

You can't put a price on love....especially when it comes to Valentine's Day

More and more Belgians buy the purchase for their loved ones online, with a stunning 188% increase in ecommerce transactions

More than ever, the way to the Belgians's heart is through their stomach!

February 13, 2017 – Whether it's a small romantic gesture or an extravagant surprise for that special someone, it would appear Belgian shoppers around the globe are feeling loved up, spending more on the most romantic day of the year than ever before. The annual "Mastercard Love Index", an analysis of payment card transactions over a three-year period, has revealed that sentimental spending in Belgium has increased by 45 percent since 2014, with the overall number of transactions up by 91%. And whilst the majority of purchases still happen in person, love is the latest thing to go digital, with a stunning 188 percent increase in the number of online transactions from Valentine's Day 2014 to Valentine's Day 2016.

If you still haven't picked up something special for your loved one; you're not alone. Data showed the majority of Valentine's purchases in Belgium happen during a last-minute dash on February 13th, with over 300,000 transactions that day alone over the past three years.

Besides, it seems that the way to the Belgian's heart is through their stomach! Whilst spending on traditional Valentine's gestures such as flowers has decreased by 26% over the last three years, spending in restaurants increased by 78%, accounting for 22% of all transactions.

"Whilst the way we say I love you might have changed in recent years, showing someone you care on February 14th is more popular than ever. The Mastercard Love Index highlights key global and regional trends to hopefully offer retailers some priceless insight into how customers want to spend the most romantic day of the year" commented Valérie Nowak, Country Manager at Mastercard Belgium.

The study, which looked at shopper behaviour in more than 200 territories around the globe, identified some other purchasing trends.

The personal touch still matters: Despite the continued growth of online, 95% of transactions around Valentine's Day are still made in person. Those in Latin America showed the biggest shift to online, with an increase of 250% from 2014 to 2016, followed by the Middle East and Africa with a 56% increase

REGIONAL TRENDS	
Asia Pacific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend most of their money on hotels / motels during the Valentine's period – 37%, an increase of 33% since 2014 • Do 85% of their Valentine's Day purchases in person, however online sales have increased by 81% in the last three years
Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose to spend the most on restaurants and eating out during Valentine's Day period – 34% • 59% of their spending happens in person (the lowest amount across all regions)

<p>Europe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of their Valentine’s Day spending goes on hotels / motels – 35%, an increase of 50% in three years • Europeans lead the way in terms of spending online compared to other regions, 19% of their Valentine’s Day spending is done on e-commerce sites • Biggest area of growth in Europe was in restaurants, up by 67% during the Valentine’s Day period in three years
<p>Latin America</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biggest growth in terms of online spending, up by 250% in three years • Bucked the trend in terms of flowers, seeing massive growth of 271% between 2014-2016 • Also saw the biggest growth in terms of splashing out on jewelry – up by 66%
<p>USA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love spending their money on food, 44% goes on restaurants and has seen the biggest growth across all regions since 2014 – up by 130% • 90% of their purchasing still takes place in person • Spending on hotels / motels was also up by 57% over the three year period on Valentine’s Day
<p>Middle East and Africa</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend most of their Valentine’s Day budget on hotels / motels (43%) followed by jewellery (22%) • Conduct three quarters (75%) of their purchases in person • Also bucked the trend in terms of flower sales, up by 22% over the three year period

-ENDS-

About Mastercard

[Mastercard](#) (NYSE: MA), www.mastercard.com, is a technology company in the global payments industry. We operate the world’s fastest payments processing network, connecting consumers, financial institutions, merchants, governments and businesses in more than 210 countries and territories. Mastercard products and solutions make everyday commerce activities – such as shopping, traveling, running a business and managing finances – easier, more secure and more efficient for everyone. Follow us on Twitter [@MastercardNews](#), join the discussion on the [Beyond the Transaction Blog](#) and [subscribe](#) for the latest news on the [Engagement Bureau](#).

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