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A day to single out

Do loved-up couples make you reach for a bucket this time of year? Don't spend this Valentine's Day feeling out of place – join in the singles fun, urges **Helen Croydon**

Valentine's Day falls on a Saturday this year, so the whole world will be making as much of it as possible. But what if you're single? Here's our guide to staying sane this weekend.

■ Ditch the 'single' stigma

Don't let anyone presume you'll be sat at home with an M&S meal for one, logged on to a lonely singles' web chat room. You're having loads more fun. Kindly point out to any well-meaning match-maker that, while they are

Googling aphrodisiac recipes or at a crowded restaurant, you will be sipping champagne at a busy party in town where every hottie is guaranteed to be single. Once a year, you have the ultimate licence to flirt.

■ Gifts are over-rated

Who wants roses, really? It takes an age to de-stem them, and that's after you stab yourself at least four times with the thorns. And if you were thinking longingly of heart-shaped chocolates in a pretty box, be careful what you wish for – the tradition of giving

gifts as a token of love dates back to when St Valentine took a break-up extremely badly and cut out his still-beating heart to send to his ex as a romantic gesture. Nice.

■ Rise above hype

If you are susceptible to couple-envy, it's important to remind yourself of the many under-rated single freedoms. There are no diary consultations, no forced attendance at weddings of people you don't know, loads more wardrobe space, and no one

need ask how many pairs of shoes you own or how much they cost.

■ Stick together

Valentine's Day is going to be in your face all weekend. But where to escape to? Somewhere with lots of other like-minded Valentine's haters, of course. Here are the pick of the events:

■ Potty Mouth Disco

Why not simply say "f*** Valentine's Day" at an event where foul language is encouraged? Potty Mouth Disco's masked ball is an opportunity to make as many social faux pas as possible in the company of other singletons. Featuring wholly inappropriate games such as John Leslie's Wheel of Sexual Misfortune, and Cilla Black's

Tombola of Unrequited Lust. **Tomorrow, Bloomsbury Ballroom, Bloomsbury Square, WC1, £10. ticketweb.com**

■ The No Mate Required Flirt Shop

Like a girly sleepover but with more booze and better dresses, the No Mate Required Flirt Shop banishes all mention of V-Day and provides two hours of flirting tips and booty tricks from "flirt diva" Sue Ostler, who will teach the art of seduction. Includes champers and seductive goodies. **Saturday, 7-9pm, Verve Bar, Upper St Martin's Lane, WC2. Tickets £20 from 020 7395 1200 or verve-bar.co.uk**

■ Loss Valentine's Day Ball

Shun all displays of love and joy at the Loss Valentine's Ball. The Last Tuesday Society bash has a dress code of "decaying beauty" (think wilting lilies and mascara-stained cheeks), a workshop on making voodoo dolls for exes, and as much miserable music as your tear ducts can take.

Tomorrow, Tabernacle Arts Centre, Powis Sq, W11, £25



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lovest
CHANGE YOUR FATE

♥ To the sweet I saw on Mon Cross station 3pm. I told yo beautiful! Dri IN THE GREY

♥ It was the S before the snr smiled at me when you got Piccadilly line Felt unwell th probably didr but I was tou

♥ Beautiful S American lad Stockwell in r and white tro Sunday at 10 asked for dire Elephant and chatted and y earring. Coffe UNIFORM

♥ To the guy a camera trip Jubilee line. Y at Bond Stree Fancy a coffe GIRL IN PURP

♥ We met at SuperMartXe in Richmond, from Liverpool have given yo number by m

♥ You: Spanis funny ear, cut gorgeous lips! you on the Ju GREEN-EYED

♥ To the blond Brockenhurst the 6.32am to Tuesday. Your glasses, holdi

If you b TEXT 888!

NOT TOO LATE FOR

gay girl about town



clubs, where music is secondary the serious business of copping BBB played a vicious mash-up