

BEAUTY / BEAUTY FEATURES

## Who Needs Cupid? Beauty Industry Aims at Self-Purchase to Sweeten Valentine's Day Sales

No sweetheart is no problem for this year's crop of Valentine's Day beauty gift ideas as the holiday is expected to rack up 7 percent sales gains over last year.

By [Faye Brookman](#) on February 12, 2018



© Otterland's Valentine's Day Candle collection.

Valentine's Day can be a bust for those without a partner. This year, the beauty industry has a game plan. Buoyed by a robust Christmas, the industry is hauling out offers to wrest Valentine's Day presents away from the chocolate, jewelry and floral categories. What's notable is that brands are borrowing a strategy that propelled sales last Yule — promoting products for self-purchase for those without significant others.



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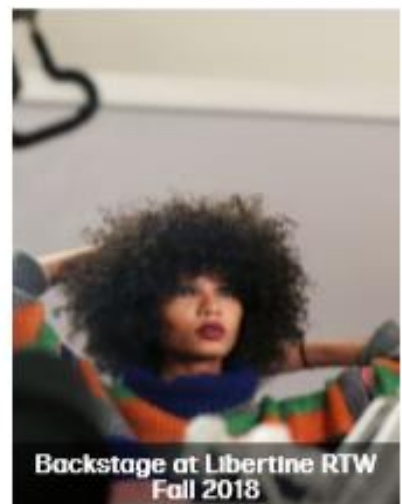
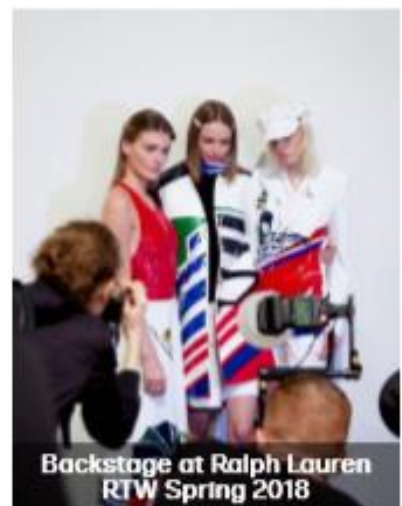
No matter the intended recipient, Valentine's Day is shaping up to be the second largest in the 15 years since the National Retail Federation started tracking its sales. According to the [NRF](#) and Prosper Insights & Analytics, total spending for the romantic holiday will hit \$19.6 billion, up from \$18.2 billion last year. Jewelry, a night out, flowers and clothing top the gift list, but if the beauty industry has its way, fragrances, candles and even chocolate wax services could muscle into the top-selling list.

Otherland, a new direct-to-consumer candle brand, seeks to fill the market gap between superluxury brands like Nest and mass-market entries. For Valentine's Day, the brand has a limited-edition Valentine's Day Candlegram targeted to "those who are taken or single AF." Launched last December, Otherland is the brainchild of Abigail Stone, who combined her business school education with work experience in fashion and art acquisitions to craft the collection.

The Valentine's Day version features packaging inspired by vintage floral scarfs, Henri Matisse and the Los Angeles flower market bundled with an exclusive love poem penned by Instagram-story star Alison Malee. The gift box also includes a set of matches stored in a personalized matchbox. The candles are a custom soy-and-coconut blend. Like Otherland's traditional pricing model, there is a single candle for \$36 or a mix-and-match three-pack priced at \$89 with complimentary shipping included.

The five core collection candle scents, Canopy, Rattan, Chandelier, Kindling and Daybed, were formulated by master perfumer Firmenich, and are the five distinct scents Otherland thinks every home needs to create any kind of vibe. The packaging resembles a giant matchbox that has become popular unboxing fodder for social media videos, said Stone. This year, she wants to open a pop-up shop to expose more consumers to her brand and she hopes it will encourage shoppers to trade up from low-end, while also attracting those who have been shelling out for higher-end brands.

Positioned that not everyone is lucky in love, cruelty-free makeup line Luscious Cosmetics turned to its staff members to create Hearbreakers Lipsticks with names such as Player and



Romeo timed around Valentine's Day.

Spas are getting into the Valentine's Day action, too. Face to Face NYC, founded by Enrique Ramirez, is offering deals on chocolate wax through the month of February. Chocolate wax is said to be less painful than standard wax, less likely to cause breakouts and loaded with anti-inflammatory properties — and a good self-treat.

Fragrances, of course, are a staple of the romantic holiday. **Influenster** drew from its peer-to-peer product discovery and recommendation platform to uncover the most buzzed-about scents in advance of Valentine's Day. Influenster analyzed over 250,000 authentic, user-generated reviews in the fragrance category on its platform to determine the most-reviewed fragrances unique to each state. Overall, with nearly 15,000 organic reviews, Victoria's Secret Love Spell Fragrance Mist is the winning fragrance with the most number of reviews on Influenster. The fragrance that took home the most buzzed-about title in the most number of states is a tie between Bath & Body Works Pink Chiffon Eau de Toilette and Victoria's Secret Bombshell Fragrance Mist.