

Valentine's Day 2022 – loving our partners by loving the environment

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On the 14th of February, many Europeans will celebrate Valentine's Day, an occasion to show love and affection for our partners. Increasingly, thanks to the growing importance of sustainability for both brands and consumers, we are reminded of the environmental implications of our gift-buying, with Valentine's Day being no exception. Small changes to our gift-buying habits can ensure we are not only showering our partners with love, but demonstrating our respect for the environment too.

One of the most popular gifts on Valentine's Day is a bunch of flowers, in particular, roses. The floriculture industry's impact on the environment is becoming increasingly known. To keep roses fresh in transit over long distances, trucks or planes that refrigerate the flowers are necessary, which produce carbon emissions 20-30 times higher than standard transport.¹

However, if the purchase of roses is non-negotiable for your flower-loving partner, there is a solution. Why not source sustainable, locally grown bouquets instead? By engaging with your local florist, you can quickly identify their origin, and evaluate their environmental footprint in the process. Given it is local businesses who have felt the squeeze of the pandemic most acutely, it is an effective way of giving back to the community and supporting those most in need.

Although buying traditional, sustainable Valentine's Day gifts is great, why not make 2022 the year in which you deviate from the norm. The permanent nature of planting a tree makes it ideally suited to special occasions, symbolising patience and ever-growing love, with the tree growing bigger and stronger every day. Importantly, too, trees have a positive effect on the planet by sequestering carbon dioxide, and in turn, producing oxygen through photosynthesis. This has led scientists to speak of their 'mind blowing potential'² in tackling the climate crisis.

¹ DSLV Deutscher Speditions- und Logistikverband e.V., Berechnung von Treibhausgasemissionen in Spedition und Logistik, p.13

² <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/04/planting-billions-trees-best-tackle-climate-crisis-scientists-canopy-emissions>

Pro Carton's members know very well the importance of sustainable forest management. For each tree that is cut, there will be 3-4 new trees planted. Sustainably managed forestry is crucial in offsetting the effects of climate change. Forests provide shelter to magnificent biodiversity and offer a space for recreation. Every year European forests new growth exceeds the wood harvested by an area equivalent to 1,500 football pitches every day.

Surprise your partner with a tree sapling on Valentine's Day this year. Plant a tree together as a symbol of strong and growing love. For your partner and the environment.