OpenTable Survey Reveals Valentine's Day Dining Trends

When Valentine's Day bookends a weekend, it's typically good for restaurants and diners

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 4, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- According to a new survey released today by OpenTable (NASDAQ: OPEN), the world's leading provider of online restaurant reservations, restaurants are poised to be busy with diners celebrating love not only on Thursday, February 14, but on the weekend following Valentine's Day. OpenTable diners also indicated that they plan to celebrate love in a big way with a projected check average of $139, which is 63 percent more than the typical OpenTable check average of $85 per couple. The survey results also provided a peek into dating habits and trends related to the busiest holiday for dining out.

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"The idea of a romantic Valentine's Day meal often conjures up images of lavish tasting menus, enchanting small plates, and prix fixe menus," said Caroline Potter, Chief Dining Officer of OpenTable. "However, our survey revealed some surprising insights into how people want to celebrate Valentine's Day and an indication of romantic trends to come. Diners prefer a la carte ordering in a classic three-course meal where they can personalize their experience."

Long Weekend of Love

- 51 percent of respondents said they plan to dine out on the Thursday, February 14, while 36 percent said they plan to celebrate Valentine's Day on Friday, February 15, or Saturday, February 16.
- 5 percent of diners said they plan to celebrate on Wednesday, February 13.
- 8 percent of respondents plan on dining out more than once for Valentine's Day.

Positive Reviews and Ambience Matter Most

- Respondents indicated that the top three factors in selecting a restaurant for Valentine's Day are positive reviews (34%), romantic ambience (27 %) and service (16%).
- Less important attributes included restaurant location (14%), special Valentine's Day menus (8%) and the quality of the wine list (1%).

Most Desirable Menus

- When presented with menu options, diners said they prefer A la Carte (67%) over Prix Fixe (33%) menus.
- Traditional menus came out on top with the majority of diners (56%) saying they would select a classic three-course meal (starter, entrée, and dessert).
- Others preferred sharing several small plates (23%), feasting only on entrees (13%) or enjoying an extensive menu (8%).

Romance and Restaurants Go Hand in Hand

- 21 percent of diners said they would go on a first date on Valentine's Day, while 42 percent said that Valentine's Day dining is reserved for those dating for a month or two.
- The remaining 37 percent of respondents think that dining on the most romantic day of the year should be reserved for those who have been dating at least 3 months.
- 71 percent of diners said that only some PDA is appropriate on the most romantic day of the year, while 21 percent think Valentine's Day is all about the PDA. Still, 8 percent said that PDA in a restaurant is never appropriate.

Check, Please!

- Put your phone away! 56 percent of women and 61 percent of men say talking and texting at the table is the biggest dining faux pas a date can commit.
- Being rude to wait staff was the second biggest no-no for 32 percent of women and 28 percent of men.

For diners still searching for the right restaurant, OpenTable recently released the Diner's Choice List of the Top 100 Most Romantic Restaurants in the United States. Diners can also find more tips and trends regarding Valentine's Day on OpenTable Chief Dining Officer Caroline Potter's "Dining Check" blog at OpenTable: http://blog.opentable.com.

About OpenTable, Inc.
OpenTable is the world's leading provider of online restaurant reservations, seating approximately 10 million diners per month via online bookings across more than 26,000 restaurants. The OpenTable network connects restaurants and diners, helping diners discover and book the perfect table and helping restaurants deliver personalized hospitality to keep guests coming back. The OpenTable service enables diners to see which restaurants have available tables, select a restaurant based on verified diner reviews, menus and other helpful information, and easily book a reservation. In addition to the company's website and mobile apps, OpenTable powers online reservations for nearly 600 partners, including many of the Internet's most popular global and local brands. For restaurants, the OpenTable hospitality solutions enable them to manage their reservation book, streamline their operations and enhance their service levels. Since its inception in 1998, OpenTable has seated more than 385 million diners around the world. The Company is headquartered in San Francisco, California, and the OpenTable service is available throughout the United States, as well as in Canada, Germany, Japan, Mexico and the UK. OpenTable also owns and operates toptable, the leading consumer destination site for restaurant reservations in the UK.

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