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COUPLES SHARE THE LOVE WHEN IT COMES TO BOOKING VALENTINE'S MEALS

It's the most romantic day of the year, but booking that all-important Valentine's meal out is no longer the preserve of the male of the species.

Increasingly more women are taking the lead to ensure they have a table at their favourite restaurant on 14 February to share food and celebrate love with their partners.

And with Valentine's Day falling on a Sunday this year a significant number of couples decided not to hold with tradition and opted for a romantic get-together on the Saturday instead.

New figures by online bookings service liveRES show that while men are still ahead in making the Valentine's reservations, women are catching up in the practicality stakes.

This year 47.09% of bookings over the Valentine's weekend (including Friday) were made by women compared with 45.8% last year and 42.7% in 2014.

Not surprisingly, the Sunday table for two was the favoured choice, but venues were able to share the love with 31.7% of the weekend bookings made for Saturday 13 February instead.

Olivia FitzGerald, managing director of liveRES, part of Zonal Retail Data Systems, said: "Valentine's Day is a much anticipated date for lovers of all ages. It is also one of the busiest dates in the dining out sector, so it needs a practical head as well as a romantic heart to get that booking organised.

"New technology makes it easier than ever before to browse online for Valentine's Day bookings, and it looks like the role of planning ahead is being shared more between the sexes."

When it comes to bookings, it also seems that it's the traditionalists amongst us who are more likely to plan ahead, with the top male bookers named David, Paul and John and for the ladies, Sarah, Emma and Laura.

“There is real competition out there to grab a share of the Valentine’s Day eating out market. With other key trading dates like Mother’s Day coming up, it’s essential that operators make sure their offers and customer communications are targeted towards both male and female consumers, especially those that are organised to book ahead,” added Olivia.

liveRES is part of the Marketing Technologies division of Zonal Retail Data Systems, the UK’s leading provider of hospitality solutions to over 8,000 leisure and hospitality businesses across the UK. For over 35 years, the company has been working closely with clients to enhance the customer experience through market leading technology, experienced people and a partnership approach to business.

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For further information contact

Jo Mathers on 07799 662389 / jo@limegreencommunications.com

Sarah Perrins on 07774 925943 / sarah@limegreencommunications.com