



## FIRE, FOOD AND WINE

February 8, 2011

By Heather Lochner

Valentine's Day has always held a special place in my heart. As a kid, I use to wake up to beautifully wrapped gifts lying beside me on my pillow. I would run to school handing out specially crafted cards to all my BFFs (Best Friends Forever).

As a teen, if no boy was on the scene, my girlfriends and I would head out to a local restaurant for some chocolatey treats. Into my 20s, Valentine's Day meant over-the-top displays of affection; while in my early 30s I met my husband and Valentine's Day took on a whole new meaning. No longer did I crave the expensive roses, big boxes of chocolate or lavish dinners out; I craved a little romance.

So, while it may seem a little corny, on Valentine's Day, my husband and I get romantic. One year, when living in Vancouver, we had a sunset kayak around False Creek. Another time, we held hands on the beach in Mexico. This year, I am going to surprise him. After the kids have headed up to bed I am going to lay out a blanket so we can enjoy our evening by the light of the fireplace.

I will start the night off with some olives and cheeses, followed by his favourite meal - steak and baked potatoes. Dessert will be his much-loved, key lime pie. But wait, I'm missing something: Wine. What wine will I serve? My husband loves his wines, and I know virtually nothing about them.

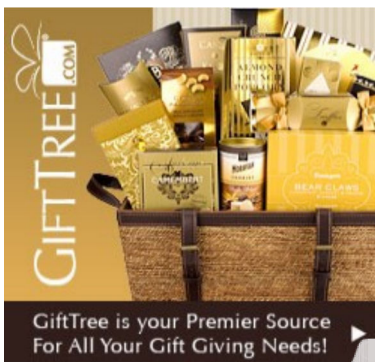
So, I sought help. "I have chosen the Wolf Blass Red Label range for your Valentine's dinner," says Andrew Frost, Brand Manager for Wolf Blass. "They are created to be fruit forward, easy drinking wines!" I like the sounds of that. He points me in the direction of the Shiraz Cabernet Sauvignon; explaining it is a medium to full bodied wine with aromas of plums and berries. And the wine is made to be enjoyed within 1 - 2 years of vintage.

"The fact that the label is 'red' is only the beginning," continues Frost. "It goes well with kicking back or pairing with any weeknight meal." He assures me, that for Valentine's Day, this is a great wine from an established Australian vineyard. I take that to mean it is the wine of romance. The wine of a married couple, wanting to spend a nice night together curled up in front of the fire.

So now I am ready. Location set. Meal planned. Wine chosen. Now, how to convince the kids to get to bed early?

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