

## What Consumers Will Buy This Valentine's Day

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Source: National Jeweler

New York--For the first time in a decade, Valentine's Day spending is expected to slow, the National Retail Federation said in its pre-holiday survey of consumers.

The NRF said U.S. consumers are expected to spend an average of \$136.57 ahead of Feb. 14 this year, down from \$146.84 last year, which was a record high that capped off a decade of growth in Valentine's Day spending.

Not surprisingly, consumers are expected to spend the most on their spouse/significant other (\$85.21), followed by other family members (\$26.59), children's classmates/teachers (\$6.51), co-workers (\$4.27) and pets (\$4.44).

Total spending is projected to reach \$18.2 billion, down from \$19.7 billion last year, which also was a record.

So, what will people be looking to buy for their loved ones?

According to the NRF, consumers will spend the most money on jewelry (both costume and fine) at \$4.3 billion, with 19 percent of shoppers surveyed planning to give the gift of bling.

Following jewelry, consumers plan to spend \$3.8 billion on an evening out (given by 37 percent of shoppers), \$2 billion on flowers (35 percent), \$1.9 billion on clothing (19 percent), \$1.7 billion on candy (50 percent), \$1.4 billion on gift cards/gift certificates (16 percent) and \$1 billion on greeting cards (47 percent).

The NRF said gifts of experience--meaning tickets to a concert or game, a gym membership or an outdoor adventure--also will be popular this year. Twenty-four percent plan to give one, making it more popular than clothing, candy, gift cards and greeting cards, and 40 percent of consumers said they want an experience gift.

As for where consumers will be shopping for Valentine's Day gifts this year, department stores ranked No. 1 at 35 percent followed by discount stores (32 percent), online (27 percent), specialty stores (18 percent), florists (18 percent) and local small businesses (15 percent).

The NRF conducted its survey between Jan. 4 to 11, asking 7,591 consumers about their Valentine's Day plans.