

Have Yourself a Green Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is a day for romance, sentimentality and/or sex, depending on your current relationship(s), familial status, preferences and proclivities. It's a day symbolized by a bright red heart, the symbol of love. So the idea of a *green* Valentine's Day seems like something of a contradiction.

However, Green is In. So let's look at how you can make your Valentine's Day *green*, meaning sustainable, organic and locally produced (minimizing transportation costs and carbon emissions), as most of us define the term "green".

The two major gifts that immediately come to mind are chocolate and flowers. (We'll skip diamonds. For most of us, the economy isn't doing as well as it could be.)

Green chocolate (ugh) should be organic, sustainably-grown and preferably also fair trade, meaning the growers receive a fair price for their labors. Ideally, the cacao beans used for it should also be grown within 150 miles, but we'll let that requirement go since cacao currently isn't grown in this area (global warming may change that). Your chocolate should also be purchased locally, and it's even better if the store where you buy it is not just local, but locally-owned.

There are a number of online places where you can buy organic flowers, and Organic is Nice, but your loved one is probably not going to eat her roses-although if they're organic, it's okay. Perhaps more important is that your flowers are not just purchased locally, but even *grown* locally.

Phew. Not easy, is it? Kermit didn't realize just how right he was. So where in the Napa Valley do you buy green chocolate and a bouquet of organic, locally-grown flowers?

Flowers

Vallerga's in Napa (253-2621) can special order organically-grown flowers. Whole Foods will be carrying them, as they always do. Flowers from Beau Fleurs in Napa (224.7993) are almost all grown locally in Northern California and, as owner John Prittie points out, "the glass vase can be reused or recycled, and the flowers can be dried and kept as sentimental mementoes or recycled with yardwaste." We found no local floral shop that specifically offers organic flowers.

Chocolate

Most grocery and health food stores always carry organic chocolate bars. Vallerga's says it will have boxes of organic chocolates. Whole Foods will be carrying a wide range of organic chocolate bars, as it always does. It also has organic truffles and, in their bakery area, a large selection of natural (no trans fats, preservatives or artificial anything) chocolate goodies. No local chocolate maker offers organic chocolates.

Bottom line? Valentine's Day isn't a major green event locally. Encourage your local florist and

chocolatier and maybe next year will be different. In the meantime, celebrate the day with a bottle of Napa Valley sparkling wine. It may not be organic, but it's local. And it's one thing you can find *everywhere* in the valley.