a romantic image of the day in the minds of the people.

Valentine's Day Cards too are said to have originated in France. A young Frenchman, Charles, Duke of Orleans is said to

have written the first written Valentine's Day Cards. The Duke who was captured at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415 is said to have written a poem or 'Valentine' to his wife while imprisonment in the Tower of London.

Valentine's Day Custom in France

People in France once followed a peculiar Valentine's Day custom called "drawing for". Unmarried young and old people would go into houses facing each other and begin calling out across from one window to another and pair off with their chosen partner. If the young man failed to be particularly enthralled with his valentine, he would desert her. A bonfire would be lit later where ladies would burn images of their ungrateful lovers and hurl abuses at them. The ritual was eventually abandoned as it left much room for nastiness and ridicule. French government handed down a decree and officially banned the custom.

There was also a custom in France to exchange elegant cards containing tender messages called *cartes d'amities*. These were not essentially Valentine and resulted chiefly due to a trend popular in England.

Germany



In Germany, it has become customary for the young man of a courting couple to present his beloved with flowers on February 14. Valentine gifts in Germany are usually in the shape of love tokens, complete with endearing messages. However, these are not distributed solely on Valentine's Day,

but on any occasion. Even early German baptismal certificates or marriage certificates were considered at one time to have been valentines but were more likely simply decorative and pictorial documents that contained lovely verses.

The German celebration of Valentine's Day is nearly the same as elsewhere in the world. For Germans, the festival is a celebration of love and a time to spend with their sweethearts. In Germany, it is customary for a young man to present his beloved with flowers on February 14. Valentine gifts in Germany are usually in the shape of love tokens, complete with lovely messages. But these are not entirely restricted to Valentine's Day celebrations and can be gifted on any occasion of a joyous nature.

Italy



In Italy, Valentine's Day was once celebrated as a Spring Festival, held in the open air, where young people would gather in tree arbors or ornamental gardens to listen to music and the reading of poetry. However, over the course of the years, this custom steadily ceased and has not now been celebrated for centuries. In Turin, it was formerly the custom

for betrothed couples to announce their engagements on February 14. For several days ahead of time, the stores would be decorated and filled with all manner of bonbons.

Romantic Festival of Valentine's Day is celebrated with enthusiasm in the beautiful country of Italy. Lovers take the opportunity of the day to express love and affection for their beloved. Loads of Valentine's Day gifts are exchanged and everyone enjoys the day to the hilt.

History of Valentine's Day in Italy

Valentine's Day was initially celebrated as a Spring Festival in Italy. A celebration of the day was held in the open air. Young people would gather in tree arbors or ornamental gardens and enjoy listening to music and reading of poetry. Later they would stroll off with their Valentine into the gardens. The custom steadily ceased over the course of years and has not been celebrated for centuries.

Early Valentine's Day Tradition in Italy

In the Italian City of Turin, betrothed couples used to announce their engagement on Valentine's Day. Several days ahead of February 14, stores were decorated and loaded with a huge variety of bon-bon. Some even sold china baskets and cups filled with delectable Valentine's Day candies and tied with a ribbon. These were to be presented as gifts to Valentine.

Another interesting Valentine's Day tradition followed in Italy and Britain made unmarried girls wake up before sunrise.

People strongly believed that the first man an unmarried girl sees on Valentine's Day, or someone who looks like him would marry her within a year. Girls, therefore, used to wake up early on Valentine's Day and stand by their window to watch a man pass.

Valentine's Day Celebration in Italy

People of Italy see Valentine's Day as a holiday imported from the US, just like Halloween and Mother's Day. For the love and lovers country of Italy, the major day for the celebration of love is **il giorno della festa degli innamorati**. As lovers' exclusively celebrate this day family members and friends do not exchange gifts.

In recent times, however, lovers in Italy celebrate Valentine's Day by expressing their love to sweethearts. Couples usually go out for dinners at pizzeria or ristorante. Just as in several other countries, the festival has been commercialized to a great extent. There is a strong tradition to exchange gifts like a rose, perfume, chocolates, and diamonds depending on the age and taste of the person. Another popular Valentine's Day gift in Italy is Baci Perugina – small, chocolate-covered hazelnut containing a small slip of paper with a romantic poetic quote in four languages.

In Italy, Valentine's Day was once celebrated as a Spring Festival. It used to be held in the open air, where young people would gather in brightly decorated gardens to listen to music and the reading of poetry. This custom, however, steadily ceased with the passage of time and has been out of practice for a long long time. In modern-day Italy, Valentine's Day is mainly seen as a holiday imported from the US, just like Halloween, Father's Day or Mother's Day. The day

is celebrated mainly by the young people who take this opportunity to profess love to their sweethearts the American way with gifts like perfume, chocolates, flowers, cards or jewelry. The day is seen here earmarked exclusively for lovers, and hence, family members and friends do not exchange gifts. Couples usually go out for dinners at pizzeria or ristorante which ends with lovers' giving gifts to each other. A popular Valentine's Day gift in Italy is Baci Perugina – a small, chocolate-covered hazelnut containing a small slip of paper with a romantic poetic quote in four languages.

Japan



In Japan, Valentine's Day is celebrated on two different dates...February 14 and March 14. On the first date, the female gives a gift to the male and on the second date...known as White Day and supposedly introduced by a marshmallow company in the 1960s...the male has to return the gift he received on February 14. Thus, strictly speaking, a Japanese female has the luxury

of actually choosing her own gift. Chocolate is the most popular gift in Japan. However, since most Japanese females believe that store-bought chocolate is not a gift of true love, they tend to make connections with their own hands.

In Japan, Valentine's Day is observed on February 14 but the celebration of love truly ends on March 14, known as the "White Day". On the first date, women present chocolates or gifts to the men they love to express their feelings for them. Gifting chocolates is a typical way to celebrate Valentine's day in Japan for chocolate is the most popular gift in the country. Hence, it is a must for Japanese Valentine's Day celebrations. Gift shops all over Japan pile their shelves with chocolate a month before Valentine's Day. Most Japanese females believe, however, that store-bought chocolate is not a gift of true love. Hence, they tend to make the confection all by themselves.

But it's also common for women to give chocolates to any man close to them, such as co-workers and male friends, whom they don't actually love. This kind of chocolate gift is called Giri-choco which means chocolates given because of obligations. Men who receive chocolates or gifts on Valentine's day are supposed to return the favor to the women on March 14, exactly a month after Valentine's Day. Also known as "White Day", this is the time when men are to give back a gift to the women who gave them gifts just a month before. The tradition is believed to have been introduced by a marshmallow company in the 1960s.

South Korea



The traditional gift of candy takes place in Korea on February 14, but only from females to males. There is another special day for males to give gifts to females and this is celebrated on March 14. Very similar to the custom in Japan, March 14 in Korea is known as "White Day." On "White Day," many young men confess their love for the first time to their sweethearts. For those young people who have no particular romantic partners, the Koreans have set aside yet another date...April 14, also known as "Black Day." On that date, such individuals get together and partake of Jajang noodles, which are black in color, hence the name of the day.

Valentine's Day celebrations in Korea is quite akin to the Japanese observance of the festival. As in Japan, Korea witnesses gifting of chocolates and candies from females to males. The favor is returned the same way by the men on March 14, which is referred to as "White Day" similar to the custom in Japan. But "White Day" here is Valentine's day in its own right as many young men confess their love for the first time to their sweethearts on this occasion.

And then there is April 14, also known as "Black Day", which has been specially set aside for those young people who have no particular romantic partners. The curious name of the day probably comes from the fact that on this date, individuals who are not in any relationship get together and partake of Jajang noodles, which are black in color.

Scotland



In Scotland, Valentine's Day is celebrated with a festival. At this festival, there is an equal number of unmarried males and females, each of whom writes their name (or a made-up name) on a piece of paper which is then folded and placed into a hat...one hat for the ladies and one for the men. The females then draw a name from the hat containing the men's names and vice versa. Of course, it is highly likely that the two drawn

names will not match, in which event, it is usually expected that the male partner with the female who selected his name. This rite having been completed, the company split up into couples and gifts are given to the ladies. The females would then pin the name of their partner over their hearts or on their sleeves. A dance often follows and, at the end of the festival, it is not unusual for marriages to take place. According to another Scottish custom, the first young man or woman encountered by chance on the street or elsewhere will become that individual's valentine. Valentine's Day gifts in Scotland are frequently given by both parties in the form of a love-token or true-love-knot.

Spain



In Spain, it is customary for courting couples to exchange gifts on Valentine's Day and for husbands to send their wives bouquets of roses.

Although not a traditional Spanish holiday, St. Valentine's Day in Spain is celebrated, like in most of the countries, with all kinds of sweet heart-shaped gifts, bouquets of flowers, cards and romantic dinners at fancy restaurants. Shop

windows are decorated with hearts in all shades of red and pink, bars and cafes are getting creative with Valentine-themed offerings, and many events are organized throughout the country. However, what's really interesting about St. Valentine's Day in Spain is that certain regions have their own versions of the holiday, usually celebrated with great fanfare and peculiar traditions.

1. For people from Valencia, the most romantic day of the year is the 9th of October, when they celebrate both the Day of the Valencian Community as well as the Day of Saint Dionysius (Sant Dionís), locally known as the patron saint of lovers. This is a public holiday marked by many festivities and colorful costume parades held in the main plaza of every town and village. A distinctive tradition on the Day of Saint Dionysius is the custom of offering ladies a Mocadora (Mocaorà) as a sign of love and appreciation. This traditional gift consists of a nice package of marzipan figurines handcrafted by local confectioners and then wrapped up in an elegant piece of silk.

2. In Barcelona and the whole Catalonia, couples rejoice their love on April 23, when the nation celebrates St. George's Day or La Diada de Sant Jordi – Catalonia's national day. This public holiday is also known as El Dia de la Rosa (The Day of the Rose) or El Dia del Llibre (The Day of the Book) and the main event is the exchange of gifts, usually, roses and books, hence the Catalan saying *"A rose for love and a book forever"*. As expected, during this time of year, a myriad of stalls selling roses and books are set up all over the region, public squares are brought to life by all sorts of performers and most of the bookstores and cafes organize readings. Moreover, this is the day when Barcelona's Palau de la Generalitat opens its doors to the public.

3. Convinced that this is a holiday invented to boost consumerism, Spaniards often refer to Valentine's Day as the Día de El Corte Inglés (Day of Corte Inglés), their main

department store.

La Diada de Sant Jordi

But Spain actually has another 'lovers day' that I think has a far better case for celebration. St. George's Day, the same day that is celebrated not nearly enough in England even though it is our patron saint too. But as I said, Spain loves a saint, and they do it properly here.

Many countries have Saint George as their patron saint and most celebrate it on April 23rd (the accepted date of Saint George's death in 303 AD).

Though Saint George was real and did some pretty gallant stuff, the story of him slaying the dragon and saving the princess is of course legend. But that still makes St. George's Day far more romantic. La Diada de Sant Jordi

In Catalonia, it is called **La Diada de Sant Jordi**, also known as **El Dia de Rosa** (*The Day of the Rose*) or **El Dia del Llibre** (*The Day of the Book*) and is a public holiday. The main event is the exchange of gifts between loved ones. Roses have been associated with this day since medieval times but more recently the giving of books is the custom. This came about in the 20th century as some bright spark of a bookseller realized that Josep Pla (1897-1981), Miguel Cervantes (1547-1616) and William Shakespeare (1564-1616), all great proponents of the written word had all died on the same day, April 23rd. Again, far more valid a celebration in my opinion.

So, please do celebrate Valentine's Day if you so wish. I wouldn't want to be the reason for any break-ups. But let's make sure we celebrate St. George's Day too. In my eyes a far more valid day for the celebration of love and literature. And

it will make up for the poor job they did of it in England when I was growing up.

Taiwan



Valentine's Day is celebrated in Taiwan on February 14, but there is also a special Valentine's Day on July 7 of the lunar calendar, based on an ancient Chinese folktale. Both dates are equally as important. Many men purchase expensive bouquets of roses and other flowers for their sweethearts on these days. According to Taiwan tradition, the color and number of the

roses hold much significance. For example, one red rose means "an only love," eleven roses means "a favorite," ninety-nine roses means "forever," and one hundred eight roses means "marry me."

Taiwan celebrates the idea of love three times a year by including the Valentine's Day of February 14th and the Japanese White Day in addition to the traditional seventh day of the seventh month when singletons go to temples to burn incense and pray to meet a lovely significant other. On the February 14th Valentine's Day, Taipei 101 lights up a heart and malls everywhere are dotted with sales for your sweetie (Really, the US should be so inclusive— we could have tried stimulating the economy with Lunar New Year withdrawals to give each other money in red envelopes). Taiwan has also adopted White Day from Japan.

The traditional 7-7 day is the once-a-year meeting of the weaving maid and the cowherd across a bridge of magpies. It always rains on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month, since the couple is said to be crying at their reunion. This past summer I got to visit a temple to observe the dances and sniff the incense celebrating the 7-7 day.

In spite of all these modern celebrations of love, traditional Chinese love stories as far as my limited knowledge allows are rather grim. The love stories all end unhappily. An emperor falls for a mistress-spy from one of his conquered kingdoms, who costs him the empire. A fairy falls for a human and ends up forced to return to heaven alone. The one happy story was based on a real-life artist-poet who infiltrated a household so he could woo one of the daughters and make her his wife (in real life she was his ninth wife.) It is said that the abundance of sad stories is because people there love to cry at a good tragedy.

So people in Taiwan have three days to either feel bitter, depressed, and lonely, or nervous, warm and fuzzy.

Whether you're in a cozy couple or single and free, I hope you had a lovely Valentine's Day with lots of love.

South Africa



Valentine's Day in South Africa is celebrated with great passion and enthusiasm. The day is celebrated on 14th February every year. The craze and verve for the festival are like any other festival in South Africa. The geographical location of the country has made it one of the most romantic destinations. Thousands of tourists get attracted to the beauty of the place when it comes to celebrating the festival of love. A large number of tourists throng the beaches and other romantic places in South Africa to celebrate Valentine's day.

Valentine's Tradition in South Africa

The most commonly observed tradition includes going out on a romantic date with one's Valentine. Young couples make it traditional to celebrate the day at a very romantic place. Also, young girls celebrate the occasion by following an old-age Roman festival of '**Lupercalia**'. According to this traditional festival, young girls pin their lover's name on their sleeves. In some places, men also follow this custom.

Valentine Celebrations in South Africa

Valentine's Day celebrations begin well in advance in South Africa. Shops and marketplaces are beautifully adorned with fragrant flowers, love symbols like cupid, love birds, hearts and in traditional African style decorations. Week-long parties and celebrations take place in various clubs and hotels. These activities highlight the tradition and South African culture. People totally indulge themselves in African culture and art to celebrate the occasion of Valentine. Be it an old man of 60 or a young lass of 16, the joy of celebrating

love is the same in everybody.

Different events take place in various parts of South Africa. All the discotheques, pubs and restaurants are completely booked. South Africans, as well as tourists, attend huge balls where they match their dancing steps and flow in the Valentine mood with different alcoholic beverages. People of South Africa like to visit wildlife parks and sanctuaries with their friends and families. Many other events like river rafting, mountaineering amidst the exotic islands of Cape Town and Johannesburg are the main attraction of the day. Luxurious resorts give the most enthralling view and rated as one of the best places to spend a romantic evening. Apart from this, a very popular small coastal village Hermanus is just the place to be. Grand festivities are marked in the city of Durban, where innumerable tourists flock in large numbers.

India



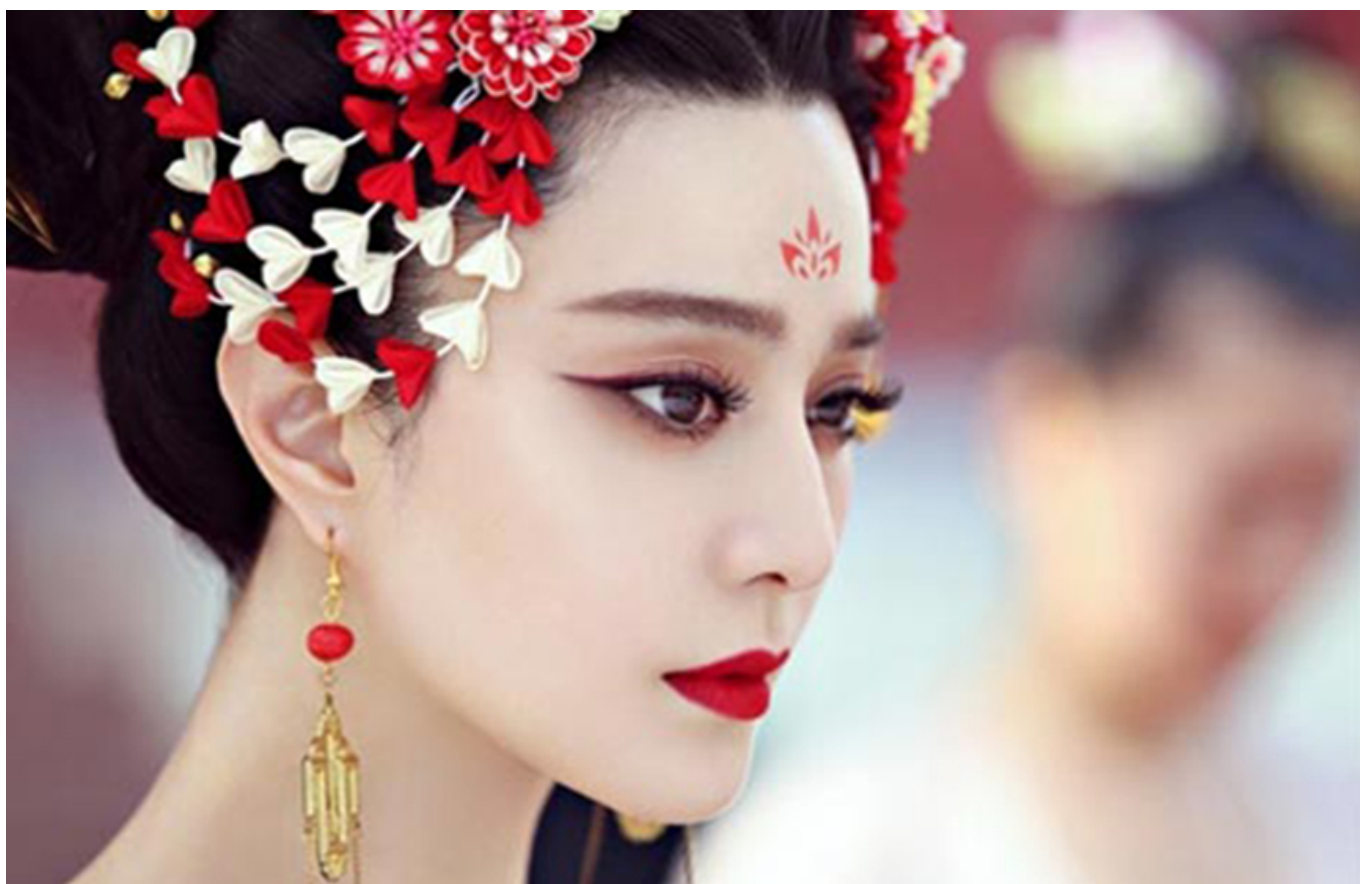
Valentine's Day celebration is a recent phenomenon in India but has caught the fancy of people to a great extent. Though some see it as a western import and hesitate to celebrate, there exists a large and growing number of those who love the feeling behind the beautiful and romantic festival. Especially to the Indian youth February 14 signifies love – a day when people express their affection for others. Just like several other countries, people in India too celebrate Valentine's Day

by exchanging cards and gifts.

The euphoria of Valentine's Day festival can be experienced weeks before the festival. Television, radio and print media start creating a hype about the festival by covering all facets of it. Gift marketers and card companies launch a rigorous campaign to lure youngsters. Card and gift shops are interestingly decorated with symbols of Valentine's Day including roses, cupid, and heart-shaped balloons. Shopping malls in metropolitan cities organize fun-filled competitions and distribute discount coupons to lure consumers.

On February 14, Valentine's Day restaurants, discos, Cineplex, pubs and pizza parlors see a particularly busy time as couples celebrate the day in togetherness. Many boys and girls even propose to their sweetheart on this romantic day. People also express love to their friends, teachers, siblings, and parents. Popular Valentine's Day gifts exchanged in India include chocolates, fresh flowers, cards, soft toys, and candies. These are also clubbed with several other gifts to pamper sweethearts.

China



People in China to have a day devoted to love but it is quite different from Valentine's Day festival as seen in other parts of the world. Chinese Valentine's Day falls on the 7th day of the 7th lunar month in the Chinese Calendar. Hence the day is also called as **'Festival of the Double Sevens'** or **Qi Xi – 'The Night of Sevens'**. The other popular name for the Chinese

Valentine's Day is 'Seven Sister's Festival' and 'Daughter's Festival'.

The legend behind Chinese Valentine's Day

There is a very interesting legend behind the festival of Valentine's Day in China. The story goes that there once lived an orphaned poor boy called **Niu Lang** with his brother and sister-in-law. The handsome boy owned an old ox that he worked on the field every day. The ox is said to be an immortal from the Paradise who was punished for mistakes in heaven and send on earth as an ox. The ox liked the cowherd and one day he said to Niu Lang, "You are a nice person. If you want to get married, go to the river and your wish will come true."

When the Cowherd went to the stream he saw all the seven beautiful daughters of the Emperor who had come down from Heaven to take a bath. Niu Lang was captivated by the beauty of the youngest daughter **Zhi Nu** and secretly took away her fairy clothes. Without her fairy clothes, the youngest daughter could not fly back to heaven along with her sisters. The cowherd asked the fairy that he would return her clothes if she promised to marry him. The girl coyly agreed to marry the cowherd. They lived happily married for several years and had two children.

One day, the ox felt that his last day was near. He told the cowherd that he should keep his hide for the urgent situation after he dies. Meanwhile, the Emperor began to miss his seventh daughter. He sent Zhi Nu's grandmother to bring her back from the earth. The grandmother succeeded in bringing Zhi

Nu back to heaven. While the 7th Princess was being taken away to heaven, the cowboy wore the ox hide and carried his two children in the two bamboo baskets with his wife's old fairy clothes and chased his wife in the sky. To keep the lovers separated forever the grandmother created a Milky Way between them. The seventh princess has moved to the star **Vega** in the Lyra (Harp) constellation while the cowherd with his two children stayed in the star **Altair** (Flying one) in the Aquila (Eagle) constellation. The star Vega is therefore popularly known by the name of the **Weaving Maid Star** whereas the star Altair as the **Cowherd Star** in China. The mother took pity and two were allowed to meet only once a year on the 7th day of the 7th lunar month. It is believed that on this specific day magpies form a bridge with their wings for Zhi Nu to cross to meet her husband.

Celebrations of Chinese Valentine's Day

The celebrations of Chinese Valentine's Day or Qi Qiao Jie – the seventh eve is quite different from usual Valentine's Day celebration we see in rest of the world. There are specific and colorful rituals for the day besides the usual exchange of flowers, cards, and chocolates as tokens of love between lovers.

Following the tradition, lovers visit the **Temple of Matchmaker** on the Chinese Valentine's Day and pray for their love and happiness and their possible marriage. Singles too visit the temple on the day and ask for their luck in love.

Chinese Valentine Day is also known as the Daughter's Festival. Chinese girls always wished to learn a good

handcrafting skill like the weaving maid. On the night of the Chinese Valentine's Day, unmarried girls offer prayers to the Weaving Maid star and seek blessings to become smarter. When the star Vega is high up in the sky, girls perform a test by putting a needle on the water surface. If the needle doesn't sink, it's a sign of a girl's maturity and smartness indicating she is eligible to find a husband. The girl who passes the test may ask for any one wish. It is also traditional for young girls in China to demonstrate their domestic arts, especially melon carving, on this day. Chinese Valentine's Day is therefore also known as **The Festival to Plead for Skills, The Seventh Sister's Birthday and The Night of Skills.**

In some provinces of China, people decorate the ox's horn by flowers on the Chinese Valentine Day in a belief that the ritual will save them from catastrophe. Following the age-old tradition women also wash hair to make them look fresh and shining. Children wash their face the next morning using the overnight water for a more natural and beautiful look.

Stargazers celebrate the festival by looking up at star Vega on the east of the Milky Way which represents Zhi Nu, and at the constellation Aquila, on the west side of the Milky Way, where Niu Lang waits for his lover to join him.

Israel



Tu B'Av, the Jewish Day of Love

Tu B'Av, the 15th Day of Av, is both an ancient and modern holiday. Originally a post-biblical day of joy, it served as a matchmaking day for unmarried women in the Second Temple period (before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E.). Tu B'Av was

almost unnoticed in the Jewish calendar for many centuries but it has been rejuvenated in recent decades, especially in the modern state of Israel. In its modern incarnation, it is gradually becoming a Hebrew-Jewish Day of Love, slightly resembling Valentine's Day in English-speaking countries.

There is no way to know exactly how early Tu B'Av began. The first mention of this date is in the Mishnah (compiled and edited in the end of the second century), where Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel is quoted saying, "There were no better (i.e. happier) days for the people of Israel than the Fifteenth of Av and Yom Kippur since on these days the daughters of Israel/Jerusalem go out dressed in white and dance in the vineyards. What were they saying: Young man, consider whom you choose (to be your wife)?"

The Gemara (the later, interpretive layer of the Talmud) attempts to find the origin of this date as a special joyous day and offers several explanations. One of them is that on this day the Biblical "tribes of Israel were permitted to mingle with each other," namely: to marry women from other tribes (Talmud, Ta'anit 30b). This explanation is somewhat surprising, since nowhere in the Bible is there a prohibition on "intermarriage" among the 12 tribes of Israel. This Talmudic source probably is alluding to a story in the book of Judges (chapter 21): After a civil war between the tribe of Benjamin and other Israelite tribes, the tribes vowed not to intermarry with men of the tribe of Benjamin.

It should be noted that Tu B'Av, like several Jewish holidays (Passover, Sukkot, Tu B'shvat) begins on the night between the 14th and 15th day of the Hebrew month since this is the night of a full moon in our lunar calendar. Linking the night of a full moon with romance, love, and fertility is not uncommon in ancient cultures.

I Love You in Different Languages

Afrikaans:

Ek is lief vir jou

Ek het jou lief

Albanian:

Te dua

Amharic:

Afekrishalehou

Arabic :

Ana Behibak (to a male)

Ana Behibek (to a female)

Basc :

Nere Maitea

Bavarian :

I mog di narrisch gern

Bengali :

Ami tomake bhalobashi

Berber :

Lakh tirikh

Bicol :

Namumutan ta ka

Bulgarian :

Obicham te

Cambodian :

kh_nhaum soro_lahn nhee_ah

Bon sro lanh oon

Cantonese :

Ngo oi ney

Catalan :

T'estim (mallorcan)

T'estime (valencian)

T'estimo (catalonian)

T'estim molt (I love you a lot)

Chinese :

Wo ie ni (Manderin)

Croatian :

Volim te (most common), or

Ja te volim (less common)

Czech :

miluji te

Danish :

Jeg elsker dig

Dutch :

Ik hou van jou

Estonian :

Mina armastan sind

Esperanto :

Mi amas vin

Persian (Farsi):

Tora dust midaram

Flemish :

Ik zie oe geerne

Finnish :

Mina" rakastan sinua

French :

Je t'aime

Friesian :

Ik bin fereale op dy

Ik ha^ld fan dy (Most commonly used phrase)

Gaelic :

Ta gra agam ort

German :

Ich liebe Dich

I mog Di ganz arg! (Suebian: South German dialekt.)

Greek :

S' ayapo

Gujarati:

Tane Prem Karoo Choo

Hausa :

Ina sonki

Hebrew :

aNEE oHEIVET oTKHA (female to male)

aNEE oHEIV otAKH (male to female)

Ani ohev at (man to woman)

Ani ohevet atah (woman to man)

Hindi:

Mein Tumse Pyar Karta Hoon (man to woman)

Mein Tumse Pyar Karti Hoon (woman to man)

Hokkien :

Wa ai lu

Hopi :

Nu' umi unangwa'ta

Hungarian :

Szeretlek te'ged

Icelandic :

?g elska þig

Indonesian :

Saya cinta padamu

Saya Cinta Kamu

Aku tjinta padamu

Saja kasih saudara

Italian :

Ti amo

Irish :

taim i' ngra leat

Japanese :

Kimi o ai shiteru

Sukiyo

Kannada:

Naanu ninnanu preethisuthene

Naanu ninnanu mohisuthene

Kazakh :

Men seny jaksy kuremyn

Kiswahili :

Nakupenda

Korean :

Tangsinul sarang ha yo

Kurdish :

Ez te hezdikhem

Latin :

Te amo

Vos amo

Lao :

Khoi huk chau

Latvian :

Es Tev milu

Lingala :

Nalingi yo

Lithuanian:

Ash miliu tave

Luo :

Aheri

Madrid lingo:

Me molas, tronca

Malay/Indonesian:

Saya cintakan awak(awak=kamu=you)

Aku sayang engkau (engkau=kamu=you)

Malay :

Saya cintamu

Saya sayangmu

Malayalam:

Ngan ninne snaehikkunnu

Njyaan ninne' preetikyunnu

Njyaan ninne' mohikyunnu

Marathi:

Mi tuzya var prem karato

Me tujhashi prem karto (male to female)

Me tujhashi prem karte (female to male)

Maltese:

Inhobbok

Mandarin :

Wo ai ni

Mohawk :

Konoronhkwa

Navajo :

Ayor anosh'ni

Ndebele :

Niyakutanda

Norwegian :

Jeg elsker deg (Bokmaal)

Eg elsker deg (Nynorsk)

Pakistani :

Mujhe tumse muhabbat hai

Persian :

Tora dost daram

Pilipino :

Mahal Kita

Iniibig Kita

Polish :

Ja Cie Kocham or Kocham Cie (Pronounced Yacha kocham)

Portuguese :

Eu te amo

Punjabi :

Main tainu pyar karna (male to female)

Mai taunu pyar kardi aan (female to male)

Romanian :

Te iu besc

Russian :

Ya lyublyu tebya

Ya vas lyublyu

Scot Gaelic :

Tha gra\dh agam ort

Serbian :

Volim te (most common), or

Ja te volim" (less common)

Shona :

Ndinokuda

Sioux :

Techihhila

Slovak :

Lubim ta

Slovene:

Ljubim te

Spanish :

Te amo

Swahili :

Nakupenda

Swedish :

Jag a"lskar dig

Swiss-German:

Ch'ha di ga"rn

Tagalog :

Mahal kita

Taiwanese :

Gwa ai lee

Tamil:

Naan Unnai Kadhalikiren

Telugu:

Ninnu premistunnamu

Neenu ninnu pra'mistu'nnanu

Nenu ninnu premistunnamu

Thai :

Phom Rak Khun

Ch'an Rak Khun

Tunisian :

Ha eh bak

Turkish :

Seni seviyorum!

Urdu :

Mujhe tumse muhabbat hai

Vietnamese :

Anh ye^u em (man to woman)

Em ye^u anh (woman to man)

Toi yeu em

Vlaams :

Ik hou van jou

Welsh :

‘Rwy’n dy garu di.

Yr wyf i yn dy garu di (chwi)

Yiddish :

Ikh hob dikh lib

Zazi :

Ezhele hezdege (sp?)

Zuni :

Tom ho’ ichema

**Jamie Oliver & Michelle Phan's
Romantic Meal | Ricotta Fritters**

Vegan Valentine's Day Meal!

<https://youtu.be/yBTlZ5Q9BzI>



Hugs and Kisses with Love Balloon &


Chocolates



This Valentine's Day, delight your love with a gift that will tickle all the senses. A beautiful bouquet of bright white chrysanthemums, precious pink carnations, and romantic red roses is gathered in a radiant red vase and paired with a sweet love balloon and chocolates



Forever beloved

Forever beloved. Forever in your heart. Forever close to you. That is what this beautiful rose arrangement symbolizes. A shared life. Or a shared sacred moment. All will be dignified beautifully with this loving gift of roses in a classic urn. 16 red roses are arranged with beautiful eucalyptus and a lovely ming vase. Say it with flowers, when no words will speak the feelings in your heart. 







Ayurveda and Fall part 1

AYURVEDA and Fall



On week 326 let's take a look at what the ancient system of Ayurveda is about and what modalities are available to us to enter fall in an aware synergy with this season so we can live in harmony and wellness with mother earth and attune our

bodies to be in harmony with it. When we live conscious of mind, body, and spirit we are whole and we can function from well-sustained energy that supports us in every aspect of our lives.

You may think, what this has to do with beauty? well is very simple a well-balanced health and a calm nervous system, assist to beauty from the inside out in all levels, when we feel good we radiate an inner glow through our eyes and smile and that is really beautiful.

Let's take a tour of our body and what goes on in fall, so with this information, we can be aware of how we work with the earth's rhythms in the different seasons and where we can improve and what is better for us to refrain from, keeping in mind that takes persistence and dedication from our part it just doesn't happen overnight be gentle with your self, stressing over it, is not what the goal is, that will only add tearing down health, just take your time and have fun.

Sher with family and friends so they can also benefit from it, and thank you from all of us we appreciate the loyalty and love that you send to us.

Our Muscles & Colon

This video can truly explain why we have pains, dryness and so much more and how easy is to correct it

Fall as you may know already is the opposite of spring season, by late September as our reduced blood flow leaves our muscles it induces fatigue. In fall the days start to grow darker earlier, so a comfortable evening curled up on the couch or our beds with a favorite movie or a book seem to be the thing to do hmmm I love the idea and for me that includes my sweet puppies. Our smooth muscle tissue and that includes the tissue of our colon, it starts to become sluggish when the temperature and pulse rate drop. It is a fact that the colon, is also sensitive to stress, and holds the wear and tear of the autumn season.

Indigestion & Electrolytes

It is a process called cold diuresis, the name Diuresis refers to the physiological process by which urine production in the kidneys is increased as part of the body's homeostatic way to maintain our fluid balance. This action causes fluid loss in Autumn. Cold diuresis is a response to vasoconstriction from our bodies. As our blood vessels constrict, it increases blood pressure is kind like squeezing the air inside a balloon. Our kidneys then proceed to release the extra pressure by removing fluids from circulation and emptying them into the urine and that is their job to balance the system. A summer of hot sweating followed by cold diuresis may leave you dehydrated and electrolyte deficient this is good to keep in mind. So it is important to keep in mind to add foods that can support electrolyte, juicy and salty taste encourages water retention for dry Vata. Vata types should avoid dry foods in the fall altogether so their system can function optimally.

Cold Feet & Warm Socks



Some people get cold feet even when wearing extra warm socks to warm their feet. Too much of tight clothing like socks can't

coax blood out of hibernation once it moves to the core. The body at this point may simply lack strength to maintain core temperature and warm our feet. A sweater to heat the core does a better job than an extra pair of socks to cure cold feet specially tight ones. Lifestyle changes, such as warm clothes and indoor heating, can convince the body it has heat to spare. Additionally, daily oil massage in the morning before bath coats the skin and prevents evaporation. As in summer sweat, evaporation causes significant heat loss. Oil massage thus helps retain heat by creating a protective barrier, let's be aware of the kinds of oil that can help with this process. Once the pathological cold has penetrated our system, hot baths may be the only way to restore circulation. A pinch of turmeric keeps circulation strong. Sour lemons in morning tea convince sweat glands and stomach glands to stay juicy, Ginger lemon tea is a great aid here.

Fall is a time of transition. It is evident everywhere around us. Trees and shrubs are quietly undressing in preparation for the winter in their beautiful rhythm of the seasons. There is a subtle browning of the earth she goes within. Temperatures, which, just a few weeks ago were raging with the intense heat of summer, are beginning to hint at the telltale crispness of autumn. And there is the wind: slowly gathering strength, carrying the tides of winter on its breath to its role in nature. Fall harbors a certain emptiness that can leave us feeling exposed and a little raw, but it is also filled with possibility—a time when we, too, can strip down to a quiet essence of being and savor the simplicity of life and heart connection. The fall brings with it a predominance of air element and prana (the vital breath, the subtle essence of life) is abundant in the atmosphere at this time. Autumn is dry, it can be rough, windy, erratic, cool, subtle, and clear. These are all qualities shared by Vata dosha, and because like increases like, autumn is considered a Vata season. This same principle illustrates why taking a few simple steps to balance Vata dosha this fall can be tremendously beneficial to be in balance

Emotions, the Mind, Inspiration time



**"Life should be a
continuous source
of inspiration."**

-Paramhansa Yogananda

The fall is a time for inspiration and to work on new ideas. The movement of blood from the extremities back to the core increases blood flow to the mind a very interesting process of the intelligence of our body. The opportunity to reflect on the last few months could stir up emotions as well. The Wind, sudden temperature shifts, and the school season also provoke

higher stress levels this time of year. According to Ayurveda, keeping the nervous system stable through fall is our number one tool for maintaining strong immunity and staying healthy. Ashwagandha is Ayurveda's most important herb for Vata-type anxiety and Chywanprash helps build immunity.

Routine & Flexibility

When we wear oneself ragged in the Fall social calendar it can result in a compromised immunity for flu season. Alternatively, relaxation and downtime free up the energy to help the body prepare for winter. Skipping meals, staying up late, and irregular mealtimes, toxic process food that had never seen sun or soil, create stress and deficiency. Here is a great contributor to check, Joyful Belly offers a nurturing fall program called Restoring Youth and Vitality to prepare the body for winter.

Ayurveda is an ancient science based on elemental principles that pertain to life on earth and the connection to it with body, mind, and soul is no separation here. Ayurveda recognizes the elements of ether, air, fire, water, and earth as the building blocks of the natural world. According to Ayurveda, these five elements pair-up in three combinations to form the primary forces of nature called doshas. Ether and air form Vata dosha. Fire and water make up pitta dosha. Water and earth create Kapha dosha which we all possess in ourselves.

https://youtu.be/U5J2_Gah19w

Fall Is a great Time for an Ayurvedic Detox

Each one of us have a unique mix of the three doshas, although we tend to be dominated by one at any given time. And the seasons are also governed by its own doshic activity.

Ayurvedic theory says, that by the time autumn comes around, we have accumulated plenty of heat in our tissues from the summer heat—fiery pitta dosha. When the leaves dry up and weather starts to change, vata dosha begins to take over and the one governed by air and marked by change, instability, and anxiety when not balanced. If we would to speak metaphorically, what happens when you add random blasts of air to a fire? It burns even brighter right?. So Ayurveda system says that when the accumulated heat of pitta is fanned by vata, it can lead to mental and physical burnout and we definitely don't want that, it stresses our adrenals and nervous system and putting some of the body's natural detoxification processes on hold.

Let's talk about the liver, for example. It is the body's natural detoxifier and one of the primary organs in which excess pitta can accumulate and cause serious problems. The liver processes not only the foods and drinks we ingest but also many of the harsh chemicals we encounter on a daily basis—like prescription and over-the-counter medications, over processed foods cosmetics loaded with petroleum ingredients and synthetic perfumes to polluted matter in the air. And then the liver gets overloaded with excess pitta

(these puts tremendous stress on the liver), and that has a large effect on our overall wellness. Overtaxed liver can result in migraines, irritability, rashes, anger, and skin issues and so much more. "It will make us tired, we get sick easily, we will gain or lose too a lot of weight. These two systems in the body are designed to "transform" toxins when the liver and the digestive tract become overwhelmed, we collect a kind of toxic sludge made up of all the waste products that the body has not been able to properly break down, digest or otherwise expel, creating much toxicity.

In ayurveda the toxins our body cannot process have a name : **Ama**, the meaning in Sanskrit is "that which harms or weakens" no so good. Ama is not only a kind of physical sludge but also as a psychosomatic sludge that pollutes the mind. Accumulated ama is the basis for many diseases and emotional disturbances—and from a physical standpoint, it creates an appealing host environment all the illnesses that blow in on autumn's winds.

Do You Really Need to Detox

We don't think that we have to worry about ama, well not so fast. We all do, as a result of poor diet choices, unhealthy lifestyle habits, stress in general, lack of hydration—even just living and breathing in a polluted world with pesticides additives to most products. No matter who you are, you'll end up with ama, and is a reality for us humans and even animals. Now the question we have to ask ourselves is, 'What can we do

about it?'"

Ayurvedic Detox

To protect your health year-round, but particularly during the fall, Ayurvedic health educators say it's important to slow down, support your liver's natural ability to remove toxins from the body, and take stock of the influences that you allow into your life—from the kind of food you eat to the amount of time you spend in front of an electronic device (computer, cell phone, TV).

Unlike some popular cleanses that ask you to undergo dramatic fasts or to take other extreme measures, purvakarma (which literally means "up-front actions") is designed to support, instead of shock, your system. "Rather than aiming to eliminate toxins at any cost, purvakarma gently balances the whole person so that they can detox without destabilizing the body in any way," Blossom explains. "It is a middle-path cleanse that uses nourishing foods, herbs, and self-care techniques to rejuvenate the body rather than simply strip it down, which can leave you even more vulnerable going into winter."

Blossom says that a middle-path method of cleansing includes a simplified diet, yoga asana, self-massage, nasal irrigation, herbs, meditation, pranayama, and reflection. During the cleanse, you'll forgo substances and habits that contribute to liver overload—such as processed foods or alcohol—and the unaddressed stress that strains your nervous system. You'll

also spend time thinking about what influences you want to keep in your life and what you might want to let go. The main key to purvakarma is a suspension of bad habits. Then and only then can we have space to establish the good habits we need to create the kind of health and vibrancy that we all want in our life.”

Start Slowing Down

Taking action and start reducing stress and mental overactivity is perhaps the most important element of a successful step in any detox plan. Constant rushing, over multitasking, and information overloads are the trifecta of North American toxicity. And like an overtaxed liver, an overtaxed mind and nervous system can lead to a host of health issues, including adrenal fatigue, insomnia, irregular menstrual cycles, indigestion, and unwelcome weight gain.

The first step in reducing the toxicity created by an overloaded life? Slowing down. During the next seven days, adjust your schedule so you have time to prepare and eat your meals in a relaxed manner, practice daily yoga, and take regular meditation breaks. By saying “no” to the outside influences that pull your attention and energy in so many directions—and replacing them with healthier choices—you’ll begin to tune in to your body’s natural rhythms and detox more effectively.

The Detox Diet

Next, you need to nourish your body with healthful, cleansing foods. At the heart of the dietary program is kitchari, a simple dish of rice and mung beans widely used throughout Asia to purify the body. Its balance of protein, carbohydrates, and fat makes for an easy-to-digest yet highly nourishing meal. Kitchari is also tridoshic, which means that it's appropriate for all three doshas. "The lightness of the dish reduces kapha in the body," Blossom says. "At the same time, it stabilizes vata by offering a complete source of protein. And the astringent nature of the beans cools pitta, so kitchari is naturally anti-inflammatory." Best of all, eating kitchari twice daily keeps hunger and cravings at bay, he says.

Ayurvedic cleansing also calls for ghee (clarified butter), which lubricates the digestive tract and facilitates the elimination of toxins from the body. Spicy teas and chutneys are recommended to keep the fires of digestion stoked throughout the cleanse; and triphala, a traditional Ayurvedic digestive tonic (made up of three fruits—amalaki, bibhitaki, and haritaki) with antioxidant properties, acts as a mild laxative. "Triphala is a classic example of an Ayurvedic remedy that supports the system and preserves what is good while it gets rid of toxins that will sicken the body," Blossom explains. "Taken together, all parts of this plan make sure you're getting everything you need to stay healthy and you won't be malnourished in any way."

Cleansing Yoga

Specific yoga poses can help expedite the detoxification process. The heating and twisting sequences designed for this plan can help move toxins from your tissues through your lymphatic and digestive systems so that they can be eliminated from the body. In addition, restorative poses, relax the nervous system and mind and help settle the body—which is especially important during and after a detox cleanse. Restorative poses will also help bring you into a state of receptivity that's perfect for the season, says New Jersey yoga teacher and restorative teacher trainer Jillian Pransky. "I look at autumn as a transition into a new year," she says. "I look at nature: The harvest is over, and it's time to clear out. It's an opportunity to till the soil and plant the seeds for next year's harvest. Once we do this for ourselves, we can recommit to what is working for us and set ourselves up to get more of what nourishes us in our lives."

Self-contemplation

As you embark on the program, contemplate the ultimate reason: "Why am I doing this?" By interrupting your normal patterns, cleansing provides a unique opportunity to practice *svadhyaya*, self-study. No matter what your motivation is—better health, a simpler life, a deeper yoga practice—you'll be amazed at the insights you can gain when you just slow down and start to listen. "The body should be telling us all the time what to do and what not to do—it knows what's good for it and what is not," Svoboda says. Getting out of our own way is finely the

key.” And that is the point, for the most part. It is ideal that at the end of the cleanse, it is recommended to take a day to meditate, be quiet and observe, you may want to ask yourself: ‘What can I do from now on to make my life the best it can be? What are the habits that I am doing to sabotage myself? and how can I help that? just becoming aware is a huge step.

During a detox, it is encouraged taking time to contemplate not only what you want for your own life but also what you want to put out into the world and all around you. If you can, spend at a half or a full day in silence, and spend time in nature or journaling about your experience. Did the cleanse give you clarity about how you may be exerting energy in ways that don’t serve you, and where you can use that energy more effectively, perhaps even to help a larger cause?

Get clear on the answers, and your life will get simpler: Do what works; don’t do what does not work, it hurts you on many levels. As we temporarily change our daily routines, we open ourselves up to seeing and feeling from whole new perspectives and we grow in evolution.

Ayurvedic Fall Cleanse

Recipe: Harvest Stew

This stew is easy to digest and is made with seasonal vegetables.

Ingredients

2 tbsp olive oil
1 small onion, medium-finely diced
1–2 tsp of high-quality sea salt
1 large carrot, finely chopped
2 small parsnips, finely chopped
2 cups butternut squash, diced to taste
2 cups green cabbage, diced
2 tsp fresh rosemary leaves
2 tsp fresh thyme leaves
4 cups vegetable stock

Preparation

In a large soup pot place, the olive oil on heat at medium-high, then sauté the onions until transparent. When onions start to get clear, add a pinch of salt and the carrot. Add parsnips until they feel soft, repeat with squash and then cabbage last.

Taste it and add salt to your like and continue to sauté vegetables until they begin to slightly stick to the bottom of the pan.

Add the rosemary and thyme, stir, and deglaze by adding a little vegetable stock. Add the rest of the stock. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, cover, and simmer on low for about half-hour. Taste occasionally and add, rosemary, or thyme until the desired flavor is achieved.

And there it is a delicious dish.

**Part 2 of Ayurveda and Fall
it will come soon**

