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Love Padlocks

By Jess Gillis

VALENTINE'S DAY SPECIAL

HEARTBROKEN ORIGIN

Boy (a Serbian military officer named **Relja**) meets Girl (a school teacher named **Nada**) over **100 years ago** in the Serbian town of **Vrnjačka Banja**. They fall in love, and commit to marry. Boy goes to war. Boy meets local girl from Corfu. Boy falls in love with new girl. First girl falls prey to melancholy, and, never recovering from the loss, allegedly dies of a broken heart. Local girls, wanting to secure their love, affix padlocks with their - and their sweeties' - names, to the bridge where Relja and Nada used to meet (see image 1).

GLOBAL SPREAD OF "LOVE LOCKS"

Since roughly the year 2000, **the practice has spread all across Europe, and the world**, with bridges, trees, fences, and other public places being covered, and in some cases **weighed down**



2. **Ponts Des Arts**, Paris (source)

(as with the "Ponts Des Arts" bridge in Paris, France), with lovers' padlocks. In addition to France and Serbia, they've appeared in **Ireland, Italy, the USA** (even appearing on the Brooklyn Bridge), **Germany, Algeria, Russia, Taiwan, Uruguay**, and of course **Canada**. In Canada alone, locks have appeared



1. **Most Ljubavi (The Bridge of Love)**
Vrnjačka Banja, Serbia (source)

on Vancouver's **Wild Pacific Trail**, Ottawa's **Corktown Bridge**, and even on Toronto's **Humber Bridge**, which city officials fastidiously remove roughly once per year. Many municipalities worldwide consider the lovelocks to be a public nuisance and/or a hazard to infrastructure they happen to cover. A group called **"No Love Locks"** has even emerged to campaign against the practice.

TORONTO, CITY OF LOVE?

Luckily for us Torontonians, our distillery district now boasts its very own love padlock art installation, where lovers can legally, and happily, attach their locks. We're not sure yet if it's here to stay, but for now, it's a great spot to grab a photo and leave a token of your undying affection! If you're in the **Mill & Trinity St. area**, check it out!



3. **Distillery District**, Toronto (Photo: Sharon Weeden)

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