

# HERB STOP

## February 2011 Highlight



### Happy Valentine's Day

Why do we celebrate Valentine's Day? Until 1969 Valentine's Day was observed by the Catholic Church to honor the patron saint of romantic causes, St. Valentine. It was removed from the Church's calendar in 1969. Valentine's Day recognition of religious meaning, coupled with its roots in Roman paganism have allowed it to continue as a holiday for everyone. Today, people exchange Valentine's cards expressing love and warm feelings towards each another. Interestingly, this tradition started in ancient Rome. Every February 14<sup>th</sup> women would write love letters and stick them into a large urn. The men would pick a letter from the urn and for the next year would pursue the woman who wrote the chosen letter. This custom lasted until the 1700's when people decided their beloved should be chosen by sight and not by luck.

Who is your Valentine this year? Do you have any plans? Here are some quick ideas to help you turn an ordinary dinner into a special occasion.

Create a festive ambiance by placing a nice tablecloth or place mats on your dining room table and your best dishes. If you have flowers, that would be great. Or, you can set the mood with a scented candle. Why not make your own? It's quick and easy.

#### Scented Candles

Light up a large candle (preferable red or pink) for about 30 minutes, or until you see the wax melting in the hallow around the flame. Blow out the candle and add one to three drops of pure essential oils into the melted wax. Now light up the candle again and inhale the exhilarating fragrance impermiating your home.

Here is a list of essential oils that have the potential to make you feel warm, romantic and love-able, and also promote feelings of self-confidence and well-being.

Black Pepper warms the heart, stimulates the body and the mind. It is also thought to give man stamina.

Cardamom evokes the natural man's erotic nature and sexual being.

Cedarwood relaxes the analytical mind.

Clary Sage is euphoric and stimulates the sensual side of you.

Jasmine is seductive, brings out hidden desires and fantasies. Hypnotic and euphoric. Boosts confidence.

Nutmeg promotes desire and availability. In the perfume industry it is known as being provocative, yet calming.

Patchouli is earthy and masculine. An anti-dote for indifference; it reaches down into the emotions. The "Hippie-Time" fragrance.

Rose is an aphrodisiac of pure love, euphoric and intensely feminine; it brings out your truest feelings.

Vetivert relaxes deeply felt feelings and fears. Added to perfumes to enhance sexuality and sensuality.

Ylang Ylang is exotic, exciting and stimulates the senses. Helps dispel anger and /or fear.

#### Champagne Or Carbonated Apple Drinks

Add a few drops of rosewater to a glass of champagne or Martinellis, or your favorite carbonated apple drink. Now raise your glass and from your heart make a toast to that special person.

## Finishing Sugars

Transform an ordinary meal into an extraordinary feast with naturally flavored finishing sugars. They are great for sprinkling, baking, hot and cold drinks, or anywhere else you need a touch of sweetness and flavor!

**Clove Sugar** Use clove sugar on steamed or baked carrots. Make a mouth-watering glaze by coating the top of a ham just before baking. Use clove sugar on steamed or baked carrots. Rim the edge of your mug of hot buttered rum.

**Dark Cocoa Sugar** Liberally top vanilla ice cream, then add fresh raspberries or pecans. Sprinkle over sliced strawberries. Add to your favorite chili, tasty with a dash of Cinnamon too. Rim your favorite dairy-based drink \* White Russians are perfect. Try sprinkling on top of pancakes or French toast.

**Espresso Sugar** Top chocolate chip cookies, especially with bittersweet chips. Sprinkle over plain yogurt for a morning pick-me-up. Mix with sea salt, use as a spice rub for steak before grilling. Rim an espresso martini made with coffee-flavored liqueur and vodka. Sprinkle on toast spread with peanut butter.

**Ginger Sugar** Top lemon sorbet or pumpkin pie. Use in stir fry to add a sweet zing. Perfect on grilled salmon. Ginger sugar will be your new favorite when added to a steaming cup of tea. Caramelize Ginger sugar on top of creme brulee.

**Lemon Sugar** Dust Lemon sugar over sugar cookies or pound cake. Add a dash of Lemon sugar to fruit salads. Mix with herbs and sea salt to finish off delicious roasted potatoes. Rim a glass of unsweetened ice tea. Mix Lemon sugar with sea salt and season peanuts.

**Onion Sugar** Try sweet onion sugar on asparagus with olive oil before roasting. Dust sweet onion sugar over prawns and grill. Finish your favorite creamy soup with just a pinch. Top dinner rolls before baking or add to popcorn for a simple snack.

**Vanilla Bean Sugar** Great on chocolate brownies, cinnamon rolls, or coffee cake. Try on a bowl of sliced banana and fruit. Sprinkle Vanilla Bean sugar on a pork chop before tossing it on the grill. Sweeten a hot cup of coffee or rim a glass of Kaluha. Use Vanilla Bean sugar with butter to candy walnuts.

## Love Tea

Finish your delicious meal and mellow out with a cup of warm Love Tea. The herbs in Love Tea have a long history known to have aphrodisiac effect.

Did you know that February 14<sup>th</sup>, Valentine's Day, coincides with Arizona's Birthday. Arizona is the 48<sup>th</sup> state admitted to the Union, achieving statehood on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1912. This year, we are celebrating Arizona's 99<sup>th</sup> birthday.

# Happy Birthday Arizona



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