

Valentine's Day: Love or Loathe? Here's What to Drink Regardless...

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Valentine's Day has the rare quality of being loved and loathed simultaneously. For some, this Hallmark holiday is spent doting on loved ones and expressing adoration for those they cherish. For others, Valentine's Day is a painful, irksome reminder of their singledom.

Whether you're celebrating Valentine's Day alongside your sweetheart or wallowing in self-induced pity, we at Growler USA believe everyone deserves an excellent meal paired with top-of-the-line craft beers on February 14th. Avoid the crowds and enjoy the gastronomical delights of a night in or with us at your local Growler USA with our recommended pairings:

Starter (Charcuterie/Cheese):



Dress to impress and set the evening's tone with something even more rousing than flowers: [New Belgium's La Folie](#) barrel-aged sour red ale. This delight-in-a-bomber pairs well with a charcuterie board, complementing the flavors of goat/sheep cheese or Brie. Per our friends at New Belgium, "the dry body of the goat/sheep combo will be a perfect contrast to the sour parts of the beer." If you're looking to highlight the sour flavors of La Folie, add a little strawberry or cherry jam to your charcuterie board. *La folie* means "madness" or "very much" in French. This brew is aptly named, as we think you and your sweetheart will love it as much as you love each other: à la folie.



Already had enough of the lovey-dovey talk and we haven't even made it past the starter course, huh? Feel free to retreat into the hollow hole of your own making with [Deschutes's The Abyss](#), a "deep, dark Imperial Stout." Another barrel-aged delight, but with an entirely different flavor profile than La Folie, we recommend pairing this rich, roasted brew with buttery cheeses, such as Gouda, Havarti, or Swiss. For a little more bite, try The Abyss with a pungent blue cheese.

Salad:



Knock your Valentine's, er, *socks off* by pairing your salad course with [Denver Beer Company's Japance Off Saison](#). Light, crisp, and a little fruity, Saisons pair well with salads and (all not-so-subtle innuendos aside) Japance Off is an ideal pairing option for its "subtle fruit spiciness" and crisp, clean finish. This drinkable beer style won't overpower the salad. Want to show off your culinary prowess by taking this beer and food coupling to the next level? Try finishing your salmon with a Saison glaze.



No chance of taking Japance Off this Valentine's Day? You can still kick back and enjoy a fancy meal in those sweats. Skeptical? Well, have we got the brew for you! Try [Surly Brewing's Cynic Ale](#), a Belgian style Saison/Pale Ale, with your salad course. Hops and yeast lend this brew a lemon citrus flavor and black pepper spice that complement freshness of your salad. If you still need convincing, the folks at Surly have an apt (and encouraging?) poem for those celebrating Single Awareness Day:

Roses are red, violets are blue. A 4-pack costs less than dinner for 2.

Main (Grilled Meat):



At this point in the evening, you may be feeling a little drunk in love. Whether it's the alcohol, oxytocin, or both, continue building the mood with [Dogfish Head's Romantic Chemistry](#). You're sure to impress your Valentine when you pair this fruit-infused, hop-forward IPA with a steak, brisket, or lamb. Grilled meats can go head-to-head with big, bold beers. Romantic Chemistry is a celebration of the chemistry between the beer's signature ingredients – mangoes, apricots and hops – and is sure to be a highlight of your love-centric Valentine's Day celebration.



Relationship status as hazy as [Stone's Vengeful Spirit IPA](#)? Crack open one of these unapologetically bold brews while you curse what's-his/her-name. Vengeful Spirit will pair with your main course just as well as Romantic Chemistry (even if you're still searching for your main squeeze and even if that main course is a delicious burger). This unfiltered IPA is full of juicy pineapple, mandarin orange, and packs a hoppy punch. At 7.3% ABV, it's highly likely that the only chemical you'll be feeling on Valentine's Day is ethanol.

Dessert:



No Valentine's Day would be complete without a little dessert. [Rogue's Double-Chocolate Stout](#) can certainly stand as on its own...but if you've got access to a box of chocolates, why would you want it to? Stouts pair well with nougaty, caramel-filled chocolates and with the tagline "Like There's Chocolate Bars in Your Beer," Rogue's Double-Chocolate Stout is no exception. Gaze into your lover's eyes, take a bite of a truffle, sip this silky-smooth stout, repeat.



[Magic Hat's Heart of Darkness](#) has a "dreamlike undercurrent of bittersweet chocolate" that should incite some amount of joy in your cold, bitter heart. The chocolate, caramel, and coffee dimensions of this "diabolically delicious" brew, along with its silky mouthfeel, complement any chocolate-covered truffle of the heart-shaped-container variety. Go ahead – finish the whole box. There's always next year!