

A vine romance: It needn't be just champagne and roses on Valentine's Day. Try British bubbly, Italian Pignoletto – or even a chilled red

By OLLY SMITH EVENT FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY

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It may seem naff but I proposed to my wife Sophie on Valentine's Day.

We'd been together a while and events had conspired to thwart my previous attempts at wooing – most not my tactic of choosing this particular day paid off; the proposal was a genuine surprise.

The day is what you make it and I reckon a formidable opportunity to pop some bubbly and raise a glass to English fizz remains at the top of my tree for a dazzling aperitif.

It's great to support local and I'd love this to be the first year when every state banquet and British Airw English and Welsh fizz for our guests and travellers.

And this isn't to do down other types of fizz: the point is, they're all different.

Prosecco hits the spot for many palates, with its mellow fruitiness and friendly prices.

Or how about another breezy Italian bubbly, Sainsbury's Taste the Difference Pignoletto DOC (11 per cent fun.

But it's also worth noting there are also some decent value Champagnes out there.

For example, Lidl's Champagne Premier Cru Brut (12 per cent) for £15.99 is my star buy this week, if you good value Champagne – it's worth calling ahead to make sure your local store has still got stock before you. To stand out from the crowd, pick a Riesling Sekt such as Philipps-Eckstein 2011 (12.5 per cent) alpinewines.co.uk.

Or to surprise as well as woo the one you love, how about chilled red fizz?

Served with fresh raspberries (worth noting for when they're next in season), unleash the fruits of love with Paul Thénevet's On Pète la Soif! 2013 from robersonwine.com – at just 8 per cent it's one to sip to the s Long.



Just keep an eye out for that surprise proposal...

OLLY'S PICK OF THE BUNCH

<p>£11.99</p>	<p>£16.49*</p>	<p>£20</p>	<p>£109.95</p>	<p>£6</p> <p>WINE OF THE WEEK</p>
<p>LAST OF THE RED HOT LOVERS Bouvet Rubis Demi-Sec Majestic A quirky choice to unleash with a bowl of fresh red fruit – or try it with a slice of Stilton.</p>	<p>CHAMPAGNE SUPERNOVA Waitrose Blanc de Noirs Champagne NV (12.2%) *On offer from Feb 17 A great price for this charming rich fizz, laden with red fruit finesse.</p>	<p>THE ONLY WAY IS SUSSEX The Society's Exhibition English Sparkling Wine 2013 (12%) The Wine Society Buzzing with verve, this Sussex fizz is ready to charge your love batteries.</p>	<p>BECAUSE THEY'RE WORTH IT... Dom Ruinart Blanc de Blancs 2004 (12.5%). The Finest Bubble Up there with the gods of Champagne. Elegant, vivacious and enthralling fizz to satisfy your heart's desire.</p>	<p>Tesco Finest Argentina Malbec 2014 (13.5%) A grand plush red with lush fruity fragrance, irresistible vibrance and depth. Crack a bottle of love potion!</p>