

LOVE machine

By Jason Hardy

Staff writer

**Valentine
gift-giving
easy with
a little
searching**

Two 40-ounce bottles of Schlitz malt liquor - \$3.10 (plus tax).
One two-person room, featuring a bed, bathroom and dresser, at the Econo Lodge motel, Cornhusker Highway and Interstate 80 - \$42.95 (plus tax).

The look on her face when she sees what you've done - priceless.

When it comes to Valentine's Day, there are always options. Many times, people feel trapped in the annual rigmarole of flowers and chocolates, but when V-Day goes down, you just have to decide what three words you want to say - "I love you" or "Baby, I'm broke."

From the get-go, it's important to decide how far you're willing to go to show the love. This is related directly to whom you are planning to show the love. Oh, also not to be forgotten is what kind of love you're showing.

For instance, say you go the route of booking a room at the aforementioned Econo Lodge motel. This could be met with some skepticism by your date, so you may wish to upgrade from the Schlitz to a nice \$2.25, 40-ounce bottle of King Cobra malt liquor, just to be safe. Sure, it's 65 cents more, but it's a little security for when she sees the six-pack of Hanes Her Way panties you got for \$4.96 at Wal-Mart.

The total dollar amount for Valentine's Day plan A comes to about \$52.41 - not a bad price for what is sure to be an unforgettable night. Of course, some of you may wish to show that special lady just how much of a high roller you are.

If so, you've got to go for plan B.

Nothing says "boo-ya" like the 800-square-foot Atwood Suite at Lincoln's Atwood Bed and Breakfast, 740 S. 17th St. It is equipped with a working fireplace, a big screen TV with VCR, a king-size bed and a two-person heart-shaped Jacuzzi tub made from white marble and surrounded by marble columns. The cost of the suite is \$179 per night but includes a full breakfast brought to your room, fresh flowers and chocolates.

Anyone ballin' enough to get the Atwood Suite is surely going to spring for a \$200 bottle of Roederer Cristal champagne from the Cellar, 6913 O St., as well as the \$125 heart-shaped chocolate from Sugar Plum Candies, 333 N. Cotner Blvd. This bad boy weighs in at seven pounds and is pure, homemade, Josephine Krick chocolate.

This brings the grand total for plan B, for "boo-ya," to \$504, roughly. Now, this is a big chunk of change, so unless the dude or lady you're hoping to woo is royalty, you might want to explore some other options, many of which can be found on the beloved World Wide Web.

It's not surprising that with the mass-media explosion of the 1990s, Valentine's Day has become one of the most marketable events for web-based sales. There's a reason for that.

By shopping at www.cooking.com you can drop hints of hope for a "morning after" breakfast with the seven-inch Chrome Classic Heart Waffler, for a romantic \$49.95.

Or, for a similar effect, you can just tie a red ribbon around a \$1.77 bag of Sugar Puffs from Super Saver.

Planning a Feb. 15 breakfast may be getting a little ahead of things. For those of you hoping to make Valentine's Day last into the wee hours of the morning, www.RedEnvelope.com has a variety of items that could make this Valentine's Day off the charts.

Things such as a Japanese body and soul bath kit for \$38 or the Kama Sutra weekender kit for \$22 have a lot of potential, not to mention the erotic fortune cookies for \$25 or the gourmet body paint for \$24.

Let's not kid ourselves here folks, these items aren't going to do much good if you bust them out in a bedroom decorated with Star Wars sheets and a Hendrix poster.

But don't worry, if those items were a bit too adventurous check out www.heartcity.com. It's the Web site for the town of Valentine, Neb., that sells things such as silver heart-shaped belt buckles and watches.

Some of the nicer belt buckles sell for \$63, but the site does offer gifts that could prove to be just as romantic - i.e. free e-mail Valentine's Day cards.

That's right, for no cost at all, www.heartcity.com will send your sweetie a personalized Valentine e-card with an attached picture of the scenic Valentine, Neb., countryside.

Of course if you've waited until today to plan your Valentine's Day you might be out of luck. Then again, Hinky Dinky, 2145 S. 17th St., is selling long-stem red roses for three bucks.

That plus a King Cobra is only \$5.25. Hence, plan C.



Neal Obermeyer/DN