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## Consumers Cut Back on Valentine's Day

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[-By Mark Dolliver](#)

**NEW YORK** Perhaps you're thinking, "So what if the economy is tanking? At least we've got love!" Alas, the former may be impinging on the latter, if a pre-Valentine's Day Brand Keys survey is any indication.

The average respondent to the poll plans to spend \$108 for the occasion, down 15 percent from last year. Men expect to lay out an average of \$140 (vs. \$166 last year); women expect to spend an average of \$75 (down from \$90).

Anticipated spending on dinner and drinks is up, while expected outlays for jewelry and other expensive gifts are down. One surprise: Women are as likely as men to say they expect to make a purchase in the cologne/perfume category, with 10 percent of each sex stating this intention.

The same goes for candy, with 40 percent of women and men alike planning to buy some for their loved one. Among respondents' top Valentine's Day activities are dinner (cited by 40 percent of respondents), a movie (30 percent) and sex (25 percent).

Stirring up trouble, the poll asked men and women to say who, aside from their "very own sweetheart," they'd care to spend the holiday with. The top choices of women were Hugh Jackman, George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Barack Obama and Johnny Depp. Men's top choices were Eva Longoria, Anne Hathaway, Kristin Bell, Salma Hayek and Angelina Jolie.

Elsewhere on the pre-Valentine's front, a Porter Novelli Styles report released today (based on polling fielded last spring) finds 42 percent of women and 36 percent of men characterizing themselves as "romantic." There was no significant difference between married and unmarried women on this question. Among men, though, 40 percent of the unattached described themselves as romantic, vs. 34 percent of those with a wife or domestic partner.

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