## STONESTHROW DIRECTORY



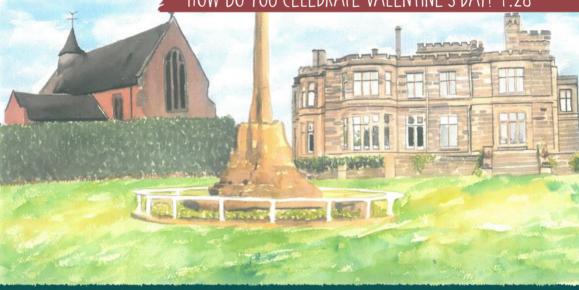
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## BALSALL COMMON MERIDEN HAMPTON IN ARDEN MILLISONS WOOD

FEBRUARY / MARCH 2024

JAMIESON CHRISTIE





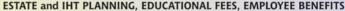






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#### ANOTE

Welcome to our February/March Edition!

February is a day longer in 2024, and the 29th is traditionally the day that women can propose. The custom began in 5th century Ireland when St Patrick decreed that the extra day in a leap year would be the ideal opportunity for a woman to ask for a man's hand in marriage. Nowadays, anyone can propose at any time, but around 6 million people worldwide get engaged on the 14th of February. If you are still deciding how to celebrate the day of love and romance, head to page 28 for some

Shrove Tuesday occurs on the 13th of February this year when we traditionally eat sweet or savoury pancakes. You don't have to be religious to enjoy this custom, it dates back to the 15th century when people would race and have competitions tossing pancakes.

ideas.

Schools, libraries, and bookshops will celebrate World Book Day on the 7th of March. This year's theme is The Great Big Footy and Booky Quiz. It's always a fun celebration usually marked with fancy dress competitions and activities based around storytelling. Children can obtain a £1 book token and choose a free book. (worldbookday.com)

Mother's Day falls on the 10th of March this year, so be sure to celebrate your Mum and make her feel special. Many local retailers are happy to work with you and create a bespoke gift for the special mother in your life.

The first day of Spring is officially the 20th of March 2024, so look out for all the daffodils and tree blossoms in your local neighbourhood. Easter celebrations occur at the end of March. Then the clocks will go

March. Then the clocks will go forward in the early hours of Sunday the 31st of March, essentially giving you an hour less to consume all of those Easter eggs!

A few of dates for your calendar: 14th February - Valentine's Day; 10th March - Mother's Day; 17th March -St. Patrick's Day; 29th March - Good Friday (Bank Holiday); 31st March -Daylight Saving Time starts; 1st April -Easter (Bank Holiday)

However you decide to spend next couple of months - keep your heart and your business local.

Yours Stonesthrow Publications

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 Solihull Hospital
 0121 424 2000

 Balsall Common Health Centre
 01676 935 000

#### POLICE & FIRE

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 Warwickshire Fire & Rescue
 01675 62 007

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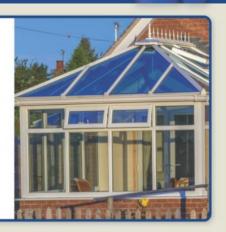
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## WHAT'S ON

#### **Balsall Common Country Market**

Date: every Saturday / Time: 10am - 12pm / Venue: The Jubilee, 225 Station Road, Balsall Common CV7 7FF

We are more than just a place to shop – we are a place where people meet and belong. Come and have a cup of tea or coffee with us along with home-made cakes and goodies. Our range of foods includes cakes to die for, savoury meals you can pop in the freezer for later in the week and jams and marmalades in a class of their own.

We have splendid flower arrangements, plants for your garden that include both the unusual and old favourites. Our fruits and vegetables are home grown and wholesome.

#### Coffee Together

Date: first Saturday of every month / Time: 10.30am - 12noon; Venue: The Jubilee Centre, 225 Station Rd, Balsall Common CV7 7FE Organised by Churches together in Balsall Common and Berkswell. Entry fee is £2. this includes coffee and pre-wrapped biscuit. All profits go to charity. Enquiries to Clare Laland at clmap18@gmail.com

#### **Balsall Common Memories Cafe**

Date: 2nd Wednesday of every month / Time: 1.15pm – 3.00pm / Venue: Balsall Common Village Hall, Station Road CV7 7FF. For those with dementia and their careers our free afternoon sessions provide an opportunity to meet together for a chat a laugh over refreshments and enjoy a varied programme of activities and entertainment. For more information contact Christine 07974 140353

#### Balsall Common Memories Café, Coffee and Chat

Date: 1st Thursday of the month / Time: 11.00am – 12.30pm / Venue: Balsall Common Library, Kenilworth Road CV7 7EL For those with dementia and their careers. Drop in for a chat and a laugh, we'd love to see you, come along and join us for coffee/tea/ biscuits. For more information contact Christine 07974 140353

#### Card Club

Date: every 2 weeks on Mondays / Time: 2.15 -

4pm / Venue: Balsall Common Library Refreshments are provided for a small charge. For more information please ask at help Desk, call us on 01676 532 590 or visit www.solihull.gov.uk/ library-events

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#### Berkswell and Balsall Common Sports & Community Association

Date: varied / Time: varied / Venue: The Lant, Meeting House Lane, Balsall Common With cricket, hockey, running, sailing and tennis clubs plus a clubhouse and bar. Facilities also available for private hire. See www.bbcsca.co.uk or Facebook - BBCSCA / Berkswell Sports Bar for more information

#### **Firebird Singers**

Date: every Friday / Time: 7pm - 9pm / Venue: Meriden Village Hall, Main Road, Meriden A small and friendly choir, singing for pleasure whilst raising money for charity. Anyone 16+ that enjoys singing is welcome to join the choir. Come along, learn new songs, participate in our local concerts, make new friends. If you are interested in joining please contact Val on 01676522963 or Anna on 07792525999.

#### Heart of England WI

Date: 2nd Thursday of the month / Time: 7.30pm / Venue: Balsall Common Village Hall, 112 Station Road CV7 7FF

The Heart of England Women's Institute is a thriving group, with lively members who enjoy rambles, lunches, coffee mornings and craft evenings. New members are always welcome. The programme of speakers for 2024 starts on 8th February with the History of Balsall Common by Stephen Gill. More information is on Heart of England WI Facebook page or by phoning Lyn 01676 533675 or Kathryn 01676 534824. Email:

hoewi2019@hotmail.com Looking forward to seeing you.

#### Balsall Common Methodist Church Toddlers Group

Date: every Tuesday / Time: 10am - 11.30am / Venue: Church Hall, Station Road Term time only, £2 per adult, refreshments included. Open to all carers of pre-school children. All will be made very welcome. For further details contact Joy on 01676 532006.

#### Balsall Common Bat and Chat

Date: 2nd, 3rd and 4th Friday of the month / Venue: 1000-1200, at the Jubilee Centre. Jacqui Clark has started a non-profit making Table Tennis Club. Come along and play Table Tennis. All abilities and ages very welcome. £5 per session which includes a cuppa and biscuits.

#### The Gauntlet Carboot Sale

Date: 25th February / Time: 8 - 9am / Venue: The Gauntlet, Kenilworth CV8 1DP All Of The Pitch Fees Will Be Donated To Molly Ollys charity. Call To Book A Pitch: 01926 351333 or email: info@thegauntlet-kenilworth.co.uk

#### Balsall Common Lions welcome Briefcase Blues Brothers Band

Date: 2nd March / Time: 7.30 - 10.30pm / Venue: Heart of England School

An act that you really won't forget - they are absolutely brilliant, with so much energy, enjoying themselves as well, and getting the audience rocking and dancing joining in the fun. In the second part of the show they'll continue to entertain with music from the 80's - an excellent mix of music, dancing and a bit of comedy. Tickets available via the enclosed link. Alternatively, contact Lion Andy Pemberton on 0345 833 8565, or email blue.bros@balsallcommonlions.org

#### Drinking cans collection

Venue: Ale rooms, Knowle

Please support Ryan's work by dropping off your empty aluminium cans in the blue bin situated right outside the Ale Rooms, Knowle High Street. Ryan from "We Can" collects aluminium drinking cans, crushes them and trades them for money to help buy food to address food poverty locally.

While we do our best to ensure the accuracy of our listings, events may be postponed or cancelled without notice. Please confirm with the organiser before making any plans for attending events.

For your news, events and group meetings to be featured free of charge on our What's On Page please email Ksenia: info@stonesthrowpublications.co.uk

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#### HOROSCOPES: FEBRUARY / MARCH

#### ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

Mercury, Venus and Mars are occupying the highest point of your chart this month, indicating that this the perfect time to make a go of anything career related. Stay alert to any opportunities that come your way. The spectacular new moon and the start of the Dragon year on the 10th both highlight the beginning of exciting new adventures and new friendship groups forming. March will be a rather introspective month for normally bold and dynamic Aries. The powerful combination of the Sun, Jupiter and Neptune in the deeply intuitive sign on Pisces will probably cause you to reassess many things in your life. Mercury arrives in your sign 27th bringing some tough choices your way.

#### TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

February opens up some brilliant opportunities and ideas for further education and detailed travel plans. The new moon on the 10th is particularly important as its powerful energy encourages you to broaden your horizons, especially on the career front. The Virgo full moon on the 24th offers up a romantic opportunity, it also encourages you to be at your most creative. March is all about finding a much gentler way of life, particularly if things have been rather hectic during the last year. The Sun, Jupiter and Neptune are joined in spiritually minded Pisces and encourage you to tune in and connect with your life purpose. Creativity is highlighted and this is the year to find your deepest passion.

#### **GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)**

February suggests that your financial plans will need some reviewing. Mercury, Venus and Mars are all in responsible Capricorn, excellent placements for assisting with practical long lasting decisions. The pioneering Aquarian new moon and the start of the auspicious Dragon year on the 10th, both ensure that you have some innovative new ideas to increase your prospects. March is a powerful career month with the emphasis on you reaching your goals, whatever they might be. Optimistic Jupiter in mystical Pisces highlights your soul journey and the many things that still have to be accomplished. Venus and Mars both arrive in innovative Aquarius on the 6th, enabling you to get those new plans underway.

#### CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 22)

The first part of February offers you a great deal of energy as Mars, Venus, and Mercury are all challenging you in your opposite sign of Capricorn. This could indicate some relationship issues that will very likely come to the surface now. Jupiter and Uranus, both in the down to earth sign of Taurus offer heightened intuition steering you towards making the right decision. March: Finances and resources are in the spotlight this month as Mercury and Saturn ask you to begin a through reassessment. Keep yourself focussed as you now have the power to be very persuasive in any negotiations. Jupiter in Pisces offers great intuition, use it wisely and this should turn out to be a profitable and productive month.

#### LEO (JULY 23 - AUGUST 23)

The Sun and Pluto are strong in your opposite sign during February emphasising any difficulties arising in your relationships. The Aquarian new moon on the 10th will throw some light on any issues that have been troubling you for a while. Dynamic planetary energy in the health and fitness area of your chart also suggests that you will have more drive and vitality to follow a new regimen. March suggests that health and lifestyle balance will be top priorities for you this month. The Pisces new moon on the 2nd offers great insight and your renewed confidence enables you to push any new ideas forward. Jupiter and Neptune are strong in Pisces and this combination indicates a marvellous energy boost.

#### VIRGO (AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 22)

February offers some big changes in the love and romance sector of your chart; be on the lookout for some important new information related to your plans. Mercury, your ruler, is in quirky Aquarius on Valentine's Day – be prepared, anything could happen! Jupiter and Uranus, both in down to earth Taurus, will help you to reach a positive outcome, be mindful and trust your intuition. March: The full moon in your sign on the 18th helps you to apply your energies to constructive pursuits. The Sun, Jupiter and Neptune are all prominent around this time and highlight inspirational and intuitive experiences. New and exciting ideas to push you forwards occur at the spring equinox on the 20th.

#### LIBRA (SEPTEMBER 23 - OCTOBER 23)

New and exciting creative opportunities are suggested during February as transformational Pluto and the radiant Sun occupy a pivotal part of your chart. Romantic encounters are also in strong focus, particularly around the time of the powerful Aquarian new moon on the 10th. The Dragon year begins and partnerships could take on a much more spiritual aspect. March: The month's events hinge around Venus, your ruling planet, arriving in the most creative area of your chart on the 6th. Be sure to talk to partners and colleagues about the bigger issues and dig deep to unearth new truths. The Equinox on the 20th shows that freedom and individuality are more important than ever

#### SCORPIO (OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22)

February puts you in a rather assertive mood, as you strive to take on a more independent approach to life. Your communication sector is stirred up by Venus, Mars and Mercury all suggesting that renewed insight helps you to remain positive; big ideas can lead to brilliant results. The Aquarian new moon on the 10th offers some radical change, particularly in your domestic area. March: This month's planetary activity turns your attention to communicating trust and intuition, by doing this you'll benefit most from a harmonious atmosphere. Venus and March enter your domestic area on the 6th, you can use your organisational skills to perform everyday jobs and plan your schedule in a more efficient way.

#### AGITTARIUS (NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER

Three planets in your financial sector all suggest an active and very positive start to this month. With your enhanced resourcefulness it's a good time to make some major decisions concerning your goals for 2024. The exciting Aquarian new moon on the 10th highlights all types of communication and gives you extra powers of persuasion and insight. March is dominated by a restructure of your personal finances and earning capacity. As both Venus and Mars arrive in Aduarius on the 6th you'll find that if you stick to your plans you have a really good chance of succeeding. The Virgo full moon on the 18th suggests that a long term creative project can finally get underway

#### CAPRICORN (DECEMBER 22 - JANUARY 20)

Three planets in Capricorn ensure that this will be a breakthrough month. Dynamic Mars and romantic Venus are both strong in your sign, emphasising matters of the heart and suggesting that a new love interest may be on the horizon. Positive thinking is the way forward and the exciting Aquarian new moon on the 10th looks set to bring some great opportunities your way. March indicates that finances and resources are in the spotlight, challenges and change are on offer and you'll need to make some important decisions. The intuitive energy of Jupiter and Neptune in Pisces can assist you when looking at your choices. The spring Equinox on the 20th will reveal more about changes of the inevitable kind, particularly on the home front.

#### AQUARIUS (JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 18)

February is your birthday month and the favourable and dynamic new moon in your sign on the 10th ensures that positive change is not far off. Communication planet Mercury arrives in Aquarius on the 5th, followed by Mars on the 13th and Venus on the 17th. This is truly an inspirational month, bursting with new ideas and the opportunity to act on them. Your intuitive nature should ensure that you make the right decisions. March is a very important month as both Mars and Venus arrive in your sign on the 6th, indicating innovative insight and big changes in the pace of your life. The Sun, Jupiter and Neptune in mystical Pisces offer Inspirational energy and a renewed interest in anything spiritual or creative.

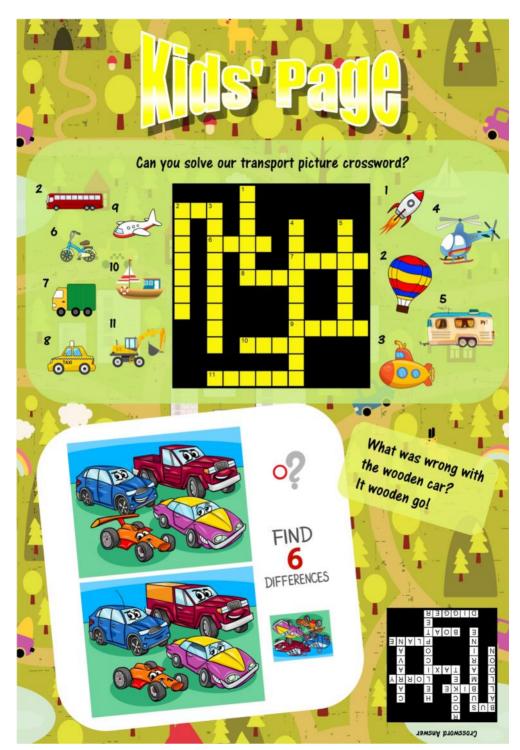
#### PISCES (FEBRUARY 19 - MARCH 20)

Venus, Mars and Mercury start the month in the practical and resourceful sign of Capricorn, indicating renewed connections where friendships and group endeavours are concerned. Jupiter and Uranus highlight your powers of communication, pushing you to take full advantage of this chance to usher in a whole new era of confidence and success. The full moon in Virgo on the 24th illuminates and important issue. March: The powerful full moon in your opposite sign of Virgo on the 18th brings much needed clarity and focus into many areas of your life. This is a time for illuminating new beginnings, particularly where love and romance are concerned. Venus and Mars both arrive in analytical Aquarius on the 6th, it's time to be decisive!

Christine Chalklin, Inspirational Astrologer and Life Coach.

Take a refreshing new look at the year ahead by booking an astrological reading now - Consultations are available on Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp or telephone.

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Masala Club Indian

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01676 533 210

The Brickmakers Arms Gastropub 307 Station Road, Berkswell CV7 7EG 01676 533 890

The White Horse British, European Kenilworth Rd. Balsall Common CV7 7DT 01676 533 207

The George in the Tree Gastropub Kenilworth Rd CV7 7EX 01676 533 118

Cafe Tamarinds Pan-Asian 376 Kenilworth Rd CV7 7ER 01676 533 308

Balsall Common Fish Bar Fish & Chips 207 Station Rd. Balsall Common CV7 7FE 01676 533 576

La Delicia British, European 231 Station Rd. Balsall Common CV7 7EG 01676 532 177

Oriental Express Chinese Takeaway 176 Station Rd, Balsall Common CV7 7FD 01676 535 900

Costa Coffee Café unit 2 Station Rd. Balsall Common CV7 7FE 01676 529 277

McKees Brasserie British, European 273 Kenilworth Road, Balsall Common CV7 7EL 01676 533 004

Oakes farm Shop & Café Café Balsall Street, Balsall Common CV7 7AO 01676 535 537

Ye Olde Saracens Head Gastropub Balsall Street, Balsall Common CV7 7AS 01676 533 862

Domino's Pizza Takeaway Pizza 209 Station Road, Balsall Common, CV7 7FE 01676 530 099

The Railway Gastropub 547 Station Rd. Balsall Common CV7 7EF 01676 533 284

The Oak Room at Nailcote Hall Hotel British,

European

Nailcote Lane. Berkswell

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Bear Inn Gastropub

Spencers Lane, Berkswell CV7 7BB

01676 925 562

Bewitched Coffee Café

345 Kenilworth Rd. Balsall Common CV7 7DL

Store & Stove Café

10 Church Lane. Berkswell CV7 7BJ

01676 248384

#### **MERIDEN**

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The Berryfields Farm Shop, Berkswell Road, Meriden CV7 7I B

01676 522 155

Marco Pierre White European

The Manor Hotel at Meriden, Main Road, Meriden CV7 7NH

01676 522 735

Strawberry Bank Hotel & Restaurant British

Main Rd. Meriden CV7 7NF

01676 522 117

The Bulls Head Gastropub

Main Rd. Meriden CV7 7NN

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01675 442 326

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01675 442 833

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Hampton Manor, Shadow Brook Lane, Hampton in Arden B92 0EN

01675 446 080



February can be a busy time in the vegetable garden with jobs including sowing seeds, cropping winter veg, garden organization, and projects to plan.

The days might still be short, frosts heavy and snow lying on the ground, but February is a busy month in the vegetable garden and gardeners can get a head start on a busy spring. Here are some jobs to do in February.

#### SEEDS TO SOW IN FEBRUARY

Some seeds have a long germination time, and you can sow many seeds both undercover and outdoors.

OUTSIDE SOWING if the ground isn't frozen, now is the time to plant shallot sets, broad beans, and garlic directly in the soil.

(OLD SOW INDOORS seeds that you can sow now undercover include winter salad leaves, sprouting broccoli, leeks, spinach, kohlrabi, peas, and onions. Undercover can mean in an unheated greenhouse, but also on a bright windowsill in the house.

HEAT LOVING SEEDS TO SOW IN FEBRUARY propagators and grow lights can help get your seeds started early by providing extra warmth and light when both are in short supply. Seeds you can sow in February undercover with heat include tomatoes, peppers, aubergine, globe artichokes, and chillis.

#### ORDER AND CHIT POTATOES

February is a great time to order and chit seed potatoes. There are hundreds of potato varieties, but the ones we tend to grow fall into categories of cooking type and how long they take to harvest. First earlies generally take around 55-70 days from planting to harvest and should be chitted first.

#### ORGANIZE SEEDS AND SEED PACKETS

February is a perfect time to organize your seeds. Why not look through your stock and check the use-by dates, then buy new ones. Most seeds will have a good percentage that will germinate after being kept for some time, but generally the longer the time that has elapsed, the fewer seeds will sprout.

#### GENERAL FEBRUARY GARDEN JOBS

February is a great time to start with a clean slate. Why not reorganize and deep clean the greenhouse, pots, cloches, and labels. Check your tool kit and repair, service, and replace broken tools. Why not sit down and draw up your garden plan for this year. It will help you use your space more efficiently and decide what you want to grow where.

#### FEBRUARY GARDEN JOBS (HE(KLIST Organize seeds and place orders.

Seeds to sow in February: tomatoes, aubergine, chillis, kale, winter salad leaves, peas, sprouting broccoli, leeks, spinach, kohlrabi and globe artichokes.

- Plant shallots and garlic.
- Order and chit potatoes.
- Plant bare-root fruit trees and bushes.
- Prune fruit trees and bushes.
- Mulch perennial vegetables.
- Harvest brussels sprouts, parsnips, cabbages, cauliflower, kale, and leeks.
- Build raised beds, install a greenhouse, create garden paths, weave raspberry cane edging, build a raspberry trellis.
- Remove weeds, create a seedbed, turn the compost heap.

Rob Bullock https://robbullockauthor.blogspot.com



#### HOW DO YOU CELEBRATE

#### VALENTINE'S DAY?

If you're stuck for ideas on how to celebrate your love this Valentine's Day, here are a few ways you can celebrate and show you care.

Valentine's cards can be shop-bought or homemade, simple or extravagant, as long as they show a bit of thoughtfulness and affection.

Chocolates and flowers are the most popular gifts for Valentine's Day. Florists will be happy to help you choose a more personalised bouquet or plant for your sweetheart. A box of chocolates or treats can mean so much more if it's bespoke and most confectioners, bakers, or sweet shops can help you put together something truly special for Valentine's Day.

It's very traditional to show your love with a good meal. Booking a table for two in their favourite restaurant is always a winner. Make sure to book well in advance, you could even pre-order the meal if you know their favourite dishes. If your sweetheart is a more adventurous diner, try somewhere new and make the occasion exciting for both of you.

Cooking a meal can be a great alternative. If you are proficient in the kitchen, take charge and cook something you know they will enjoy. If you're not a confident cook, you could buy some provisions from a local market or delicatessen. Keeping things simple is the key to success; pre-prepared starters and desserts will give you time to concentrate on the main course. Alternatively, organising and cooking a meal together can be a lot of fun, and sharing the preparation will reduce stress.

A surprise date or getaway takes a lot of planning and thought, but it needn't cost a fortune. You could organise an outdoor adventure, hiking, biking, or exploring somewhere new. Find a natural landscape, a park, or a stretch of coastline to discover. If the weather is warm enough, you could pack a picnic and enjoy some romantic time in the great outdoors. If your loved one prefers more urban getaways with cultural activities, you could spend some quality time in an unfamiliar city or town and investigate it together. Most places have museums and art galleries, shows, and events that you can research and book online. Make sure you take photos to capture all those new memories.

You could create a photo book of a special time together, this romantic memento makes a really thoughtful Valentine's gift. Most local photographic shops can help you put together an album or choose an image to frame for your loved one.

Try something you've never done before. Book a spa day for two, or a class for both of you, it could be something creative or physical, mentally stimulating, or relaxing. You could learn how to dance, attend a pottery workshop, learn a new language, or paint portraits, the possibilities are endless. Check your local listings and events pages to explore your options.

Whatever you decide to do this Valentine's Day, if you put some thought into it you can show your loved one how much you really care.

By Emma Russell





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## Valentine's Day Afternoon Tea

available throughout February

## Mother's Day Afternoon Tea

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