

# For love and money

**R**ESearch shows that a grand romantic gesture is no longer about popping the question.

Rather it's about alleviating financial stress and worry.

Financial stress is the biggest passion and relationship killer.

As Valentine's Day looms and darlings the world over contemplate the perfect gift, we suggest you pay that money into your bond and have a romantic time at home.

According to debt counseling expert and author of *Credit Hell - How to Dig Out of Debt*, Howard Dvorkin, 50 per cent of all marriages end in dissolution, and the number one reason for that is financial pressures.

Says Simon Stockley, CEO of Integer Home Loans thinks that a better idea would be to light a candle, put some bubbles in the bath, cook a meal and show your prowess as a caring lover by keeping it as safe in the bank, as you would between the sheets"

"When dinner, roses and a (small) diamond ring can cost you in excess of R10 000, why not invest in your future



peace of mind.

"After all, a man or woman with sexy frontal lobes is considerably hotter than Timothy and Tammy Tart throwing their money away on a night of short sighted pleasure," he says.

The cost of popping the question around Valentine's Day would typically cost R 10 469 if you are splurging.

Roses (reference: Interflora website): R770; Valentines dinner (reference: inquiry at Lions Head, 12 Apostles): R 1190; Diamond eternity ring (reference: Sterns website): R 8000; Moet & Chandon Grand Vintage 2000 (reference: Picardi Rebel website): R 509.

However if you deposit R10469 into the average home loan account of R750 000, you

stand to save R29520 over the total term of your loan (based on an interest rate of 13 per cent - prime less one - over 240 months). A saving of R290 000 is perhaps a greater aphrodisiac than the oysters you can ill-afford this Valentine's Day. Keep the romance hot and heavy, instead of your debt.

The recent interest rate cut of 100bps in the repo rate last week - and the Reserve Bank Governor commenting that he was looking to cut the repo rate even further - is the clearest possible indication that the interest rate cycle and property market has turned. We can realistically see an upturn in real estate prices by the middle of 2009.

"There has never been a better time to buy as prices are low and the interest rate is turning and my best advice to all lovers, friends and frenemies (friendly enemies) is to get in now - at the bottom of the cycle"

After all home is not necessarily here the heart is. Rather, heart is where the home is. - *Integer*. Picture: *spaboomblog.com*

