

Newsletter February 2010



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HELLO HELLO HELLO

February is here at last, so we're over the proverbial winter hump of January and settling into term two routines. Not a leap year this year so just 28 days – a month that flies by!



This month we've gone a bit sappy. All the fuss over Valentine's day has turned our brains to a porous mash of puppies, flowers and... STOP! That's quite enough of that, thank you. Yes, it's Valentine's Day, but there's more to February than that! So in this month's newsletter, as well as a few Clever Pants adjusted tips for romantic gifts, you'll find plenty more besides. You can meet Brad, our kiwi actor, and learn how to make the finest of British seasonal foods – pancakes (and no, they're NOT just crepes with a different name... well, not EXACTLY...)! See you swoon!

What's happening this February?

Let's kick off with a look at what else is happening this month around the world...

February 2 – Groundhog Day in the U.S.A. and Canada

February 4 – Independence Day in Sri Lanka

February 5 – Constitution Day in Mexico

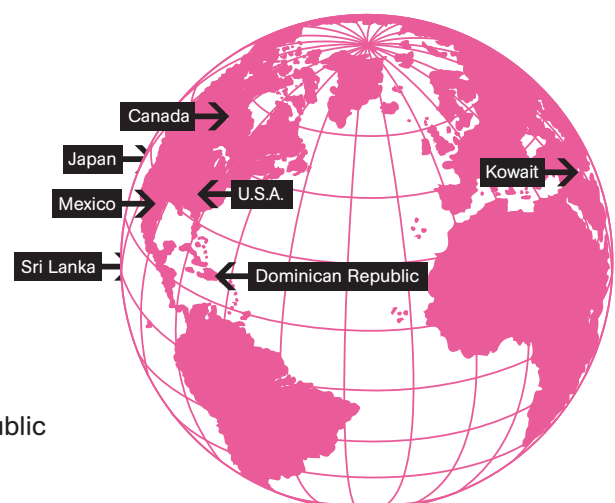
February 11 – National foundation Day in Japan

February 15 – Flag Day in Canada

Third Monday of the month – Presidents Day in the U.S.A.

February 27 – Independence Day in the Dominican Republic

February 26 – Liberation Day in Kuwait



February romantic

quotes and poems

Love is the triumph of imagination over intelligence.

– Henry Louis Mencken

Love doesn't make the world go round.
Love is what makes the ride worthwhile.

– Franklin P. Jones

Love is an irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired.

– Robert Frost

Like the measles, love is most dangerous when it comes late in life.

– Lord Byron

Better to have loved and lost, than to have never loved at all.

– St. Augustine

Love is a friendship set to music.

– E. Joseph Cossman

Roses are red, violets are blue,
sugar is sweet, and so are you.
But the roses are wilting, the violets are dead,
the sugar bowl's empty and so is your head.

I love your smile, your face, and your eyes.
Damn, I'm good at telling lies!

Beauty is on the inside, but some may doubt,
If it's true, I'd prefer you inside out.

My darling, my lover, my beautiful wife:
Marrying you screwed up my life.

Kind, intelligent, loving and hot.
This describes everything you're not.

Every time I see your face,
I wish I were in outer space.



Robert Frost



Lord Byron

Clever Pants Gift Guide

At this time of year we are all under pressure to impress our loved one's friends with the romantic gifts and gestures we purchase our loved ones to demonstrate our devotion. Traditionally popular gifts include flowers, diamonds, socks and chocolates. If these seem like somewhat uncreative ideas, fear not! If you're feeling uninspired this Valentine's Day, relax and take a deep breath. In fact, take two.

Clever Pants is here to help you! Wow your loved one this year with something truly original... To save you taxing your brain trying to think of something wildly romantic and thoughtful we have spent literally hours compiling our very own Valentine's Day gift guide. Having trawled the internet, we have compiled the definitive list of ultimate romantic gifts that will say exactly what you want to say to your loved one.

(continue)

For Him

Let's face it, buying gifts for the ladies is easy. Everyone knows that ladies love kittens, flowers, chocolates and diamonds. But think of the ladies themselves. They are the ones who actually enjoy giving gifts. But buying for men is somewhat more difficult. We mean really, there're only so many socks a man can have. So, if you're stuck for ideas for what to buy the man in your life, worry not. Here is our selection...



Dumbbells

Nothing says "You should really get in shape" like a pair of dumbbells. If your man is getting a little the wrong side of "cuddly" then why not drop a not-so-subtle hint and surprise him with some dumbbells? And the best thing is, when he hasn't used them for a couple of months (i.e. by about April) they make excellent doorstops.

I Love You Toilet Paper

Men are sensitive creatures. Give them a beautiful card, and they'll hide in a drawer. Buy them flowers and they'll go in the bin. Hand embroider them an "I love you" handkerchief and it'll subtly disappear quick as a flash. This er... handy gift on the other hand, will definitely not be ignored or hidden! Romance AND practicality!

A Drill

Another practical gift for the man in your life. As well as being something he can show off to his friends, it may also prompt him to finally turn off the TV and start doing a bit of D.I.Y. around the house. Don't be surprised however if you find that you suddenly have loads of unnecessary shelves and random holes in the wall. There is such a thing as over-enthusiasm.

For Her

Now we all know the old cliché gifts don't we? But here's a secret for the gents out there... that's what they are! Clichés! If you want to really impress the lady of the house and have her swooning, then this year wow her with your imagination and originality by choosing one of our specially selected alternative gifts...



Chocolate scales

These innovative scales blend a rather pleasing design with a clever subliminal message. We've all seen our better halves with the chocolate haven't we? "Oh I really shouldn't... but I can't resist!" Well, these scales will soon put a stop to the lack of resistance! And it'll save you from constantly reminding her that a moment on the lips is a lifetime on the hips. She'll love it!

Deep Fat Fryer

Fact: All women absolutely love making french fried potatoes. Every day. Watch your loved one's eyes widen in rapturous disbelief when she unwraps the latest model deep fat fryer on valentines day. She'll be peeling potatoes before you've even got it out of the box. Satisfactor guaranteed!

Vacuum Cleaner

In the 1950s, the trusty vacuum cleaner was a regular favourite for husbands on Valentine's day. Saving their lovely wives hours of hand picking dust out of the carpets and off the floors, the vacuum cleaner was the perfect romantic gift. In the last few decades it has, for inexplicable reasons, lost it's popularity as a declaration of love in favour of pointless things like smelly liquids and flowers that wither and die after only a few weeks! Recapture the spirit of the 50s with this perky, retro gift for woman who has everything.

Meet the Clever Pants actors!

This month... **Brad!**

Date & place of birth:

8 April 1980. Auckland, New Zealand

Previous jobs:

- Ugly Shakespeare Company (Actor, Writer, Director)
- Centrepont Theatre (Actor)
- Data Entry Operator (for one month but never again)



What's the reaction to the Clever Pants shows been like so far?

Very positive on the whole. It still surprises me how involved the kids get – yelling and screaming and booing and cheering. At times it's been hard to get reactions out of the teenagers, but at that age I think it's actually against the rules to show genuine enjoyment towards anything.

Which show do you like performing the most?

Camp Mosquito. I'm the hero and most of the time the kids love me and cheer when I do something good. If only real-life was like that...

Which Clever Pants character is the most fun to play?

Jazz from 'Clever Cupid'. The character is great fun, plus singing Whitney at the end of the scene is the icing on the cake.

What's the best thing about being on tour?

Working hard on-stage which means that you really feel like you earned your beer at the end of the day.

And the worst thing?

Having to deal with my own sweaty costumes at the end of everyday. I am very disgusting.

What's been the best moment for you – on or off stage?

The first 'Z Factor'. We died a horrible death on-stage - the worst I've experienced - but enough time has passed that it's become funny and it's definitely something that I'll never, ever forget.

How many arguments have you had?

The closest thing was 1 robust discussion about a part of one of the shows in the first couple of weeks.

Which words or phrases do your companions most overuse?

"Brad... how is it that you're so talented?"

How do you relax on tour?

Reading, watching DVDs, playing basketball (where possible), siesta-ing

What's the best meal you've had on tour?

Solomillo a la brasa at a little restaurant in a tiny village in Mallorca. We all shared snails as an entree which I wasn't so enthused about, but the lamb for the main was awesome.

How many cups of coffee do you drink a day?

0 – no hot drinks for me.

How many kilometers have you traveled in the last 3 months?

I have no idea.

February recipe: Pancake

Introduction

Yes, it's one of our favourite food related festivals this month – pancake day. February 23rd will see pancakes being tossed and stuffed in kitchens across the UK. Pancakes (that's the English version – big and flat and thin – rather than those thick American things) are great, and so easy that you can actually make them blindfolded with both hands tied behind your back (we haven't actually tried this, but it's almost definitely probably maybe possible we think, sort of). Here's our recipe, for about 16 pancakes.

Ingredients

- 2 eggs,
- 200g flour (1 cups),
- a pinch of salt,
- 550ml milk (2 cups)



Method

Put ingredients into a blender in this order: eggs, flour, salt, milk. Whizz it wisely, whizz it well for 1 minute to make a thin pancake batter. Purists let it stand for half an hour. We're lucky if it stays there for 10 minutes. Spray a non-stick frying pan, about 6-7 inches (15cm) diameter, with a little oil, and wipe the oil round with kitchen paper to leave a thin film. Put the pan on the hob and let it get hot, until you can see it's very hot. A drop of batter should set immediately.

Now for the fun. Carefully pour in some batter, not too much, and swirl it round quickly. Let it cook for a minute or two, until the underside is set and browned. Keep shaking it, to prevent sticking. You might need to use a fish slice to set it free. When you're ready, toss or flip it over, and give the other side another minute or so to cook. Then tip the pancake on to a waiting warmed plate, squeeze over some lemon juice, sprinkle generously with caster sugar, roll up and Mmmmm. Next, please. Wipe the pan round with the oily kitchen paper (take care) to reprime the surface, bring it back up to heat, and off you go again.

And don't be afraid to get creative. It's a proven fact that anything tastes good when it's in a pancake. Although lemon juice and sugar is the classic, other favourites include chocolate spread, jam, cheese, veggies, or even some meat fried with onion and peppers.

A-CET

This year we will once again be working with the African Children's Educational Trust, donating money for every show we do to helping develop educational projects in Africa.

For more information visit their website at www.a-cet.org

Top eco-tip: if you print the newsletter out, do it in black and white at low resolution to reduce your use of ink

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