



News Release

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AAA Inspectors Select 14 Favorite Places For Enchanting Valentine Escapes

Distinctive Hotels and Resorts Inspire Romance with Secluded Locations, Luxurious Amenities and Delectable Cuisine

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA (February 2, 2012) – What better way to celebrate Valentine’s Day than a romantic getaway or private dinner with that special someone? Cupid can be found at hotels and restaurants throughout the U.S. and Canada all year. For those seeking an exceptional opportunity to cozy up to a sweetheart this February, AAA inspectors have compiled their favorite places for romance.

Read about private retreats, sumptuous spa treatments and intoxicating gardens in settings ranging from a historic mansion to seaside cottages. Discover places to enjoy mouthwatering meals and exotic specialties served in hideaways that span from a rooftop oasis to a Moroccan palace.

AAA inspectors’ 14 favorite romantic hotels and restaurants are listed below. Find their additional recommendations on the AAA travel blog at AAATravelViews.com.

Romantic Lodgings

Beachfront Bed & Breakfast, Saint Augustine Beach, Fla., AAA Three Diamond Bed and Breakfast

Situated directly on the beach in a city noted for romance, this quaint, adult-only B&B offers breathtaking views from many areas of the property. With just five rooms in the main house and three in the back cottage, a crowd is not something you’ll find here. Unlike traditional B&Bs, the Beachfront features a heated pool, hot tub and complimentary bicycles. Romance packages include champagne and chocolates on arrival.

The Bryant Park Hotel, New York, N.Y., AAA Four Diamond Contemporary Boutique Hotel

This high-style, midtown Manhattan boutique hotel offers easy access to many of the city’s top attractions. The hip modern rooms provide luxurious touches like hardwood floors with Tibetan area rugs, Travertine marble bathrooms and state-of-the-art electronics including sound therapy machines. The cellar bar is the place to see and be seen, popular with the young “fashionista” set. Free ice skating is offered right in front of the hotel at Citi Pond in Bryant Park until February 26.

Chateau Avalon Hotel, Kansas City, Kan., AAA Three Diamond Hotel

This hotel’s focus is providing an exceptional in-room experience. Guestrooms feature individual classic, luxury and adventure themes, all beautifully and tastefully executed. Themes range from the tame, such as the Hemmingway or Seville, to more adventurous styles like the Tahitian Treehouse or Castaway Isle, which features a two-story replica ship’s bow. All include a luxurious tub. Package options include in-room massages and chilled champagne. Guests are served breakfast in their room.

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The Inn at Palmetto Bluff, Bluffton, S.C., AAA Five Diamond Resort Cottage

This virtual Garden of Eden sits alongside the tranquil May River. Single and duplex cottages throughout the sprawling, secluded resort offer privacy, with a full menu of world-class amenities. Enjoy a ride on a historic yacht or laps in the heated infinity pool. Indulge in a spa treatment, soak in your enormous in-room steam bath or relax in an Adirondack-style rocking chair on the wooden bridge as you watch the dolphins play in the river. A little white chapel is on property for those who want to take their romance all the way!

Mill Rose Inn, Half Moon Bay, Calif., AAA Four Diamond Bed and Breakfast

Just the drive to get here along Highway 1, a scenic coastal drive, is romantic. It's located within walking distance to the Old Town district and a nice hike to the beach. The beautiful rose garden is perfect for a wedding, according to the local inspector. Each guestroom has different décor with distinctive wallpaper, antique furniture, claw foot tubs and a fireplace to complete the picture.

Sparkling Hill Resort, Vernon, British Columbia, AAA/CAA Four Diamond Boutique Hotel

Built on a hilltop overlooking Okanagan Lake, this hotel boasts more than 3.5 million individual Swarovski crystals throughout the premises — from opulent chandeliers in the lobby and dining room to unique fireplaces in the guestrooms. Guests may witness a spectacular light show when the sun is setting and its rays hit the crystals just right. The hotel is set up mostly as a couples retreat and offers one of the area's largest spas featuring more than 100 different treatments.

Vanderbilt Grace, Newport, R.I., AAA Four Diamond Historic Boutique Hotel

This impressive circa 1908 mansion turned Four Diamond hotel features a multimillion dollar art gallery, spa, heated indoor pool and rooftop terrace overlooking the harbor. Each room features sumptuous 400-thread-count sheets, a fluffy duvet topper, Frette robes and slippers. The bathrooms include oversized Italian ceramic showers with dual shower heads and high-end Penhaligon's bath amenities. The current "Month of Love" package is valid throughout February.

The Whale Cove Inn, Depoe Bay, Ore., AAA Four Diamond Country Inn

Perched above the crashing Pacific Ocean waves of Whale Cove, this intimate inn offers a truly great escape for couples looking to get away, unwind and just enjoy quiet time together. With only eight luxury suites, guests experience a sense of peace and solitude throughout their stay. All suites feature a large private balcony with a Jacuzzi spa and unrestricted water views.

Enchanting Dining

Bertrand at Mister A's, San Diego, Calif., AAA Four Diamond Restaurant

This lovely rooftop restaurant offering beautiful views of the city provides a romantic setting inside and out and highly attentive service. From the large wraparound balcony it appears the world is at your feet. Perfect San Diego weather enhances your opportunity to relax outside with a glass of fine wine, a flavorful entrée and the one you love any time of year. Inside the inviting décor is softened with candlelight in the evening.

Dahl & DiLuca Ristorante Italiano, Sedona, Ariz, AAA Three Diamond Restaurant

If you associate Italian cuisine with romance, this restaurant will not disappoint. The dining room teems with flowing drapery, stone pillars and crystal chandeliers. Background music and legendary homemade pasta complete the picture to "set the mood."

Gitane Restaurant & Bar, San Francisco, Calif., AAA Three Diamond Restaurant

The name itself, which means “gypsy,” evokes a sense of excitement. Tucked away in an alley, down a flight of stairs, guests enter to find a bar with soaring ceilings draped with lush velvet and tapestry. Continue to the upstairs dining area to sample mouthwatering dishes culled from Spain, Portugal and the south of France. Dine amid an eclectic, sensuous and surprisingly harmonious fusion of décor. To see the decorator’s piece de resistance, be sure to visit the restroom, renowned for its funky appeal.

Il Mulino, Chicago, Ill., AAA Three Diamond Restaurant

Located in the restored historic Biggs mansion, the restaurant presents a traditionally elegant ambience with luxurious chandeliers, rich dark wood trim, crisp linen-covered tables and a fireplace. On Valentine’s Day, choose the special four-course prix fixe menu or the regular à la carte menu. Every meal includes a variety of complimentary appetizers that start arriving shortly after guests are seated, and may include cheese and salami, fried zucchini and bruschetta.

Restaurant XO (in Hotel Le Saint-James), Montréal, Québec, AAA/CAA Four Diamond Restaurant

Few hotel dining rooms offer the opulence and romance of this one. Located in a former bank built in 1870, the regal setting was once known as Bankers' Hall, with a decor posh enough to woo the Victorian-era business elite. Two-story stained glass windows and lavish crystal chandeliers give the room a glamorous glow. The best spot for an intimate dinner is one of the semi-private dining nooks or at a table on the raised mezzanine level. For guests of the hotel, dessert, coffee or an after-dinner digestif can be served in your room.

Sultan’s Tent, Calgary, Alberta, AAA/CAA Two Diamond Restaurant

What could be more romantic than to whisk your loved one off to an exotic land? Exit the modern world when you enter the striking Sultan’s Tent featuring intimate and private booths decorated with rich tapestries and billowing ceiling curtains. Spice up the evening by feeding your Valentine in the traditional way by scooping up your food with the pita bread as knives and forks are available only on request.

For more AAA inspector picks, insider tips and travel stories, visit AAA’s travel blog at AAATravelViews.com.

About AAA Inspections

AAA rates more properties than any other rating entity and is the only rating system that covers the U.S., Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean. It is one of only two that conduct physical, on-site evaluations. AAA/CAA Approved lodgings and restaurants are assigned a rating of One to Five Diamonds. For 75 years AAA has used professional inspectors to conduct in-person property inspections and publish the results for member travelers.

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