

Happy Valentine's Day

When you think of Valentine's Day, you probably think of hearts and cards. Maybe you imagine flowers and candy. Giving those items are ways that we traditionally celebrate Valentine's Day in the United States. But what about the rest of the world?

In Finland, Valentine's Day is Friendship Day. On February 14th, Fins celebrate Ystävänpäivä. They give their friends small gifts to let them know they are appreciated.

A Philippine Valentine's Day is all about love and commitment. The government holds a giant wedding ceremony. All of the couples who want to get married are wed at the very same time.

In Japan, Valentine's means chocolate. And lots of it! Honmei choco is the name for romantic chocolate. Giri choco is for friends and relatives.

South Africa celebrates Valentine's Day on February 15th in honor of the ancient Roman festival of Lupercalia. Women write the name of the person they love on a piece of paper and pin it to their arm. They are literally wearing their hearts on their sleeves.

Italians don't celebrate Lupercalia anymore, but they do celebrate Valentine's Day. In Verona, the home of Romeo and Juliet, they have parties for four days. The parties are a time for musical concerts, heart-shaped lanterns, and love-letter writing contests.

In South Korea, Valentine's Day is a day to honor men. Women pamper them with gifts and chocolates. A month later, on White Day, the women get the gifts. Then in April, on Black Day, single people are celebrated with noodles in black bean sauce.

Wherever you travel, make sure you know the traditions. If you accept a bouquet in Taiwan with 108 roses, you're getting married!

Which gift is NOT mentioned as a way that people in the United States celebrate Valentine's Day?

- A. Cards
- B. Jewelry
- C. Flowers
- D. Candy

Which country celebrates with chocolates?

- A. Japan
- B. South Africa
- C. Finland
- D. Italy

What is Black Day?

- A. A day to celebrate women
- B. A day to celebrate men
- C. A day to celebrate single people
- D. A day to get married

Where would you like to be a friend?

- A. Italy
- B. Finland
- C. Philippines
- D. South Africa

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