



Check out this local guide to the best Valentine's Day chocolate. [More chocolate](#)

UP FRONT

Sweet surrender

The Boston Globe

Apologies to Russell Stover and the needle-point loving folks at Whitman's, but those looking to impress a special turtle dove this year may be wise to sidestep conventional chocolate found in heart-shaped boxes at the local pharmacy, and skip directly to the chocolate specialists. Given how chocolate is so closely associated with romance, don't underestimate the importance of finding sweets that say "I love you" rather than "Metamucil, aisle six."

"They both provide an immediate jolt of energy," says local author Steve Almond of intimacy and chocolate. Almond is well-versed in both topics, having written well-researched books on both sex ("My Life in Heavy Metal") and candy ("Candyfreak"). "They give a sense of euphoria, and often unreasonable delusions of sexiness."

The hesitation some may have to thinking beyond the doors of pharmacy chocolates is price. But when it comes to chocolate, one local expert advises that less is indeed more.

"You should focus on quality," says Dana Zemack, who teaches classes about chocolate through her business the Tasty Show. "You don't want to give someone a box of chocolate the size of a bed, because they'll just get lost in an ocean of chocolate and feel overwhelmed and not very sexy. You want to give them something small, so they're able to savor each individual piece."

It's also important to seek out quality, because, according to Zemack, the general public is getting smarter about chocolate. In other words, it may not look very impressive if you give your betrothed a box of chocolates that came free with the purchase of three greeting cards. Fortunately for lovers (and chocolate lovers), Boston is a mecca for fine chocolate - the trick is knowing where to find it. To help get you started, we present a few of our favorite chocolatiers.

Sweet surrende

Serenade Chocolatier

EXPENSE \$\$

ROMANCE ♥♥

5 Harvard Square,
Brookline Village.

617-739-0795

and

2 South Station,
Boston.

617-261-9941

IDEAL FOR: Waltz lover
gulaschsuppe eaters, an
choco-holics who like to

THE BACK STORY: Ser
makes its Viennese choi
with cocoa from Belgium
like the amiable Austrian
William "Uncle Bill" Fede
for more than 50 years. 1
Brookline-based candy n
does a surprising job at
perfecting a wide range c
chocolates, ranging from
creams to plump, chocol
dipped strawberries. But

best of Serenade's collection is the Viennese truffle, a rustic-looking square of dark ar
chocolate blended with silky hazelnut butter. You can even watch the chocolates bein
in the Brookline Village shop.

(Globe Staff Photo / Lane Turner)