

A moonlight walk — now that's amore!

A full moon on a first date has always been a romantic setting whether it was Valentine's Day or not. The Italian word for love is amore, and in fact in the '50s, Dean Martin's hit song *That's Amore* boasted his popularity.

Here are a few verses from that song: "When the moon hits your eye, like a big-a pizza pie, that's amore" and "When the world seems to shine, like you've had too much wine, that's amore."

It's hard to tell if Martin had too much wine when he wrote that song, but the first line has been used by a few pizza companies to market their products in TV commercials.

Advertisers seem to have a knack of associating two totally unrelated ideas and making a hit out of it. I would not advise you to smack your date with a big pizza pie to show them the moon as they'll



Neel Roberts
The Sky's the Limit

likely douse you with their beverage, telling you to "cool off".

However, a simple moonlight walk after a romantic meal has always capped off an evening well, no matter what stage the relationship is in. Now that's amore!

Sky watch for the next month

Look east on Feb. 9 at 8:30 p.m. and Mars will introduce the moon rising and will stay close to it all night until they set at dawn in the west.

The Zodiacal Light is a faint, roughly triangular, whitish glow seen in the

night sky extended up from the vicinity of the sun along the ecliptic or zodiac. Discovered by the astronomer Giovanni Domenico Cassini in 1683 and later explained by Nicolas Fatio de Duillier in 1684, it's difficult to find, but this year there will be several opportunities to get a glimpse. The best time is from Feb. 10 for two weeks in the northwest after twilight.

The Valentine's star Betelgeuse is visible Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, starting in the southeast sky from dusk until setting in the west at 3:30 a.m. Impress your date by showing them the easy-to-find red pulsating star.

Venus will be visibly below the moon until it sets at about 10:30 p.m. on Feb. 25 in the north-northwest. The next day, Jupiter will take its place from dusk to its setting at roughly 11:30 p.m.

Public events for the next month

Did you join us last month at the Vulcan Tourism and Trek Station for stargazing? We had a great start to what will be a monthly event, so don't hesitate to get involved. We'll check out Betelgeuse on Feb. 10 at 7:30 p.m. with Comet Levy.

A short indoor presentation is followed by stargazing, weather pending. Treats and refreshments are provided free of charge, and all welcome.

For further information, phone Vulcan Tourism at 403-485-2994 or visit the website www.vulcantourism.com.

Neel Roberts is a member of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. Neel welcomes your questions and comments at 403-485-2683 and Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com.