

Dating Advice: 10 Great Date Ideas Under \$50



By Laura Seldon for GalTime.com

Great dates don't have to come in the form of a helicopter ride at sunset or a weekend spa getaway (although a massage does sound nice right about now...) No, contrary to what *The Bachelor* would have you believe, romance doesn't depend on spending money in big flashy ways. To prove it, here are 10 fun and unique date ideas that will cost you less than \$50!

1. Hit up a video arcade

Tired of playing games in relationships? You won't feel that way when the games are part of a video console! "This kind of date makes you feel like a kid again," says Tripp, a dating

coach in Los Angeles and the founder of TrippAdvice.com. "Playing games and building up the tension of competition can make for a steamy date!"

2. Plan a picnic

Seems a bit cheesy for a date, right? Well, think again! Planning a picnic is a great way to get to know someone new beyond the walls of a coffee shop. "Go to the grocery store with your date and pick out the food together," suggests Tripp. "Make sure you have a blanket in your car and pick a scenic spot."

3. Visit the farmer's market

Like planning a picnic, heading to the farmer's market allows you to spend some quality time with your date in a relaxing outdoor space. "Check out your local farmer's market and make a nice afternoon of it," says Tripp. "Pick out some fresh food and eat while you enjoy the day together."

4. Compete in a game night

Nothing stokes the romance flames like a little competition! "Invite your date over to play an array of games together while you eat some snacks or have a few drinks," says Tripp. However, Tripp also suggests you go beyond playing innocent board games. "There's nothing like a risqué game of strip poker when the mood is right!"

5. Make it a group date

"Get a bunch of other couples to screen a movie on the side of someone's garage," suggests Dr. Nancy Irwin, a therapist and life coach in Los Angeles. No place to screen a movie? Throw a potluck picnic in your backyard. "This is really fun because it is a party with as many other people as you like."

Not only will you reduce your costs if you get a few other couples in on the fun, but you'll also be bonding with your

friends and your date all at once.

6. Visit a museum

Museum tickets don't necessarily have to add up to a pricey date. "In many cities, there are usually free museum days," says Larry Moore, a relationship expert and blogger in Houston, Texas. "Museums are great for dates because there's always something in the museum that sparks conversation or serves as an ice breaker, giving each person a chance to get to know more about the other person."

7. Show 'em your hood

Consider spending a romantic evening touring your neighborhood with the object of your affection. "What better way is there to show a date who you really are than to show that person where you are from?" asks Sujeiry Gonzalez, a relationship expert and author in Los Angeles. "Besides, you have home advantage. You know the little shops and restaurants that won't bleed out your wallet!"

8. Explore your hobbies

Always wanted to learn a few skills in the kitchen? Longing to try out rock climbing? Ready to take your love for dance to the next level? Then do it... but with a date! "Not only will you build your relationship, but you may also end up realizing you both have another shared interest," says Marni Kinrys, founder of MarniWingGirl.com. "It's also great for conversation starters!"

9. Peruse a thrift store

Take a date shopping at a thrift store and compete to see who can find the silliest outfit. You can even take pictures and have a few mementos from your date. "Showing your fun side while trying on silly hats and taking pictures will create a lasting memory for both of you," says Jeff Callahan, a dating

coach in Little Rock, Arkansas. "I believe that having a fantastic date shouldn't crush your wallet."

10. Browse your local bookstore

Judge a few books by their covers while perusing the romance novel section of your local bookstore. Not only is it free, but it's also utterly entertaining. "Reading trashy romance novels aloud to each other will make you both laugh," says Callahan. "And possibly set the mood for romance." So, head to a local book shop and tell your date to read between the lines!