

Food and Fashion

Romance is back

By MARY MARTIN NIEPOLD
Romance, according to experts who are paid to know such things, is back.

Weddings are on the rise; entertaining at home is a major trend across the country; more births will be recorded this year than any other since 1953; and the movie "Ghost," a modern love story, is a runaway smash hit.

Even the recent display of Greta Garbo's personal estate at Sotheby's auction house disclosed a woman whose home upended the image of a lady usually seen in black and dark glasses. We find that pinks (soft pinks to intense fuchsia ones) were Garbo's favorite colors, and Louis XV chairs, along with paintings by Bonnard, revealed a woman who surrounded herself with things romantic.

Likewise in the '90s, experts say, customers must have a passion for the products they purchase. "There is no future for products people like a little," observes laurel Cutler, vice president of consumer affairs for Chrysler Corp., in a symposium sponsored by the Fashion Group International.

Revlon, creator of the new "Unforgettable" fragrance for women, caught wind of the same movement to things of the heart and did a little research of its own. In a nationwide survey of more than 1,000 men and women, respondents were asked to identify critical lifestyle issues of the '90s. The findings suggested a relinquishing of the material-mindedness of the yuppie '80s and a need for romance in the '90s.

When asked, "How important is romance in your life?" 60 percent of the respondents said "very important." Interestingly, more men (66 percent) than women (55 percent) acknowledged this need.

Perhaps even more interesting is that an overwhelming majority of the respondents indicated a new definition of romance. Today, a strong sense of self and in-

dividuality are considered romantic. Participants were asked if they agreed that "the most unforgettable person in my life dares to be her/himself." An impressive 82 percent of the respondents said yes. And when they rated personal goals, "being in love" garnered 58 percent of the yes votes (and "climbing the corporate ladder" came in last). As for choices for quality time in a private setting, 61 percent chose walking on the beach, and more than half chose listening to music in front of a fire.

In fashion, the trend to things romantic also held true. Pampering is part of the new romantic picture. More than 75 percent of the women said that receiving a special gift from the man in their life made them feel "most feminine". More than a third said that wearing a designer dress (and favorite fragrance) were "particularly important." And in fragrances, it was the "light" and "floral" scents that were most popular.

One look at holiday fashions and makeup confirms these observations. Jewelry is bold, glittery, oversized and full of color and sparkle. (Avon for one, currently offers sparkly jewelry ideas like hear-motif loop earrings, heart lockets and heart pins.) Yves Saint Laurent's "Rituel" make-up for winter features vibrant reds and pinks to parallel the designer's Rive Gauche Collection, called "a journey into seduction."

At Anne Klein II, designer Louis Dell'Olio says, "My favorite clothes are uncomplicated and feminine... Lush knits in the softest colors imaginable. Silk and satin-lined shells that get tossed on for late-day glamor. Skirt shapes with bias draping..." Pale pinks and grays do, in fact, seem to float in softly styled shirts, jackets, trousers and skirts in the collection.



EGG NOG

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 eggs
- 3/4 cups icing sugar
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 cup vanilla

METHOD:

1. Using a large mixing bowl, beat eggs until very light and lemon coloured.
2. Gradually beat in sugar, salt and vanilla. Stir in milk. Add liquor to your own taste.
3. Refrigerator for 24 hours before serving.
4. To serve, run through a blender to foam up.
5. Garnish with nutmeg.

Makes 25 5 oz. servings.

- 10 cups milk
- Brandy (or rum, rye, scotch)
- Nutmeg, for garnish

POPCORN BALLS

Makes 20-2 1/2" Balls

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup corn syrup
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 cup water

METHOD:

1. Mix sugar, corn syrup, salt, water and butter. Stir over low heat until sugar dissolves. Boil covered for 3 minutes, then boil uncovered to hard ball stage. Remove from heat and add vanilla. Pour over popcorn and stir in, then form into balls.

HOT BUTTERED RUM

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 sticks cinamon
- 1 1/2 tsp. light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup dark rum

METHOD:

1. Evenly divide the cinamon sticks, brown sugar and rum among 4 warm heatproof glasses or mugs.
2. In a saucepan heat apple cider until very hot but not boiling. Fill each glass or mug to top with apple cider.
3. Add a dot of butter to each. Sprinkle with mace and add a lemon slice. Stir well and serve.

Makes 4 servings.

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