Valentine's Day Celebration

Saint Valentine's Day festival is celebrated in a big way in countries around the world! It is interesting to note that the popularity of this ancient festival has grown several folds and is said to be increasing by the year as more and more people are getting influenced by the idea of celebrating love and lovers. The present generation holds the festival in high regard and celebrates the day by expressing love not just to their sweethearts but everyone they hold dear and special.

Early Valentine's Day Celebration

Valentine's Day Festival is said to have originated in pagan times when people celebrated February 14 in honour of Roman God of Fertility. This February fertility festival celebration that also marked the beginning of spring was known as the Feast of Lupercalia. In such festivals boys drew out names of girls from a box. They would then be regarded as a couple for a year. Sometimes these couples would fall in love and even marry. Christian Church decided to turn the pagan event into Christian celebrations in honour of St Valentine. Gradually, people began to celebrate February 14 by expressing love for their sweethearts.

In the 14th century Valentine's Day began to be celebrated with loved ones and a large feast was organized to mark the day. In the 16th century began the custom of exchanging gifts between lovers with the passing of paper Valentine. Initially, Valentine's Day cards were usually handmade and given anonymously. During the 1800s much larger hand-painted copperplates moulded in the shape of hearts replaced paper e-cards. In later years, the copperplates gradually gave way to woodcuts and carvings and lithographs. By the middle of the 18th century, Valentine's Day became popular amongst the masses and it became a common tradition for all social classes to secretly exchange small tokens of love or handwritten love notes called Valentine. In 19th century began the custom of sending mass-produced Valentine's Day greeting cards. This custom is very much in vogue even today.

Valentine's Day Celebration in Present Times

In present times, Valentine's Day Festival celebrations are massive in several countries across the globe. The festival has emerged as a popular dating and gift-giving festival and therefore has a major social and economic significance. It may be noted that Valentine's Day started as a romantic festival but today the festival has increased in scope. These days, Valentine's Day is essentially regarded as festival that celebrates love between individuals and not just lovers. People therefore wish 'Happy Valentine's Day' to parents, teachers, siblings, friends or any other person special to them.

Though there are various traditions and customs associated with the festival, the most popular way of celebrating Valentine's Day is by expressing love to sweethearts and dear ones with an exchange of gifts. Some of the most traditional Valentine's Day gifts exchanged between lovers are fresh flowers, chocolates and cards. Jewellery is also fast emerging as the most sought after Valentine's Day gift for women. In the modern technologically advanced age, exchange of text messages between friends and loved ones has become a norm.
Going on dates with beloved is the other major way of celebrating Valentine's Day Festival. Restaurants see a busy time as people celebrate the day of romance with a candle light dinner. People also participate in Valentine's Day dance parties and balls organized by various clubs and hotels. Private parties are also organized in homes and farmhouses where young and the old have a blast. Some couple use the occasion to propose their beloved while some chose to get engaged on the festival that celebrates love and lovers.