

working together

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Flying Solo

If you're single on Valentine's Day, the myriad of red and pink hearts papering stores and restaurants may leave you feeling a bit blue. Just remember, you're in good company—there are over 80 million other unattached individuals who are trying to figure out just what to do on a day that celebrates couplehood.

Embrace the spirit of loving others with these ideas for a Valentine's Day sans a sweetheart.

Volunteer your services. Do you have a married friend or family member who needs a babysitter? Offer to watch the kids. It may not be your idea of celebrating, but you'll be doing your friend a huge service. Plus, kids love holidays—you can spend the evening helping them celebrate in kid-friendly ways by making cards, baking cookies or playing games. Bring a feel-good movie for after they go to bed.

Surprise someone with a special gift. If you know someone who just lost a loved one through death or divorce, Valentine's Day may be especially difficult this year. A fresh bouquet or thoughtful card could be a nice way to show someone you're thinking of them.

Bring goodies to work. Show a little love to your co-workers by bringing in candy or

baked goods to celebrate the day. It might surprise you to find out how many of them are also fretting about getting a little love and attention that day—even the married ones.

Get physical. Go for a run. Work out at the gym. Have a little P90X or Wii Fit fun. Do something that increases your heart rate and get your endorphins pumping to flood your body with its own feel-good chemicals.

Throw a party. Invite your single friends over for a Valentine's get-together and gift exchange. It'll be a fun way to make sure nobody ends up empty-handed on Valentine's Day.

Make it a date night with yourself. Order your favorite meal, buy something new to wear, watch a favorite movie or buy a new book—whatever makes you feel pampered. Go ahead and show yourself a little love. It is Valentine's Day, after all.

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You'll Love Us

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It's What's Inside

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Have Your Cake and *Eat It*, Too

More than a third of Americans will dine out this Valentine's Day, making it the second most popular holiday for restaurants after Mother's Day.

And many of those dining out will be hoping to enjoy a meal low enough in calories in order to have their dessert and eat it, too.

If you're hoping to enjoy a sweet treat this Valentine's Day without feeling like you broke your calorie bank all on the main course, consider these suggestions.

Read the whole menu. Don't get fixated on the first dish you spot. Get an idea of all that's available—you may find something lower in calories that sounds just as appetizing as your first choice.

Give a Touchy Feely Card for *Valentine's Day*

Donating money to a charitable organization in someone's name is a thoughtful and heartwarming gift, but it can feel somewhat intangible.

That's where the Causes Gift Card comes in—it's a physical card for gift-giving purposes that lets the recipient decide which charity will benefit.

Recipients of the cards have the opportunity to choose to donate to more than 1.5 million Causes charities online, and purchases of the gift cards are tax-deductible. The Causes Gift Card is currently available in \$25 and \$50 denominations at grocery stores throughout California. Causes is currently working to enable online sales of its gift cards for use anywhere in the world.

Gift-givers simply purchase the (fully tax-deductible) card of their choice and give it to the recipient, who can then choose from more than a million nonprofits at Causes.com.

Causes is a Facebook application that was co-founded by Sean Parker and Joe Green. The platform was launched on May 25, 2007, and since then, the community has grown by over 140 million people and over \$28 million has been donated through the application. Over 390,000 causes have been created by users on every topic from breast cancer research to stopping genocide to supporting local parks. Find out more about the Causes Gift Card at www.causes.com/gift_cards.

Sentiments

"I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands. You need to be able to throw something back."

—Maya Angelou

Tracing Your *Food*

If "you are what you eat," as the saying goes, wouldn't it be nice to know where you came from?

Food traceability is all the rage lately as consumers are becoming more curious about the origins of what they eat.

Never mind wondering where their next meal is going to come from. They want to know exactly where their current meal came from.

Here are some food brands that are taking steps to give consumers information about the origins of their products' ingredients. They may be baby steps, but they are nonetheless moving in the direction of increased transparency.





Skip the tech talk.
We speak fluent
smart marketing.

Start with a salad. Many restaurants bring out bread or something similar to nibble on while you're waiting for your meal. You can consume a lot of calories quickly from the breadbasket. Have a few bites, but also order a small green salad or a broth-based soup to tide you over. These choices are often lower in calories and higher in nutrients.

Consider à la carte. Try getting a soup or salad and an appetizer, or a couple of side dishes instead of an entrée. Many restaurants now offer bite-size portions, too—mini cheeseburgers, for example. They are worth a try and often just right in size.

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Top *Five* Healthiest Fast Food Restaurants in 2010

1. Panera Bread
2. Jason's Deli
3. Au Bon Pain
4. Noodles and Company
5. Corner Bakery Café

—according to *Health.com*

Stone-Buhr. Buyers of Stone-Buhr's All Purpose Flour can type in a lot code on the company's website to see which family farms grew the grain. Stone-Buhr's emphasis is on spotlighting the family-owned farms in the Northwest who supply it with certified sustainable wheat. Meet the wheat growers at www.findthefarmer.com.

Dole Organic. Dole lets consumers "travel to the origin of each organic product." By typing in a fruit sticker's three-digit code on Dole Organic's website, customers can find the story behind their banana or pineapple. Each farm's section on the website includes background info, shows photos of the crops and workers and tells consumers more about the origin of Dole's organic products. Research your banana at www.doleorganic.com.

Frito-Lay. This brand's Chip Tracker lets consumers trace where a particular bag of chips came from by entering their ZIP code along with the first three digits of the bag's product code. Track your Fritos at www.fritolay.com/lays/chip-tracker.html.

Fresh Express. A subsidiary of Chiquita Brands and supplier of washed and packaged salad greens, Fresh Express allows consumers to find the origin of their salad through a Leaf Locator on the company's website. Fresh Express includes details on a location's climate, growing season and agricultural history. Trace your veggies' roots on www.freshexpress.com.

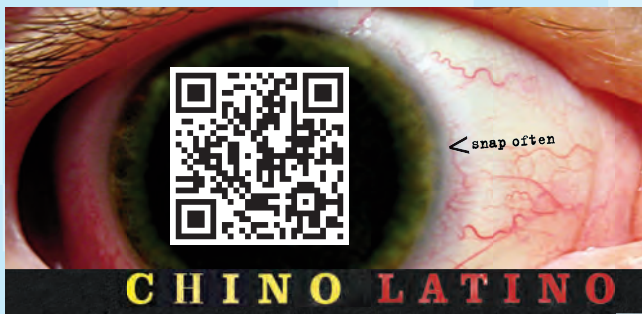
Insights

In the Middle Ages, young men and women drew names from a bowl to see who would be their Valentine. They would wear this name pinned onto their sleeves for one week. This was the origin of the expression "wear your heart on your sleeve."

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Unlock the Code — QR Codes



(Picture of a Check Presenter produced by Creative Graphics for Chino Latino's recent campaign using a QR Code.)

What exactly are these strange-looking, checkerboard-like, black and white boxes that have begun appearing in print ads, on store shelves, and even on billboards?

They are **Quick Response Codes**, or **QR Codes**. They were developed in Japan, in 1994, by a division of Toyota to be used as a tool for tracking parts in vehicle manufacturing. Today, the explosive growth of smartphones has opened up enormous potential uses for these codes. Many new smartphones are being manufactured with code reading applications already installed on them. There are also a large number of free code-scanning apps available for anyone to download.

To scan a QR Code, simply launch the scanning app on your phone, and aim the camera at the code. Your phone will read the code and send you to the online location that it is tied to.

Today, QR Codes are being used in a wide variety of ways. For instance, retailers like Best Buy are experimenting with posting the QR Codes on product displays to allow potential customers to learn more about their products.

Print a QR Code on the back of your business card, and the code can take your prospective clients to a U Tube video introducing you or your company.

A QR Code printed on the packaging of products you sell can direct your customers to sites for warranty information, or complimentary products and services.

QR codes can be used on direct mail as a response tool to take the potential customer to a site that will allow them to respond to your offer, register for your event, request more information, or download a coupon. Best of all, the QR code will allow you to track the effectiveness of that marketing effort because you will know which customer responses were the direct result of that specific point of contact.

QR Codes can even be personalized. We can produce a direct mailer that will incorporate a unique QR Code for each person it is being mailed to. When that person responds via the QR Code, the landing page they are taken to can already be populated with a personal greeting, references to their past purchases, and their name and address information to facilitate the ordering process. The possible uses for the technology are only limited by our creativity and imagination.

"The way we look at QR codes is, it kind of gives you a central connection for Best Buy between the physical world and all that's possible in the digital world."

— Ben Hedrington

Director of Connected Digital Solutions for Best Buy

To find out how QR codes can help your organization, scan this code or call Mark at 952-447-5044.

