

# Romance in the Skintrack: Tips for a Backcountry Valentine's Day

Contributed by Backcountry Romeo

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1. On a date, breaking trail is a sign of affection. Don't make your date go first.
2. Wear merino wool. Smelling like a wet sheep is more romantic than smelling like a wet you.
3. They get first tracks. On every run. Unless conditions are sketchy.
4. Want to show how much you care? Bring a bottle of wine. Not a Kleen Kanteen Karafe of wine or a Platypus bladder. Show your love by packing up a classy bottle of cabernet. Just don't forget the corkscrew.
- 4b. Gray REI mugs aren't classy. Disposable wine glasses are better. Collapsible plastic wine glasses are best.
5. While chocolate hearts are a must for the skintrack, you can do one better. Fire up your camp stove up top; drop in some bars of premium chocolate and making a little fondue. (Strawberries, oranges, apples, bananas, bacon, etc.). An MSR Simmerlite is your best choice to not burn the chocolate.
6. There are two ways to show your love to someone in plastic boots—warmth and chocolate. Sneak some hand-warmers into your lucky someone's boots when packing the car. Everyone loves warm boots.
7. There is a time and place for the two-person sleeping bag. This isn't it. Instead, casually check that the bags you bring have compatible left and right zippers.
8. There is nothing romantic about energy bars and gels. Period.
9. Looking to surprise your date? Some shovels can accommodate a flower in either the handle or the blade--not only does this make an excellent surprise, but the shovel will keep the flower from getting crushed in your pack. Pick the most slender rose you can find.
10. If you plan to cook a meal, do something classy. You can cook almost anything on a backcountry stove, so treat your date to something better than bagged, freeze-dried chili. It'll make you gassy, anyways.
11. Is this a pretty special person? Wax their skis for them.

12. Is this someone really special? Re-glue their skins.

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