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and on the right of those driving south (towards FSU). There were about eight parking spaces and 13 cars. I saw a drive-thru window, so I pulled around to the back to discover there was no menu or speakerphone.

The drive-thru window was just...a window. After finding a parking space that wasn't a parking space, I walked into the restaurant.

Inside was small and cramped with a few bar seats at the window and an area to sit down by a small old-fashioned television set. One petite lady with a Jamaican accent took orders, while a Jamaican man cooked. Lots of people were crowded around waiting on their orders, but none seemed impatient. Most people made small talk, as if they knew each other. Although the Jamaican Kitchen wasn't equipped with brand-specific architecture,

or corporate trained, robot-acting workers, it had a pleasant, local feeling that one would expect on a trip to the Caribbean. And their food, according to my trainer, was all freshly made. No preservatives, processed food, high fructose corn syrup, fake sugars, or pretend-meat (cough, cough McDonald's).

On the counter, there were lots of flyers and a couple menus. I grabbed a menu and browsed, seeing everything from beef patties

and pineapple soda to jerk chicken and curry goat. The menu wasn't large, but it had a good variety of traditional Jamaican meals. I ordered a medium curry chicken with white rice and cabbage, and a meat patty. It took all my energy not to order a Jamaican root beer or pineapple soda, both of which are made using ingredients directly from ginger root and pineapples, respectively.

I expected to wait five to 10 minutes for my meal, based on the number of people before me. Surprisingly, I waited all of three minutes. In between that time, almost everybody before me received their food, checked it, thanked the cashier, and left. Nobody returned their food with problems, and all the meals I saw had steam coming from inside the Styrofoam to-go box (no cold fries, oops, I mean cold curry).

When she called my number, my meal was in a brown paper bag. Inside, my meat patty was wrapped appropriately in wax paper and my curry chicken was sitting beautifully on top of white rice, a couple plantains, and potatoes, and cabbage. I had enough napkins and

she didn't forget my fork.

Before I left I took a closer look at the flyers on the counter. Most of them were advertising events geared towards unifying the Caribbean community, which made sense.

I was able to devour my meal and still make it to class. Although white rice isn't the best option during weight loss efforts, it is not nearly as bad as white bread or white tortillas. It actually has the same amount of calories as brown rice, although brown rice does have more vitamins and nutrients.

I'd go back to the Jamaican Kitchen again in a heartbeat. Aesthetically, you're not going to gasp in awe, but the quality of the cuisine is perfect.

I'll suck it up and walk in to order great food before I pull up to a drive-thru to order unhealthy, mass-produced, quantity-over-quality food, any day.

The Jamaican Kitchen is located at 2401 Murchison Road, Fayetteville, NC 28301. Hours of operation: Monday-Saturday 11am-8pm; Closed on Sundays.

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## Valentine s Day – a day for lovers and spenders!

By Briana Murrell  
Voice Staff Writer

Around this time of the year, romance and love is in the air. Money is also in the atmosphere - spending that is. Couples, friends and family everywhere are ready and willing to spend money on their loved ones. To some, money is no object when it comes to getting that special gift and making Valentine's Day is a day to remember.

According to the National Retail Federation's 2011 Valentine's Day Consumer Intentions and Actions Survey, the average person will spend \$116.21 on traditional Valentine's Day merchandise this year. Total holiday spending is expected to reach \$15.7 billion. The top three purchases: jewelry (\$3.5 billion), clothing (\$1.6 billion) and dining out (\$3.4 billion).

For Valentine's Day, the staff here at The Voice has come up with their own list of this year's top Valentine's Day gifts.

- #1 – Candy
- #2 – Personalized Valentine
- #3 – Perfume/Cologne
- #4 – Dinner
- #5 – Intimacy

According to many Fayetteville State students, Valentine's Day is a day to celebrate love. It is one day set aside to express how much you love your spouse, significant other, family, or friend. One of The Voice's staff writers, Nicolette Beatty, says, "I think of Valentine's Day as a day to show and tell the person you love just how much you love them, whether it be gifts, words, or actions."

Falling on a weekday this year, many students have opted to celebrate Valentine's Day during the weekend. Some have been planning their special day for months. Dinner and a movie topped the list of students' plans.

Leland Walker, The Voice staff photographer, has prepared a nice evening for his secret valentine. "I plan on surprising a young lady with an oversized stuffed animal, dinner, and a movie, maybe an evening walk around campus and to chill out in the gazebo."

Whether this Monday will be a special day for you, or just an ordinary day, dinner and a movie, or a night alone, celebrate life itself. "Love the life you live and live the life you love!"