

Healthy food

Love minus the love handles

'Tis the season of love and romance!

But love and romance can also mean fatty meals and calorie creep.

However, you don't have to follow this norm - instead, you can create your own, better version of normal!

Here, Sally Symonds, weight loss coach, author and motivational speaker, shares her secrets for how it's done



A RECENT UK study found that it's possible to track women's weight according to their relationship status.

When couples first meet, women usually lose about 2.5kg as they try to impress their new beau.

But during the "comfort zone" period of a relationship, they gain an average of nearly 5kg.

As women prepare for the "big day", they generally lose about 3kg, only to regain it all – and more – when babies arrive.

As Valentine's Day approaches, it's important to realise that you can celebrate your love, without feeling guilty the next day.

As I discuss in my book *50 Recipes to Lose 50kg . . . And Keep It Off*, one of the keys to successful long term weight loss is "weighing up" the everyday versus extra special.

Life is too short to let weight loss interfere with really special moments. If you want to splurge on that special occasion, then go ahead and let yourself.

If you don't, you'll end up feeling resentful towards healthy eating, and ruining your occasion.

On the other hand, life is too short to stuff your body with foods that you really don't enjoy enough considering the number of calories they contain.

Nevertheless, it is possible to enjoy a romantic dinner for two without over-indulging too much in terms of calories.

In fact, some of the best aphrodisiacs are also very good for you:

↓ **Oysters:**

Oysters are renowned for increasing sexual desire, thanks to their D-aspartic acid and NMDA – powerful chemicals that stimulate the release of sex hormones. Their high zinc content helps produce sperm and increase libido. Zinc is also great for warding off any potential

infections!

↓ **Chocolate:**

Chocolate is packed full of phenyl ethylamine (also called the "love chemical"). This is responsible for releasing dopamine in the pleasure parts of the brain, and it peaks during orgasm.

It also helps you feel exciting, attractive and euphoric.

According to Italian scientists, women who regularly indulge in chocolate achieve a greater level of sexual satisfaction than those who don't.

The cacao in chocolate also contains tryptophan, which helps you relax and produces a sense of wellbeing.

↓ **Asparagus:**

Asparagus is one of the sexiest foods around. Because of its high folate levels, it's full of histamine, which boosts sexual drive in men and women.

Its phallic shape also triggers a psycho-physiological sexual response in some people.

Interestingly, 19th century French bridegrooms were often served a three-course pre-nuptial dinner of the stuff just to help them perform better on the night!

↓ **Salmon:**

Finally, salmon gives you a great boost in the bedroom. It's full of omega 3s (which help you feel good by elevating the brain's serotonin levels), packed with protein (for stamina) and also contains Vitamins A, D and B, which give you an excellent libido lift!

Sally Symonds is a weight loss coach, motivational speaker and author *50 Steps to Lose 50kg . . . And Keep It Off* and *50+ Recipes to Lose 50+kg . . . And Keep It Off*. For more information visit www.sallysymonds.com.au

Baked Salmon with Cauliflower Skordalia and Asparagus Spears

Serves: 2

2 salmon fillets

2 cloves garlic, crushed

Juice of ½ lemon

Handful fresh coriander

Cauliflower Skordalia:

1 medium cauliflower head

½ cup low-fat ricotta

Cracked black pepper

1 clove garlic, crushed

1. Preheat oven to 200C. Place salmon on an oven tray lined with baking paper.
2. Spread garlic, lemon juice and coriander over each salmon fillet.
3. Bake in oven for 10 minutes.
4. Prepare a steamer with boiling water. Place asparagus inside and cook for approximately 8 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, steam/microwave cauliflower until cooked.
6. Combine cauliflower and remaining ingredients and blend with a stick blender until smooth.
7. To serve, spoon skordalia on a plate and top with salmon, arrange asparagus on the side.



Chocolate Mousse

Serves: 2

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4 egg whites, beaten

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4 tsps low-fat hot chocolate mix

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4 drops vanilla essence

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1. Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form.
 2. Melt chocolate mix in a small amount of hot water, allow to cool.
 3. Stir through egg white mixture and vanilla essence until thoroughly combined.
 4. Refrigerate until set.

Of course, another fantastic weight loss weapon is exercise.

But even this can take a romantic twist . . . why not canoe the Ross River, hike through Paluma or up Castle Hill at sunset, stroll along the Strand or Riverwalk, ride horses on Magnetic Island or even go sea kayaking together?

Then, of course, there's always the after-dinner exercise you can do . . .



Oysters Natural

Six natural oysters only contain about 40 calories so you can really afford to indulge in these! Simply shuck and serve!

