

A very Vegas proposal

By Jeannie Borbe
Vegas.com

Paris. Rome. Las Vegas. They're all known as cities that are full of excitement and romance. But since Paris and Rome are thousands of miles away, why not take a quick trip to Las Vegas instead? With Valentine's Day just around the corner and all of the romantic locations available in the city, you can surprise your lover with a special proposal.

Creative proposals

For the ultimate Valentine's Day proposal, look no further than the concierge at your hotel.

Jeanne Mills, chef concierge at MGM Grand, has helped with some creative surprises.

"Once we assisted a guest with placing concierges around a blackjack table with the exception of two chairs," Mills said. "When we were in place, the guest and his girlfriend sat down in the open seats and proceeded to play. On the third hand, the dealer flipped his cards and the first read 'Will You' while the second card read 'Marry Me?' The dealer then pulled a ring box from behind a pile of chips.

"Another romantic proposal involved creating a scavenger hunt for one of my guests," Mills continued. "The hunt led his girlfriend to places along the Strip that held special meaning for the couple. The final stops led the woman to a personal shopper who helped her pick out a dress for the evening. Next, she was off to a salon for pampering before her last stop, the famous 'Welcome to Las Vegas' sign, where her boyfriend was waiting on bended knee."

Tyra Bell-Holland, executive director and chef of concierge services at the Venetian, has also witnessed her fair share of unique proposals.

"A group of ladies took a friend to the Venetian for her birthday, [so] we arranged for [them] to have dinner at a restaurant overlooking the famous gondolas," Holland said. "The boyfriend flew in as a surprise and we dressed him as a gondolier. After dinner, the group headed to take a gondola ride and much to her surprise, it was her boyfriend dressed as the gondolier with a ring and proposal!"

"One of my all-time favorites is placing an engagement ring in the window display of our jewelry store with a custom poem and single red rose followed by 'Will you Marry Me?'," said Holland. "We also have a

photographer waiting in the wings to capture the moment [before] whisking them off to a gondola for a custom serenade."

Lake Las Vegas also offers gondolas at MonteLago Village. A romantic way to propose is with the "Message in a Bottle" service.

"The gentleman e-mails Gondola Adventures something wonderful he wants to say, or ask her," explained Andrea Day, events manager at MonteLago Village. "They print it on a parchment paper scroll, roll it up, tie with a ribbon and drop it into a clear wine bottle with seashells. Sometime during the cruise, the bottle miraculously appears next to his lady ... she tugs on the ribbon, the cork pops out along with the scroll and his beautiful message."

"A guest once called, nervous and unsure of how to propose to his girlfriend, [so] we suggested a serene gondola ride on Lake Las Vegas," Mills said. "As the couple enjoyed a gourmet dinner and champagne on the lake, the gondolier 'spotted' a message in a bottle next to them in the water. The message read, 'I love you today, I will love you tomorrow and I will love you forever... Will you marry me?'"

Wining and dining

For those who prefer a more traditional approach,

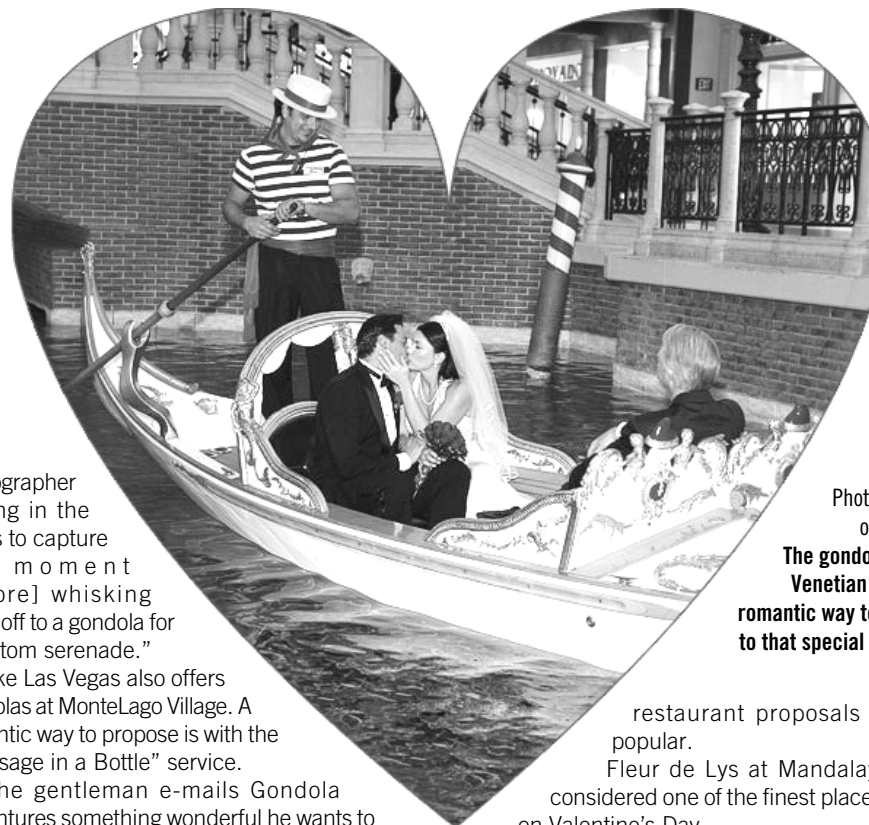


Photo courtesy of Venetian
The gondolas at the Venetian provide a romantic way to propose to that special someone.

restaurant proposals are still popular.

Fleur de Lys at Mandalay Bay is considered one of the finest places to dine on Valentine's Day.

"Fleur de Lys is the top place to secure a dining reservation on Valentine's Day," said Chef Hubert Keller. "From our living art piece, consisting of 3,500 fresh pink roses, to the sensual food prepared by Chef Steven Wolf, Fleur de Lys oozes romance. On Valentine's Day, every date receives a long stem pink rose presented to them by their server."

Keller noted that the restaurant has had several marriage proposals over the years.

"The one that most sticks out... was a couple celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary," he explained. "The man arranged for our pastry chef to write, 'Will you marry me, again?' in chocolate on a special dessert. As the gentleman dropped to one knee, other guests took notice of the special moment and began to clap. By the time she said yes, the entire room was applauding."

Another fine dining option is the Eiffel Tower restaurant at Paris Las Vegas, located on the 11th floor inside the 50-story Eiffel Tower replica.

"Eiffel Tower Restaurant offers diners not only a romantic evening of premier French cuisine, but breathtaking views of the Las Vegas Strip," said Chef Jean Joho.

Eiffel Tower offers unique wedding proposals. One of Joho's favorites is creating the proposal within the menu.

"There is a sense of suspense as the lucky reader skims the menu and realizes she is reading her own proposal," said Joho. "There have also been menus designed with poems authored by the person proposing as well. It creates a romantic keepsake for years to come."

Eiffel Tower also caters to one-of-a-kind proposals. "If people have a special request, we do our best to accommodate it," said Jeanie Jones, director of Eiffel Tower Experience.

A man recently requested that the chef prepare a peanut butter and jelly sandwich in the shape of a P and J (the couple's initials) and had it placed on a silver platter, along with the engagement ring.

"It was really cute," said Jones.

Ahh, Spa!

If you're looking for more of an intimate proposal, surprise her with a spa treatment.

"Our two-by-two couples massages are always a romantic treat anytime of the year, but especially on Valentine's Day," said Blake Feeney, spa director for Canyon Ranch SpaClub at the Venetian and Palazzo. "Couples really get a chance to experience and enjoy the relaxation together."

Tips to remember

Wherever you choose to propose, Las Vegas offers services to help plan that special day.

And if it's in a restaurant, remember that it doesn't have to be at the last minute: "After watching hundreds of men sweat their way through an entire dinner just waiting for 'the moment' to come, I would suggest a couple of things," Keller noted. "First of all, there is no rule about waiting until the end of dinner to ask. I suggest asking when the conversation feels right and then enjoying the experience as a newly engaged couple."

"If she says [no], then you can skip the expensive wine!" Keller joked.

Remember, the more planning, the better.

"You are taking a big leap in your life," said Mills. "Be original, be prepared, and arrange everything well in advance."