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# ACCENT

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SECTION **C**



## Tips on buying good chocolate

Fine Living Network

Americans eat 2.8 billion pounds of chocolate every year, and undoubtedly, a lot of it is consumed around Valentine's Day.

If you're planning on giving your sweetie something sweet this year, here's how to ensure you're giving chocolate they'll love:

- For the best quality chocolate, look for an ingredient label that shows a bar with 55 percent to 70 percent of cocoa solids. But keep in mind that the higher the percentage, the more bitter the chocolate will taste: 99 percent cocoa solids is definitely an acquired taste.

- Bittersweet or dark chocolate contains less fat than milk chocolate. (Hey, we cut calories where we can!)

- Some 92 percent of Americans prefer the taste of milk chocolate, something to keep in mind if you're gift giving.

- Specialty chocolate has a shelf life of about two weeks. Mass-produced chocolate has more preservatives and can last considerably longer, even up to a year.

- If you're buying specialty or boutique chocolates, ask the retailer about the top selling products. High turnover will guarantee freshness.

- Avoid buying chocolate that has white patches or looks dull in color. It could be past its prime. (Though we'd probably eat that stuff, too, if we had to, that is.)

- Consider purchasing fair trade chocolate. This means that the farmers received a good price for their beans.

- Looking to savor the box? Chocolate should be stored in a cool, dark place but preferably not in the fridge. The cold air can dry chocolate out.



Janet Hommel Mangas

## Kids getting smart with you? Ground them

I had no choice. I had to ground my 10-year-old daughter last week. I grounded her from reading.

Here's the problem. I bought a new Scrabble game since we misplaced our original. The travel edition of America's favorite word game is too hard on over-40 eyes.

My two older sisters, Debbie and Leta, and sister-in-law, Julie, discovered this New Year's Eve, when we squinted our way through an extreme four-hour Scrabble extravaganza.

We had to bring in a fluorescent lamp as the tiles seemed to shrink in size as the night wore on. The letter tiles on the travel edition are exactly half an inch. The regular size tiles are a gargantuan three-quarters of an inch.

After purchasing my new game at Target last week, I giddily removed the plastic and strategically challenged the youngest inhabitant in my home to join me in

(SEE SMART, PAGE C4)

# Speaking baby talk

## Businesswoman gets newborns to sleep like, well, babies

By ANNETTE JONES  
DAILY JOURNAL FEATURES EDITOR  
ajones@thejournalnet.com

Courtney Gibson is passionate about infant care, and she has an uncommon gift with babies. Gibson can have fussy newborns sleeping through the night in eight to 12 weeks.

Part nanny, part baby therapist, she owns and operates Gibson Newborn Services Inc., offering child-care skills to families across the country who want help soothing their babies.

With Gibson on the job, parents can sleep through the night even if their baby doesn't.

Gibson will share some of her techniques during a class from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Monday at the Franklin Cultural Arts and Recreation Center.

Space is still available by calling 432-3106 or sending an e-mail to [info@gibsonnewbornservices.com](mailto:info@gibsonnewbornservices.com). Cost is \$60.

Emily Stroud of Fort Worth, Texas, is sold on Gibson's methods.

Gibson, a Franklin resident, had Stroud's daughter sleeping through the night at 8 weeks old.

The first-time mother hired Gibson through an agency. Stroud has had health problems in the past and worried that sleep deprivation could make her ill.

"I wanted to make sure I didn't go down that road again," she says.

Gibson taught her lots of baby-soothing tips before her stint with the family ended, Stroud says.

Soothing wailing infants is a gift Gibson has had since she began baby-sitting as a teenager.

"I was the most popular kid on the block," she says.

After eight years of working in a day-care center and as a nanny, Gibson decided to work full time with infants.

### BABY TALK

Courtney Gibson, owner of Gibson Newborn Services, offers this advice to new parents.

**Be prepared** emotionally and mentally. Talk to people who have recently had babies to get a realistic idea of what will happen.

**Take classes** on breast feeding, child birth and baby care.

**Have a support system** in place. Hire a cleaning service or someone to cook. Or hire someone such as Gibson to help out at night.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Courtney Gibson of Franklin operates Gibson Newborn Services Inc. She travels the country to stay with families with newborns to help the babies

learn to sleep through the night faster. Gibson, who specializes in multiple births, worked with a family in Florida with the triplets pictured above.

Courtney Gibson of Franklin feeds a set of triplets from Florida. Gibson uses techniques developed by Dr. Harvey Karp, a child-development expert, to soothe babies.



### 'THE HAPPIEST BABY ON THE BLOCK'

**What:** A class given by Courtney Gibson for expectant and new parents on how to calm infants and get them to sleep through the night.

**When:** 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Monday

**Where:** Franklin Cultural Arts and Recreation Center Arvin Room, 396 Branigan Blvd.

**Cost:** \$60; includes "The Happiest Baby on the Block" DVD and CD and a blanket

**Advice:** Gibson will be available for free mini-consultations before and after the class

**Registration:** 432-3106 or [info@gibsonnewbornservices.com](mailto:info@gibsonnewbornservices.com)

**Information:** [Gibsonnewbornservices.com](http://Gibsonnewbornservices.com) or [thehappiestbaby.com](http://thehappiestbaby.com)

## Doctor's orders: Men, think before planning for Valentine's Day

By DAN VOELPEL  
TACOMA (WASH.) NEWS TRIBUNE

One Feb. 14 past, I wrapped myself in red cellophane, added a big red bow and rang the front doorbell of my sweetheart's home, an expensive chardonnay in one hand and a dozen red roses in the other.

Love comes with a price. And men pay a higher price than women.

Somehow the cosmic forces of commercial kismet have inspired men to shell out nearly twice as much money as women for Valentine's Day love offerings.

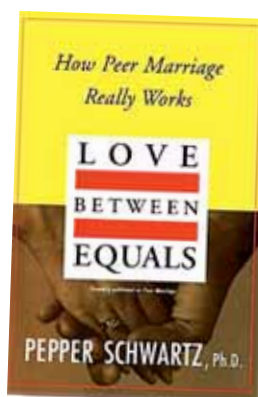
The average male will spend \$156.22 this year, while the average female will spend \$85.08, according to the National Retail Federation's 2007 Valentine's Day Consumer Intentions and Actions Survey.

(Who knew how much more we above-average males have to spend?)

With all due respect to holiday retailers, why the spending disparity between the genders?

"With males spending significantly more this year than females, men may be looking at Valentine's Day as a way to make up for that HDTV they splurged on for the Super Bowl," said Tracy Mullin, president and CEO of the retail federation.

I don't buy it. "Oprah," "American Idol" and "Grey's Anatomy" look just as McDreamy in high def year-round as Peyton Manning and Brian Urlacher did last weekend. So



"Love Between Equals: How Peer Marriage Really Works" by Pepper Schwartz

I've never felt guilty over splurging on the 42-inch plasma screen I bought the week before the 2005 Super Bowl.

To get to the heart of the Valentine's Day spending gap, who better to consult than Pepper Schwartz, the sexologist and relationship authority with a doctorate degree who wrote the book, "Love Between Equals: How Peer Marriage Really Works."

Schwartz also devised the scientific relationship compatibility system behind the Web site [perfectmatch.com](http://perfectmatch.com).

How about it, Doc?

"First of all, men don't really know what to do."

I already don't like where you're headed with this, Doc.

"There are certain things that are still

gendered in our society. Men still generally do the asking to get married. Not even in a quarter of marriages was it the woman who proposed. ... Some things are still boy-girl.

"And that's Valentine's Day, too. She may give him some stuff, but he's supposed to take her to dinner, he's supposed to do something special. The boy courts the girl."

I know you're the doctorate from Yale and tenured professor of sociology at the University of Washington, but don't you think the dynamics of relationships have evolved enough by now that equity should trump tradition?

"Women are often doing so many things throughout the year for their partners — the little niceties, the little gifts — that on Valentine's Day, it's your turn." Maybe I should have called Dr. Phil.

(SEE MEN, PAGE C3)