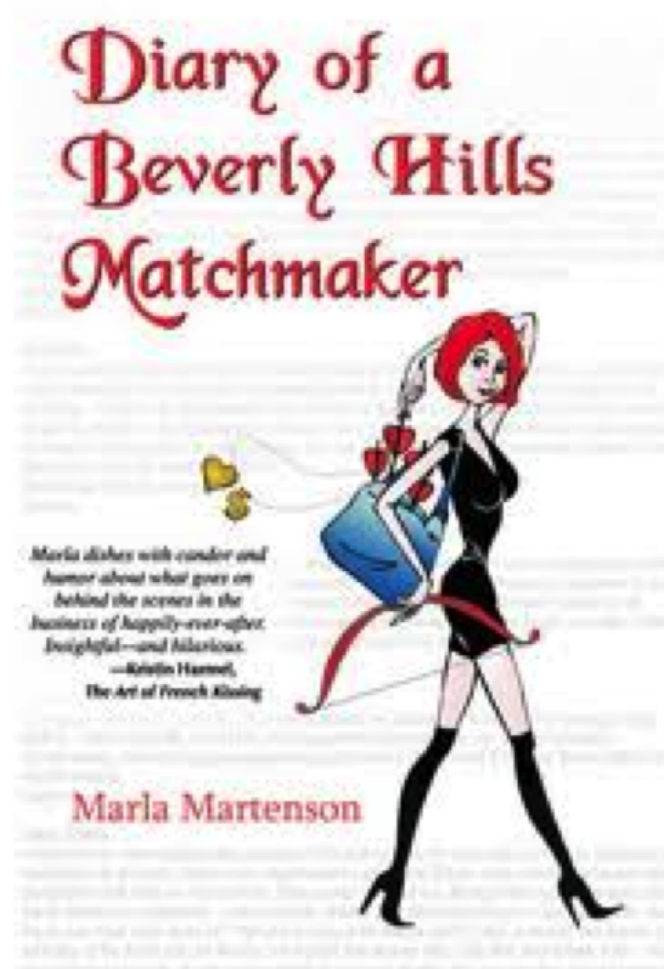


Marla Martenson Talks 'Diary of a Beverly Hills Matchmaker'



By Tanni Deb

Finding love doesn't come easy, especially when you have unrealistic expectations of your partner. If you don't believe me, just ask professional matchmaker **Marla Martenson**, the author of *Diary of a Beverly Hills Matchmaker*. Martenson gives readers an inside scoop of what really goes on behind the scenes when it comes to matchmaking. Featuring real letters from clients where elite men search for supermodel look-alikes and women are on a quest to find a wealthy soul mate in one of the richest cities in California, the book is sure to shock and entertain readers.

Cupid had a chance to interview Martenson via phone about her book. Take a look at what she had to say:

Why did you become a matchmaker?

It was really a fluke that turned into a career. I got a job as a videographer at a video dating company back in 2001. I had been an actress and a waitress for 20 years in Los Angeles and Chicago, and I didn't want to be in the restaurant business anymore. I was still acting, but I never could make a living out of it. When I was offered the position at the video dating company, I jumped at the chance. I loved it and felt like I was the director doing these videos for the people. While working there, I thought about writing a dating book from talking to all these people. After that job, I moved over to an upscale matchmaking service in Beverly Hills where I became the vice president of matchmaking. I was there for seven years.

What challenges do you face as a matchmaker?

The challenges would be the people who are so picky. They're very selective here in Southern California. The guys want the girls to look like models and the girls hope the guys are super wealthy. So I think the initial challenge is that everybody has on their wish list their prince charming. It's really about what you want in a partner and getting them to

see that it's not always about that first superficial wish that they might think they want.

Your book review in Amazon said that you've had clients who were very unrealistic. For example, "old, nerdy, overweight, and balding man" who is searching for a "supermodel look-alike who has to have an Ivy League education but prefers to be a 1950's housewife." How do you handle people with unrealistic expectations?

A lot of times I will do some coaching. A woman has come to me recently for some coaching, but sometimes people are not open to changing; they want what they want. I try to deliver and if I can't, I can't. But I tell them that I'm a matchmaker, not a magician.

Is it possible to find them someone who matches their criteria?

I have to say I really love my clients; they're great people. But a lot of them have unrealistic expectations. Luckily, in Los Angeles there are a lot of beautiful women so I'm able to match the guys. And there are a lot of guys who are doing very well and are successful. It's understandable that a woman wants a man with something going on. She wants to get married and have a family. She wants somebody who has a good career and who can take care of her. I can see where some of it comes from.

Have you had clients who return continuously because they aren't satisfied with who they were matched with?

I do show them photos, so they'll see the pictures first. Now when they get on a date, there might not be any chemistry or their personalities might not match. But, generally, they won't say that the person didn't look good at all because they've seen the photo. So they're not too disappointed that way.

What do most men and women search for in a significant other?

It's interesting because women's top desires that they tell me in a man is sense of humor, honesty, loyalty, looks and healthy lifestyle. The men want what they see first. They say they want a woman who is attractive, they love a great sense of humor and someone who is easy going.

What advice do you have for those who have been single for quite some time now because they have unrealistic expectations of the opposite sex?

Be a little more open-minded and try dating someone who maybe doesn't fit the exact picture in your mind. If you go out with somebody, it doesn't mean you have to marry him or you're going to spend your life with him. It's just a cup of coffee or lunch or dinner. So give the guy a try if he has a lot of great qualities you're looking for.

Cupid thanks Marla Martenson for her time! To get a look into the world of matchmaking, visit **Amazon** to purchase *Diary of a Beverly Hills Matchmaker*.