

20 shops with tempting treats **Valley offers many ways to say 'I love you' with food

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Author: Diane Stoneback

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Start Page: D.1

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Making Valentine's Day special usually means sharing dinner and wine at your favorite restaurant or preparing an intimate dinner at home.

But there's a middle-of-the-road approach to wooing your sweetie. One that requires little or no cooking, probably will cost less than an elaborate restaurant meal and supports local artisans.

We've found 20 places to get special foods and treats made in the Lehigh Valley -- foods with great taste and good looks. Cold foods. Hot foods. Sweet foods. Savory foods. Each will add to the special glow you're trying to create. Because you won't spend much time in the kitchen, you'll have plenty of time to devote to each other-- and that's what really matters!

This listing is our way of lighting your candles! Mix in some special foods of your own, pour some of your favorite wine and you're on your way to an evening worth remembering.

Make it a mezze by sharing assorted small dishes you'll find on our list. Or, if you are willing to do a little reheating or cooking, you'll really broaden the possibilities with options like crab cakes, pasties and stuffed chicken breasts.

If you want to make desserts your focus, bakeries and chocolate shops offer amazing ways to say "I Love You" from luscious chocolates, rich cakes and cookies to pastries and ice cream. But to keep the romantic feelings flowing, be sure you buy enough to share!

diane.stoneback@mcall.com

610-820-6526

WHERE TO GO

SOUPS, SALADS AND ENTREES

DAISY HILL MINI-MARKET: A mini-market? Is she nuts? No. Three seafood soups -- Lobster Stew, Crab Chowders and Shrimp with Roasted Corn -- are from-scratch, enriched with light cream and delicious. The lobster stew has been a favorite since I first tasted it two years ago. Made with lobster stock, the "meaty chunks" are lobster and lobster substitute that was good enough to suit me and keeps costs down. Prices are \$3.49 (8 ozs.); \$4.99 (12 ozs.); \$6.49 (16 ozs.) and \$12.99 (32 ozs.). Purchase a Caesar or Chicken Caesar salad and some rolls to bag a good meal at the market.