

Let me count the ways...

Your Valentine's Day guide to wining and dining your loved one, whether out on the town or in the intimacy of your home



LOVE is in the air – or at least the pressure to celebrate it is, with all manner of passionate gestures.

As we pack away the last of the Christmas tinsel and and before we start stocking up on Easter eggs and hot cross buns, we take a brief detour into the pretty-pink world of Valentine's Day.

This weekend we show our affection to spouses, lovers and significant others with flowers, gifts, chocolates, sparkling wines, romantic getaways, special dinners and all-round pampering. Here are some things to do:

- Watch the sun set while sipping a complimentary glass of bubbly at Pepper Club On The Beach in Camps Bay. Chris Swanepoel will serenade lovers and a special dessert will be served. For bookings call 021 438 3174 or e-mail onthebeach@pepperclub.co.za

- Bhandaris in the Westlake Lifestyle Centre in Tokai is hosting a dinner-dance tonight, for R180 a person. That gets you starters followed by a buffet and a choice of desserts. Call 021 702 2975.

- The restaurant at Buitenverwachting in Constantia, not usually open on a Sunday, will be pulling out all the stops. Chef-patron Edgar Osojnik has created a superb menu, including oysters done six ways and decadent chocolate dessert, available in three, four or five-course options (R395-R495, lunch R355) with a glass of bubbly on arrival. Ladies will receive a rose and each couple will receive a mini sacher torte.

The normal à la carte menus will also be available. Call 021 794 3522 to book or for information.

- At Simonsig in Stellenbosch, home of delicious brut rosé bubbly, the restaurant Cuvée will serve a three-course lunch menu on Valentine's Day, which includes a red rose for each woman and Brut Rosé truffles for their partners.

But why wait until tomorrow? There is a five-course dinner tonight. Each course is accompa-



PERFECT SETTING: Buitenverwachting in Constantia is pulling out all the stops.



PRETTY IN PINK: Simonsig's delicious brut rosé bubbly.

nied by a glass of wine selected by winemaker Johan Malan. Think *foie gras* with Karoo fig *carpaccio* and a flute of Cuvée Royale 2004; Scottish salmon with crisp apple wafers served with Simonsig Gewurztraminer 2006.

The Valentine's Day three-course lunch is R280 a person and the dinner R450. Both include a flute of Kaapse Vonkel Brut Rosé on arrival. Contact Cuvée at 021 888 4932 or e-mail cuvée@simonsig.co.za

- Pack a picnic basket, uncork the bubbly and share a romantic

evening of music at tomorrow's Midsummer Melodies concert in the gardens of De Grendel Estate in Platteklouf, where the Cape Town Opera will be performing with the Hout Bay Music Project under the musical direction of Aviva Pelham.

The concert aims to raise awareness of the Montrose Foundation and addiction in poorer communities. Tickets are R300, and guests will receive a complimentary bottle of De Grendel bubbly and Lindt chocolates with every two tickets purchased.

There is also the option to pre-order a picnic basket for an additional cost of R114 a person, and there will be De Grendel wine, mineral water and gourmet pizzas for sale. Guests also stand a chance to win prizes. For info and bookings visit www.montrosefoundation.co.za or call 082 877 1777 or 021 797 9270.

- At The One&Only Cape Town you can get a lavish five-course meal at Gordon Ramsay's Maze, with or without matching wines, for R990 or R695 respectively, with dishes like chilled cauliflower *velouté* with oyster ice cream. Before the feasting, a pampering session will get you in the mood. The spa at The One&Only has several special Valentine's packages available.

- You could also create something special in the

Strawberry Love Heart

STRAWBERRY Love Heart? You will have to prepare this today if you want it ready for tomorrow.

Ingredients

450g fresh mashed strawberries
125g sugar
20ml lemon juice
10ml brandy
15g cornflour and 1 tablespoon water
1 tsp vanilla extract
50g roasted pistachio nuts, roughly chopped
150ml whipped cream
50ml strawberry yoghurt
150g dark chocolate

Method

In a saucepan mix strawberries, sugar, lemon juice and brandy

In the meantime, make a paste with the cornflour and water – add the paste to the strawberries and stir until it forms a thick sauce.

Add the vanilla extract and pistachio nuts and allow mixture to cool.

Whip the cream to stiff peaks. Fold the yoghurt into the strawberry sauce, then gently fold the cream into the straw-



berry mixture. Spoon the mousse into a greased mould and freeze overnight. Once frozen, unmould and invert the frozen mousse onto a wire rack. Return to the freezer.

Gently melt the dark chocolate over a double boiler.

Remove the mousse from the freezer and evenly coat it with the melted chocolate.

Return to the freezer until ready to serve.

comfort of your own home. Stock up on delicious morsels, aphrodisiac or otherwise, paired with a bottle of Swartland Blanc de Noir 2009, voted number one for best value and rated three stars in a Wine magazine survey.

Then download the 10 free local music tracks from RhythmMusic-Store, a mixture of rock, blues and pop. Go to www.Rhythm-Music-Store.com. Finish by sharing a sexy dessert created by Michelin-star chef Tony Kocke.

