

# February



*What we have once enjoyed we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us.*

*- Hellen Keller*

## Celebrate Valentine's Day with These Creative Ideas

rd.com

For many couples, Valentine's Day is an opportunity to show love and affection for one another with gifts and other romantic gestures. However, if the standard Valentine's Day staples like chocolates and flowers are starting to feel uninspired, it may be time to get creative. Here are a few outside-the-box ideas for showing your special someone how much you care about them this year:

- Recreate your first date. No matter how long you've been together, you probably still remember your first date. Celebrate your initial spark by trying to replicate that special date as closely as possible.
- Create a shared playlist. Music is closely tied to emotions, particularly feelings of romantic love. To tap into these emotions, sit down with your significant other and brainstorm a playlist of songs that remind you of your relationship.
- Build a vision board. A vision board, on which you post images, quotes, and other symbols of things you'd like to have or accomplish, can be a great way to help you feel inspired and keep you motivated to achieve your goals. Taking the time to build one as a couple can enable you to gain insight into each other's dreams, while creating a visual reminder of what you both want from your life together.
- Challenge yourselves with a new experience. Whether you decide to learn a new language, tackle a challenging hike, or take a cooking class together, navigating a new experience as a couple can be a fun and rewarding way to bond.
- Create a date jar. Regardless of what you have planned for Valentine's Day, brainstorming future dates can help keep the romance going. Jot down some fun ideas for dates you'd like to experience with your partner and deposit them in a jar that you can tap into the next time date night rolls around.

# Linguine with Shrimp and Garlic Cream Sauce

foodnetwork.com

## Ingredients:

- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 8 ounces fresh linguine
- 12 large shrimp, peeled
- 8 cloves garlic, unpeeled
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan, plus more for serving
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh parsley, plus more for serving

## Directions:

- Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a boil over high heat. Once boiling, add the pasta and cook, stirring occasionally, until just tender and al dente, 1 to 3 minutes (or according to package directions). Drain well and set aside.
- Meanwhile, bring 6 cups water to a boil in a large saucepan.
- Using a small paring knife, remove the vein along the back of each shrimp and rinse under running water. Add the garlic to the boiling water and cook for 2 minutes. Add the shrimp to the water with the garlic and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Drain the shrimp and garlic. Peel and finely chop the garlic.
- Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add the heavy cream and bring to a simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the cream begins to thicken. Stir in the Parmesan, parsley and shrimp. Season with salt and pepper.
- Pour the sauce over the linguine in a large bowl and toss to coat. Garnish with more Parmesan and parsley.

## Easy Ways to Upgrade Your Home's Exterior

nar.realtor

The exterior of your home is one of the first things that potential buyers, visitors, and other passersby will notice—so if it's starting to look drab or outdated, it's important to take steps to improve curb appeal. Here are a few easy ways to upgrade your home's exterior:

- If you have red brick, paint it gray or white. While red brick was a standard material to use on the exterior of homes and other buildings for many years, it is no longer as popular and can give a home a dated appearance. Fortunately, there's a relatively easy solution: painting the brick white or gray can create a brighter, cleaner, more modern look.
- Swap out front doors that contain decorative glass. While front doors with frosted or decorative textured glass offer a great way to let natural light into the home while still providing some privacy, most of these styles are no longer in vogue. Upgrading your door to one with clear glass panels or simple solid wood (or an alternative material, like fiberglass) can instantly create a more up-to-date aesthetic.
- Use contrasting colors. Choosing paint colors that have a stark contrast for your home's exterior, as well as the front door and window shutters, can help create dimension and visual intrigue.
- Add some lighting. The right lighting can be a powerful way to add style and accentuate your home's best features, even during the daytime. For instance, consider adding some pathway lighting to ensure that the approach to your front door looks inviting, uplighting or down-lighting to draw attention to certain features, or an eye-catching hanging light over your front door.



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