

CityMasala Valentine Contest

By: Our Readers

CONTRIBUTIONS SUBMITTED BY CITYMASALA READERS

The month of February holds a special day on the 14th of the month which all of us associate with our loved one - Valentine's Day. Some of us choose to observe it and some of us don't, and then there are those of us who are fearful of the consequences if we chose not to observe it in some form or the other! CityMasala set out to find out a little more about this day and what it stands for within our community. Does it bring out more romance in the relationship or does it stand for the steadfastness of a relationship that has withstood the test of time? Is it specifically to be celebrated between two partners or can it be about a relationship between friends, parent and child or brother & sister?

CityMasala set up a Valentine contest to find out which submission would win the first and second prize. The first place winners are Kiran & Raj and the second place winners are Hina & Mukund. Congratulations to our winners!

Read on to find out what insightful comments our readers had to make. You never know - some of what they have to say may just be what you need to put into your relationship.

AYESHA & USMAN (Submitted by Ayesha)

What makes your relationship successful?

Laughter is very important to me. My husband makes me laugh and always helps me look at the lighter side of things. It does not matter how tough things get, he is always able to show me how much better off we are than we ever were in the past.

What is the most romantic thing you have ever done for your partner or that your partner has done for you?

While he was a student about 8 years ago, we really couldn't afford too many things. We struggled a lot then and I was brand new in the country. I was unemployed and stayed at home. I missed home and everything about our own country and used to get very lonely. One day the doorbell rang and when I opened the door, my parents were standing there! He had arranged for their visas and sent them tickets to come and spend time with me so that I would have some company! I cannot forget that feeling that I was possibly the luckiest woman in the world to have such a partner in my life.

HINA & MUKUND (Submitted by Mukund)



Hina & Mukund

What makes your relationship successful?

To stay together as a happy couple, we need to learn how to keep our love strong, even through difficult and challenging times. Otherwise, the feeling of being in love can get lost and a couple becomes stuck in unresolved problems.

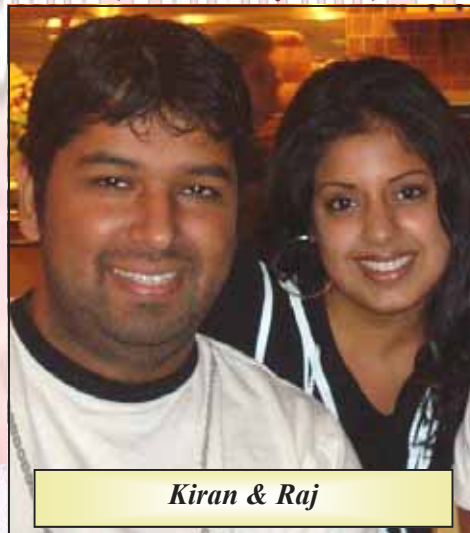
Rituals are the glue that bond relationships together. You probably already have rituals in your relationship (the good-bye kiss, the daily phone call from work) but may not realize how important

these simple actions are in binding you together. Rituals tend to get lost as time goes on, and that's when we need to consciously keep them up, even maybe make up new ones and stick to them.

What is the most romantic thing you have ever done for your partner or that your partner has done for you?

When she agreed to become my wife over 21 years ago. She respects me and my decisions ... and listens to me.

KIRAN & RAJ (Submitted by Kiran)



Kiran & Raj

What makes your relationship successful?

Love, trust, communication, and above all, LAUGHTER! Knowing that whatever disagreement we may have will be over in a few minutes so our normal, happy lives can continue is reassuring. And the secret is to never walk away from each other, and never to go to bed angry!

What is the most romantic thing you have ever done for your partner or that your partner has done for you?

The most romantic thing Raj has ever done for me (there have been lots of instances, more lavish ones than this, but this one topped them all, and has meant the most to me) was to take me to Clearwater Beach for our 2nd Valentine's Day together in 2001. We weren't as financially stable, as we were still getting our newly married 'stuff' together, so he drove me around and suggested a local pizzeria by the ocean. We ended driving around the beach area for an hour. It was about 50 degrees outside

and breezy... FREEZING temperatures! Then he asked me if we could take a walk on the beach under the moon (it was a full moon, very bright and visible). I said yes, just to impress him and satisfy his request. We bravely stepped out of the car, and he opened the trunk. I went to see what was inside - he had planned a whole Mexican buffet for us, complete with two large comforters and blankets for our 'picnic'. He ordered Mexican take-out, with all the fixings, and drinks... I was so thrilled and completely happy. We then walked to the beach, by the rolling waves, spread out our meal before us and ate (although we did rush, it was SO COLD!). Then we snuggled tight under the moonlight and blankets and lay on the sand looking up at the stars. We headed back after a while. We dated for almost 5 years and have been married for 8 years, but that one night will forever remain cherished in the depths of my heart.

MY MOM & I (Submitted by Anya (Age 12))

What makes the relationship between my mom and I stand above the rest is how much we love each other. We may have occasional fights but no love is perfect. My mother is my hero, my strength, and my best friend.

PADMINI & SHARAD (Submitted by Padmini)

What makes your relationship successful?

Showing that you care about each other, are willing to put the other's needs ahead of yours and love each other unconditionally is our mantra. I can tell him all my secrets and he can do the same.

What is the most romantic thing you have ever done for your partner or that your partner has done for you?

He bought a vacation for me and my girlfriends as a birthday gift for me just a few months after I had our daughter. It was wonderful to get away without feeling guilty and we all had a lot of fun. My girlfriends also thought I had the most wonderful man in my life and I couldn't agree more!

RADHA & HARI (Submitted by Radha)

What makes your relationship successful?

We respect each other's space but also care about each other deeply. I take interest in things that interest him and he does the same for me. We talk and have great conversations all the time and we try not to judge one another. Over time, I have

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learnt not to throw away the baby with the bathwater and he has learnt that he needs to pry a little more to get me to say what is really on my mind.

What is the most romantic thing you have ever done for your partner or that your partner has done for you?

I was talking to him one day and we started discussing music and favorite songs. I told him how much I missed listening to this one song and that I did not have the CD anymore. He sang it for me right then!

SHAPHALI & ASHISH

(Submitted by Ashish)

What makes your relationship successful?

Open and honest communication and mutual respect for each other. You have to accept your spouse's great points as well as their shortcomings. We have been married for 17 years now and dated for 7 years prior to getting married.

What is the most romantic thing you have ever done for your partner or that your partner has done for you?

I grew a moustache for our wedding day because she asked me to!

SUDHA & SURESH

(Submitted by Sudha)

What makes your relationship successful?

Well, I do not know if I can call it a success yet or not. We have been dating for just a few weeks. So far, what has worked is that we have a lot of common interests and we have a lot to talk about with each other. We respect each other immensely.

What is the most romantic thing you have ever done for your partner or that your partner has done for you?

I was really sick the other day and I called him. He was asleep but answered the phone. When I



Shaphali & Ashish

told him that I was unwell, he got in the car and

drove over an hour to come to my home to bring me chicken soup and nurse me back to health.

VIREN & SUNANDA

(Submitted by Viren)

What makes your relationship successful?

The fact that I consider her an equal partner in every sense of the way. Her opinions, thoughts and views matter to me as mine do to her. We make time for each other no matter how busy our day has been. We try to remember that life is going to be full of strife and rewards - it is how we handle the strife that will continue to bring rewards. At the end of the day, that is why we're still together after almost 20 years.

What is the most romantic thing you have ever done for your partner or that your partner has done for you?

She always remembers the little things that I like - my glass of water next to the bed, my coffee with just a dash of milk, my food heated just so and my reading material in the bathroom! These are the things that are the most romantic to me. Other than that, it is in the way she looks at me across the room full of people and keeps an eye on my drinking and what I am eating. I cannot think of one single thing but the fact that she is married to me and works on making the marriage successful every single day.

VISHNU MANDIR ORGANIZES FIRST ANNUAL COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR

(Tampa, FL) - A variety of health and safety information for parents, young adults, senior citizens and children will be available at the Community Health Fair sponsored by the Vishnu Mandir. The health fair will be held on **Saturday March 15, 2008 from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM** at Vishnu Mandir located at 5803 Lynn Rd. Tampa, Florida 33624.

Local doctors and health care professionals will be available to answer questions and distribute information about child, adolescent and senior health and safety topics, including healthy eating, injury

prevention, cholesterol screening, obesity, bone density and diabetes screening.

Vishnu Mandir wanted to provide a program to help its members and the community to better understand their health needs with the understanding that not all members of the community have access to health care.

"We felt this would be an excellent opportunity to provide this program. We would like the entire community to participate and come experience the

education that will be provided. This will not only be a health fair but a day of fun, entertainment and activities. We are providing activities for children and our senior citizens. There will be lots of food, prizes, and music provided. Come one and all."

The health fair is open to the public and not just temple members. For more information about the Vishnu Mandir Community Health Fair, please contact **Dr. Sadhana Shah at 727-798-4258** or **Dr. Ram P. Ramcharran at 727-460-2460**.

LAUNCH OF ZEE SPORTS AMERICA ON DISH NETWORK

Press Conference celebrating the successful launch of ZEE Sports America on Dish Network.

New York, NY. - December 17, 2007 - EchoStar Communications Corporation (NASDAQ: DISH) and its DISH Network® satellite TV service along with programming partner ZEE TV co-sponsored a press conference and dinner reception celebrating the recent launch of ZEE Sports America. This kick-off media event was held in New York City on Dec. 12, 2007. Coordinated by the promotional efforts of Dreamakers and Touchdown Media Inc., two promising South Asian media entities, the conference was well-attended and applauded by many members of the South Asian and Caribbean press, as well as representatives from the New York Times and other local media outlets. ZEE Sports America, the first and most complete South Asian sports channel and now available on the DISH Network platform on Channel 576, is the

first round-the-clock channel dedicated to the vast and ever-growing South Asian sports community. ZSA provides viewers with "virtual front row seats" to a broad array of South Asian sports - including Indian football, Cricket, Golf, and Motor Sports, in addition to ZEE TV's award-winning original productions such as the "Daily Sports News", "Sports Café", "Football Café", "Sports Sunday", "World Motor Sports Magazine", "Twenty Two Yards", "Cricket Talk", and "Cricket First".

EchoStar Executive Vice President Michael Kelly and ZEE TV Country Head S. Venkat co-hosted the Q&A session with members of the media. Kelly observed that, "we continue to look for new ways to bring the best of programming to the very important South Asian community, and with the launch of ZEE Sports America, we are now able to offer not only Cricket, but also other sports like hockey, soccer, tennis and golf to this audience."

S. Venkatsubramanian, echoing Mr. Kelly's enthusiasm, remarked, "ZSA is born out of the current market need and to give expression for the South Asian sporting community", adding, "that this was bound to happen as two pioneers, DISH Network and ZEE TV came together and identified the need."

The importance of this event was underscored by it being carried live on six South Asian radio stations across the U.S. in the Bay Area, Dallas, Houston, New York and New Jersey.

ZEE Sports America is available at an annual prepayment price tag of \$149.99. For more information about DISH Network programming and services, visit: www.dishnetwork.com or call 1-800-333-DISH (3474). To order Pay-Per-View events, DISH Network customers can call 1-877-DISH PPV (347-4778) or visit www.dishnetwork.com/ppv.