

10 Budget-Conscious Ways To Impress Your Partner



By [Whitney Baker](#)

Sure, sometimes it's fun to splurge on a fancy date, but other times, it's nice to do something simple, entertaining and budget-friendly with your guy. Regardless of what you do, he'll be excited that you took the pressure off of him and planned a cheap outing. Whether you enjoy exploring a new area of town, staying indoors (and avoiding the summer heat!) or being active, there's a date idea on this list for you:

1. Be Outdoorsy: Sometimes the best entertainment is right outside your front door – no tickets required. Take a hike and soak up the sights and sounds of the great outdoors. When the

sun goes down, take a moment to appreciate each other and do a little stargazing.

Related: [Date Idea: Cuddle While Counting the Stars](#)

2. Pack a Picnic: Using only items that are already in your pantry or fridge, fill up that picnic basket and head to your backyard for an impromptu lunch date. Spread out your blanket and chow down! Luckily, there's no pricey bill to face when you're done eating.

3. Free Booze: Take a tour of a nearby winery or brewery. Not only will you learn more about your drink of choice, but you'll pick up some ideas for the next dinner party that you throw with your man.

4. Eat In: Treat him to a romantic dinner at home. Cook his favorite meal, light a few candles and pop open a bottle of bubbly. Taking the time to treat him to a home-cooked meal will remind him how much you love him – and maybe he'll even return the favor tomorrow night.

5. DIY Projects: Spend a day tacking those do-it-yourself projects that you both keep avoiding. Accomplishing something together will remind you of how well you work as a team. Plus, you'll have a new piece of décor to show off to your friends.

6. At-Home Spa Day: Get ready for a day – or night – of pampering. Takes turn giving each other a massage and then enjoy a bubble bath together. When you're finished, wrap up in your plushiest robe and snuggle up with a glass of wine and some relaxing music.

Related: [Date Idea: Relax with a Spa Day at Home](#)

7. Game Day: Enjoy an afternoon at the ballpark. Tickets can cost as little as \$5 – they don't call them the cheap seats for nothing! By doing something that you know he loves, you'll

show him that you pay attention to his likes and work hard to fulfill his needs. Don't forget to take care of yourself too: indulge in a hot dog and cold beer as you root for your favorite team.

8. Hit the Gym: By showing him your sweaty side, he'll know just how comfortable you are around him. You can introduce a bit of friendly competition in to your relationship too: challenge him to a sit-up or push-up contest. Thanks to this active bonding sesh, you'll have a smile on your face, win or lose.

9. Be a Tourist: Sure, you'd love to take a romantic getaway to somewhere exotic, but sometimes, you can have just as much fun exploring your hometown. Check out a local art fair or weekend farmer's market. Wander around a downtown museum and broaden your cultural horizons. Or just take to the streets and do some people-watching. You're sure to have a fun stay-cation with your man by your side.

10. Go Househunting: Spend an afternoon visiting different open houses in your area – everything from a fixer-upper to that mansion with a pool and three-car garage. Even if you aren't in the market to buy, looking at homes is a good way to test your compatibility and see where your future lies. Who knows? Maybe you'll be inspired to do some work at your current house or apartment.

Do you have any cheap date ideas to add to the list? Tell us in the comments below!

Date Idea: Let Your Love Fly



By Amanda Martin

Relax this weekend by flying a kite in the beautiful outdoors with your honey. It's an inexpensive way to do something laid back while still being romantic.

Kites should be flown in an open, breezy area, making the beach the perfect location. Find out if there are any kite clubs nearby. Flying with other people will allow you as a couple to admire these embellishments that are said to have originated in China. Don't worry about your beginner abilities or keeping up with the more serious people around you; just have a good time.

You can buy a single-line kite for less than \$10, or if you're looking for a challenge, you can get a dual-line stunt kite

for \$20. It'll be fun to help one another make the tricky figure 8 shapes.

Once you've become tired of flying, set up an intimate picnic lunch in a shady area. Quench your thirst with freshly squeezed lemonade and indulge in homemade sandwiches. Afterwards, take a walk together and admire the beautiful scenery.

This fun and relaxing day with your other half will help you remind each other of how special your time is together. Maybe you can even talk about your future.

How do you relax with your honey? Let us know in the comments below.

Creating a Celebrity-Style Wedding





By Rob Toledo

As summer wedding season continues, it's possible that your own marriage has been on your mind. There are a lot of stressful decisions to make before you say "I do," but you shouldn't feel intimidated. There's no better way to design a unique, stylish wedding than to look to those style-makers. Here are some top tips for using the style of celebrity couples to create your own memorable wedding:

Related: [What to Wear to a Summer Wedding](#)

1. Find your personal estate: From Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel to Carey Mulligan and Marcus Mumford, estate weddings are very popular among celebrities. Luscious green lawns with perfectly pruned roses and long, elegant white tables can make any ceremony memorable. Sure, you might not be able to rent out Downton Abbey, but you still can turn almost any big backyard into an elegant property. Find a landscaping firm that will let you line the yard with your favorite flowers. Consider swapping expensive bouquets for colorful fruit bowls with a country elegance look. Wedding planning can

be the perfect reason to start a backyard fix-me-up project, so get your yard in shape with floral gardens or a stone pathway that you'll be able to enjoy year after year.

2. Celebrate in good conscience: When Natalie Portman and Benjamin Millepied got married, they did it with their morals on display, doing things like buying recycled platinum and conflict-free diamonds. These same ethics are easy to apply to your own wedding. Take a cue from Alicia Silverstone and print your invitations and programs on recycled paper embedded with seeds so guests can plant their own gardens at home. Try booking a sustainable venue such as a wilderness retreat or with a self-sustainable resort like the one where Kristi Yamaguchi got married. Have compost and recycling options readily available throughout the ceremony and use only locally grown food for an all-around low footprint wedding.

3. 'Smush smush' down the aisle: Okay, so Jersey Shore star Snooki has yet to marry her sweetheart Jionni LaValle, but we have a feeling that the vows will be exchanged in pure Jersey style. If you want a wedding like hers, start by getting the biggest rock you can find. The bride's dress should be form-fitting, and there should definitely be a tiara and six-inch heels involved. Men should dress in fully unbuttoned shirts to show off their blindingly bronzed pectorals. For the wedding reception, make sure to rent several hot tubs and place them by a pumping dance floor to continue your hot, Jersey style late into the night.

4. Bring your furry friends along: Are you the type of person who can't be without your four-legged companion? Be like Jennifer Hudson and invite your dogs up to the stage. Better yet, have guests to bring their own dogs as well and serve dog biscuits right beside that wedding cake. Your canine friends will be sure to keep things fun and playful, and they'll give you a good pick-me-up lick if your energy starts to drop. Just make sure their paws stay away from that white dress!

Related: [Five Celebrity Couples Who Had a Low Profile Wedding](#)

5. Paparazzi it up: Want to feel like a celebrity? Encourage your friends and families to bring cameras. Put little disposable cameras at the entrance table and encourage lots of photography. Get everyone snapping pictures: the more flash the better. This is a great way to get hundreds of unique photos of your wedding. Ask your photographer to focus on mostly candid shots so you can have a celebrity-style photo album. If you run a red carpet down the aisle, those flash bulbs will go wild.

Celebrities are bursting with unique wedding ideas. Use them as a model and plan a big special day of your own!

Rob Toledo is planning his own wedding in the Pacific Northwest this summer. He probably won't use the Jersey Shore idea himself, but thinks you should and share lots of pictures. He is working alongside Embrace pet insurance to create fun guides to animal ownership and encourages considering dog insurance for your four legged canines.

Date Idea: Try an Unusual Sport





By Amanda Martin

Get out of your comfort zone this weekend by trying a unique sport with your other half. Summer is the perfect time to be adventurous. It's warm outside and there are a variety of activities that can keep you and your partner learning something new.

For example, you can act like cupid and shoot arrows during an archery lesson. Or, spend time in the country and fire up some heat at a shooting range. You can make a game out of either of these activities and whoever wins gets to pick a romantic location for lunch. Don't forget to bring your camera to capture these very special moments.

Another unforgettable sport for the two of you to try is trapeze. Take your love off the ground and experience what it's like to perform in the circus. Trapeze schools are common in major cities, and there are lessons for beginners of all ages. You will be able to try moves that are as basic as the knee hang to a more complex mid-air catch. Although this is a gutsy sport, the support of your loved one should help

you get up that ladder and flying in no time.

What's the most unusual date you've ever been on? Let us know in the comments below.

New Advice Column: Dating in the Age of Technology



Have you been dating your guy for a few months, but he *still* hasn't changed his Facebook status to "in a relationship"? Or, does the new man your dating text you saying he misses you and then you don't hear from him for days? These are common scenarios in our new technology-driven dating world. If you

are challenged with how to navigate all of this, don't despair.

On Thursday, August 2nd, CupidsPulse.com will be launching a new advice column focused on this very issue. From texting to emailing to Twitter and Facebook, each month we will highlight a social media scenario and engage three experts (all from different areas of the country and different stages of life) to provide their perspective on how best to handle the situation.

Our advice column experts will include Paige Wyatt, the reality star of Discovery Channel's 'American Gun's'; Tristan Coopersmith, a "love stylist" working on her degree to become a psychotherapist; and Suzanne Oshima, a matchmaker and dating coach. Dating in the digital world is difficult – let us make it a bit easier for you!

If you have any questions you would like answered by our experts, please send them to cupid@cupidspulse.com.

Photo Courtesy: Datingsites.org

When One Partner's Needs Are More Important





By Jane Greer, Ph.D. for GalTime

Why has it been so surprising to us that Katie Holmes filed for divorce last week in an effort to end her marriage to Tom Cruise when so many of us had a hard time taking their union seriously in the first place?

Maybe it's because despite the public's initial cynicism, people eventually embraced the couple as an example of a true Hollywood love story.

According to the papers, Tom was as blindsided as we were by the news, but, unlike the couple's fans who watched from a distance, he was close to the action. How is it possible that he was chugging along, seemingly happy, when she was evidently so unhappy that she secretly planned her exit?

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Tom might have been looking through only one lens, which he does in his role as a director and producer, and was seeing things working according to his vision. Is it possible that he

didn't consider her needs at all? Tom's previous two wives, Mimi Rogers and Nicole Kidman, have each said that during their marriage their concerns were incidental to his, especially when it came to his religion, Scientology.

It has been reported that Katie wanted out because their daughter, six-year-old Suri, has reached the age at which she would begin to be educated in the ways of Scientology, and Katie did not seem to want that for her child. In fact, in addition to the divorce she has filed for sole custody. If it really is Scientology that made her want out, then she must never have fully accepted it in the first place or this wouldn't have emerged as a problem. Her concern over Suri's education may have been simmering on the back burner for some time.

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The push and pull around Scientology might not be so different from what any couple struggles with if one person wants to raise a child one way, and the other partner has a strong commitment to a completely separate religion. As I wrote about in *What About Me? Stop Selfishness From Ruining Your Relationship*, whenever there are two people who want two different things, one person is going to feel that they've given up more than the other. But for a marriage to be successful, there has to be an attempt to hear the other person and work out a compromise. With Tom and Katie, it appears that wasn't happening. Tom's way seems to have been the only way.

The other thing that may have been going on is that Katie stopped fighting for what she wanted. I see this over and over again with my patients. One partner gives up, realizing that all the conversation in the world is never going to make a difference. But the other partner takes that silence to mean the first partner is now okay with the situation, when in

reality they have shut down. They may be waiting for the right time to sever the relationship, or become vulnerable to romantic involvement outside the marriage. This myopic vision, in other words, “my” view, on one person’s part, leads them to believe that everything is just fine.

Whatever the case, Tom seems to have left no room for the necessary give and take that a healthy marriage demands. It might be just the right time for him to be making a movie called *Oblivion* since that seems to be exactly where his third marriage is headed.

Date Idea: Beach it with Your Babe





By Amanda Martin

Enjoy the sun this weekend by hitting the beach with your babe. The clear blue sky is the perfect backdrop for you and your honey as you listen to the sound of the waves crashing and feel the soft sand beneath your feet.

This is supposed to be a relaxing day, so don't put too much pressure on planning it perfectly. Simply pack a picnic lunch to bring along, and make sure it includes a lot of water so you don't get dehydrated. Put together a fresh fruit salad with cantaloupe, honeydew and the sweetest assortment of berries for you and your significant other.

One thing you don't want to forget is sunscreen. You can apply it onto one another to get close while taking the rays, and you won't have to worry about getting burnt.

Channel your inner child and build a sandcastle or bury your partner under the sand. If you want to be active, bring along a Frisbee or volleyball and find other people to play with – and of course being on the same side as your other half will ensure the chance for hugs and kisses when you score.

What's your perfect beach date? Let us know in the comments below.

5 Lies Your Single Friends Like to Tell



By Ché Blackwood

Everyone has their own preferences when it comes to dating. Usually these differences are insignificant, like preferring blue eyes or waiting until the third date for the first kiss. However, other differences matter a lot more, like those who love the single life versus those who prefer to stay coupled

up. While few will say no to being treated to an expensive dinner date, not everyone wants to commit afterward. You can tell these “commit-a-phobes” the advantages of dating over and over, but they’ll be filled with reasons why they’re better off on their own. While there’s nothing wrong with staying single, there’s also nothing wrong with taking on a partner. We gathered the most common arguments for staying single, and explained the reasons why they’re wrong:

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1. Single folks have more fun: It’s hard to argue that being single can be enjoyable. After all, you can focus on your own desires and dreams. However, the same should be true in relationships. Deciding to be exclusive shouldn’t strip you of freedom. A healthy relationship leaves plenty of room for both partners to focus on themselves, as well as on each other. If you feel you have to keep sacrificing your dreams, your relationship isn’t average, it’s unhealthy.

2. Singles are too busy for relationships: Between focusing on a career, balancing friendships and trying to squeeze in a single afternoon for that long overdue dentist appointment, it’s not surprising that some think the addition of a significant other is too much to handle. Of course, falling in love is not the same as working toward a promotion or scheduling in a root canal. Love is a wonderful treat that breaks up the monotony of everyday life. If you have the time to do things you don’t want to do, you certainly have the time for some romance on the side.

3. Singles are too independent to answer to anyone: There isn’t much room for selfishness in a relationship. Your actions are, in a lot of ways, going to directly affect your partner. Even something as minor as going to sleep at 3 a.m. on a weeknight could wake your beau up. As a result, compromise is a huge part of successful relationships and that

will never change. However, considering someone else's feelings is very different than having to answer to someone. You're even allowed to be a little selfish now and then. While couples will discuss their weekend plans together, they can choose what to do together and what to do apart, and both are equally valid. If you find yourself having to answer to your partner all the time, you should probably call it quits.

Related: [Five Steps To Turn a Date Into a Relationship](#)

4. Singles know relationships are too hard: Every relationship will have bumps now and then, so it's clear that relationships aren't always easy. Spending the majority of your free time with one person can be stressful and you're bound to fight occasionally. Still, nothing good in life comes easily. You and your best friend undoubtedly have a few fights under your belts, but that doesn't negate how much you love each other. The same can be said for dating.

5. Casual dating is better: Running into the grocery store, catching the eye of the cute guy in the vegetable section and leaving with a new number in your phone is the kind of encounter single women dream about. The constant chance that you may run into your next date is always an adrenaline rush. However, though first dates are interesting and offer you the chance to experience new things, you won't form lasting memories if you change partners every Friday. Eventually, even your single friends will feel the need to couple up. All it takes is the right start.

What do you think are the advantages of dating as opposed to staying single? Tell us below.

How to Handle Wedding Season as a Single Gal



By Jennifer Harrington

Summer is the season of many things, including warmer temperatures, weekend getaways, sundresses and weddings. As wedding bells are ringing, it's no secret that the arrival of an invitation in the mail can bring angst to a single lady. No matter how you feel, remember that weddings are a reason for everyone to celebrate, even single folks. Keep these tips in mind in order to navigate and embrace wedding season, even if you're "without guest":

Related: [What to Wear to a Summer Wedding](#)

1. Consider the men you know.

Once a wedding invitation arrives, take stock of the guys in your life. Do you have a crush or even just a good friend? Ask him to accompany you. Most guys, whether their interest in you is purely platonic or not, are eager to accept a wedding invitation, as it usually means a fun day with a free open bar. Having someone as your arm candy gives you a partner in crime for the wedding. Plus, if you have romantic feelings for your date, no place has more romance in the air than weddings.

2. Try to meet new people.

Even if you don't have a special guy in mind to accompany you, don't forget that weddings are an excellent place to meet someone new. Flying solo gives you the opportunity to mingle, particularly with members of the opposite sex. Some have even said that showing up unattached to the festivities labels you as a "hot commodity." You can be sure that the bachelors in attendance will take note and will flock to make introductions. Embrace their attention, dazzle the gentlemen, and remember: it's not uncommon for people to meet their future spouses at a friend's wedding!

Related: [Nine Unexpected Places to Find Love](#)

3. Be confident.

If you're self-assured and confident, you'll be a lot more likely to have a great time. Wear a dress that makes you feel your best (for inspiration check out celebrity-style guest attire), and enter the wedding ceremony with the right attitude. Take the day as an opportunity to have fun and celebrate the bride and groom. Don't forget to test your luck at the bouquet toss!

How do you handle weddings when you're single? Leave a comment below and tell us.

Date Idea: Explore the Wilderness



By Amanda Martin

Make this weekend all about you and your honey by spending time together in the great outdoors. Take Friday to travel to a romantic location that's off the beaten path – and yes, that may mean no cell phone service, which will really make it all about the two of you. Use the commute as a way to discuss the activities you want to do once you're there, and don't forget to compromise if necessary.

On the night you arrive, set up the tent and use your natural

resources, such as wood and branches, to start a campfire. Cuddle under a blanket while roasting marshmallows and telling spooky stories.

Start the next day with adventure once you've gotten a good night's sleep. Go for an early morning hike, and don't forget to stop and take in the picturesque surroundings while enjoying each other's company.

Spend the rest of the afternoon at the lake. You can do activities that require a couple's effort, like rowing a canoe or pedaling a boat. Another activity you can try your hand at is fishing; if one of you has a catch, make your hubby cook it for dinner. Take the night to reminisce about the good times you had that day.

Be spontaneous on Sunday before it's time to go home. If you wake up and feel like being lazy, lie out and take in the sun. Find out if there are nearby activities like rock climbing or zip lining. Whatever it is you decide to do, be sure it's what the both of you want.

The tranquil, secluded setting you choose will provide the perfect getaway for romance and communication.

How do you get off the grid with your significant other? Let us know in the comments below!

Weddings Show Single Men What They're Missing



By DeAnna Lorraine

Summer is here, which means wedding season is already well underway. That's good news for those walking down the aisle, but how about for those who are still single? Sure, some might use weddings as a hot singles spot to meet someone new, but others just feel depressed. There's a reason that therapy bills increase every summer. Though major movies like *Wedding Crashers* always cast single women as being desperate and emotionally vulnerable, it seems that men are more and more likely to be bitten by the love bug first at a wedding. In fact, they're also just as likely as women to be emotionally vulnerable. Here are some other things you might not have realized about single guys at weddings:

Related: [What to Wear to a Summer Wedding](#)

1. Men can be vulnerable: Sure, they pride themselves on

showcasing a tough and “manly” exterior, but men have feelings just like women do. They’re not just at weddings looking for casual relationships; they’re usually feeling just as strongly about commitment as their female friends and relatives.

2. Men don’t always show their feelings: Because of the need to appear strong, most men aren’t used to expressing themselves outwardly. Although they might not be using an entire box of Kleenex while at the wedding, their emotions are definitely getting stirred up on the inside, usually just as much if not more than women’s. Because men don’t typically deal with their feelings as thoroughly as women do or analyze them to death with their friends, when they are faced with something like a wedding, they’re often even more stirred up and affected.

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3. Men are anxious for love: The popular stereotypes that cast women as the clingy, needy gender and men as the cold and insensitive one just aren’t true any longer. Men are more sensitive and anxious for love than you might think. Weddings actually seem to activate a man’s own version of a “biological clock,” leaving him feeling more eager to find a woman of his own and settle down. Suddenly the bachelor life looks less fun when they see those happy couples walk down the aisle. In the last seven years of coaching singles, I’ve always had about 10% more male clients than female clients. However, that number has been steadily increasing in the last few years. This might be a reflection of this trend: a growing number of men seem to be the ones who are more interested in getting married and settling down.

Are men and women gradually starting to switch roles? It might not be long before women are the ones passing the tissues to men at the weddings, with men going back home updating their Hope chests. Let’s stay tuned and see.

Nicknamed, "Ms. Hitch," DeAnna Lorraine specializes in helping even the most introverted men and women find the best ways to find confidence to express themselves in order to find love. She has years of experience coaching hundreds of singles of all kinds on how to go from lonely and distressed to total romantic success in a few months. She's seen regularly on television and has appeared on the Rachel Ray Show offering her insights and advice.

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Date Idea: Turn up the Heat in the Kitchen





By Amanda Martin

Stay in this weekend and test your skills in the kitchen with your significant other. Prepare the whole meal from scratch and don't forget to set a romantic mood with candles.

Start with something simple for an appetizer. Put together a mixed green salad with fresh vegetables such as grilled eggplant, tomatoes, cucumbers and a balsamic vinaigrette dressing. You'll be eating healthy as a couple, so neither of you will feel too guilty about dessert.

For the main course, make spaghetti with homemade tomato sauce. It's easy enough for beginners and it's the team effort that counts when making the sauce. Be sure that the two of you eat opposite ends of a single strand of spaghetti until meeting in the middle – Lady and the Tramp style.

If you're in the mood for fun romance, individual pizzas are a delicious meal to cook together. Create heart shapes with the dough and make a game out of spinning it in the air like a professional chef. Once the main course is in the oven, start on the sweets. Mix your own cake batter and frosting exactly

how you both like it. Use colored icing to write messages to one another on the cupcakes. It can be something important you've been waiting to say, or it can just be a reminder of your love.

Cozy up on the couch with a bottle of wine after dinner. Shut the ringer on your phones and keep the TV turned off. Instead, use this time to really bond.

What's your favorite meal to cook together? Let us know in the comments below.

Date From Hell: 10 Ways to Get Out of It, Tactfully





By Sarah Ribeiro

Picture this: you're on a date and your potential partner walks in 30 minutes late. Plus, they're a sloppy, sweaty mess. As soon as you sit down, they make sure you're paying for your own meal and begin to check out the server, setting off all the red flags that romance isn't going to blossom. It's enough to make you dread the rest of the night if you haven't already bolted out of the restaurant. However difficult it might seem, there are better ways to handle situations like this. Check out these tips to leave that date from hell—with class:

1. Try a do-over: The “date from hell” might not be a bad person; maybe they're just nervous. Stop them mid-idiot and politely tell them that they're not currently coming across as a potential partner, but you'd like to try again. Set a date for a fresh beginning, and see what happens then.

2. Ask for the bill: Getting the check early is a clear sign that your date—and any sign of a relationship—is over. Doing this quickly cuts out any additional awkward time and keeps you from having to say flat-out how miserable you are.

3. The white lie: Sometimes it's better to be gentle with your let-down. Tell your date that you have plans you forgot about or that you left something important at home and you have to leave immediately. This prevents you from having to tell them how upset they're making you.

4. Use your sense of humor: Bad dates are usually some of the most memorable. You'll definitely be able to look back on your terrible experience and laugh. Stick around and gain some material for funny storytelling with your friends and future significant others.

5. Be open-minded: Your date might have underlying issues that are impeding the success of your night. Try to understand why they're acting the way they are, and you'll be able to see them in a better light.

Related: [When Dates Go Bad: 5 Ways to Find the Funny in Dating](#)

6. Ask for a change of scenery: Maybe part of the problem is that neither of you are comfortable in your location. Hating the loud, crowded bar filled with singles? Switch to a quiet, intimate couple's café—your new environment might bring a new attitude.

7. Call for back-up: If you're concerned that a date you've planned is going to get awkward, make arrangements beforehand. Prior to your date, ask a friend to call you halfway through the night. If things aren't going well, use your acting skills and tell your date there's been an emergency that you have to tend to immediately.

8. Enjoy yourself: Try to have a good time outside the date. There's sure to be something you can enjoy, even if it's not the person with you. Appreciate your meal or your surroundings and stay optimistic by entertaining yourself.

Related: [Top 10 Sayings That Can Destroy Your Love Life](#)

[Before It Begins](#)

9. Take care of yourself: Of course, if your date is being insulting, aggressive or threatening, you never need an excuse. Get up, leave and don't look back.

10. Be honest: Tell him kindly that you're not interested. If they're being such a painful date, chances are they're not interested either. It will save you both the trouble if you take the mature and truthful route.

What are some ways you've gotten out of a bad date? Tell us your story below.

3 Ways to Know He's Just "That Into You!"





By Dr. Tranquility – Lydia Belton, PhD, Ct. H.A.

Once you're in a relationship, it can be hard to tell if you and your partner are on the same page as far as your wants and needs for the future. You may question the strength of his feelings toward you, even if he's quick to say, "I love you." It's one thing to take a first date and move it into a relationship, but how do you know when your partner is ready to move even further forward?

As a woman, you most likely want more time and more involvement from your mate. You're ready for a commitment, whether that means moving in together or perhaps marriage. Regardless, the bottom line is that your relationship now comes with a view to the future as opposed to plodding along day-by-day. It's time to connect in a way that you can't put into words, so here are three ways to know he really is "all that into you":

Related: [What Attracts Us to Bad Boys?](#)

1. He can't bear to be without you.

If you find your partner refusing to go a day without talking to you and he is always making future plans, he's probably feeling that his life isn't complete without you. If you want a celebrity comparison, think Matt Lanter and Angela Stacy. The *90210* star just popped the question to Stacy in June, and the two have nothing but smiles on their faces.

2. He invites you to travel with him.

When a man invites you on a trip with him, he wants to spend quality time with you. The fact is, men don't invite women they won't want to be with to travel with them. Think Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds in this situation. The two have been spotted all over the world, even in Vancouver where Lively met Reynold's family.

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3. He's showing more than lust after the third date.

After the third date, if communication between you is still great, he should be making a point to create a space for communication and bonding. Despite the spanx and Victoria's Secret lingerie, he is ready for emotional intimacy and no distractions. Just look at the happiness that Joshua Jackson and Diane Kruger bring to the celebrity world. Although the pair are notoriously private about their relationship, you can tell they're in love even when they're not all over each other in public.

So, if your beau seems to fit the above characteristics, chances are that you don't have to question his feelings about you. Although they may not be able to overtly express their feelings the way that you do, it's time to let loose and trust his motives. It's time to go all in and see what happens!

Developed by Lydia Belton PhD, Ct.H.A. of DrTranquility.com, Date Therapy® is an effective protocol that helps people get in touch with their criteria for an

ideal mate. DrTranquility's protocols® have been featured most recently on Forbes.com & Yahoo, ABCNEWS.com, ABC's the View, KISS FM, CupidsPulse.com, Metromix for the Chicago Tribune, British Glamour, REDBOOK, Cosmopolitan Magazine & promoted by Match.com.

‘Bachelorette’ Contestant Ryan Calls Emily Maynard a “Trophy Wife”



On Monday night's *Bachelorette*, suitor Ryan had a few words to say that Emily Maynard was not too pleased about. On their

one-on-one date, he called Maynard a “trophy wife,” to which she aptly responded, “Trophies don’t talk back,” according to [People](#). Soon after, Ryan was sent home – not without protest, of course.

What are some warning signs that your partner views you as a prize?

Cupid’s Advice:

Every girl wants to be placed on a pedestal by her partner. However, sometimes being seen as special can get out of hand, and soon your partner is treating you like an object. Here are some warning signs that your partner views you as a prize:

1. He’s controlling: If your significant other is controlling the way you dress or act, you need to leave immediately. He isn’t seeing you for the person you are, but rather the partner he’d ideally like to have – so he can’t really love you for you.

2. He calls you “mine”: There is nothing sweeter than the person you’re dating telling you “I’m yours.” However, once they’re calling you theirs, they’re claiming you as property rather than a person to be loved.

3. He uses you: A deadbeat boyfriend who’s always coming to you for money (and other assets) only sees you as a walking ATM. There’s no chance for a real relationship in that situation.

What are some ways to prevent being treated like a prize? Tell us your story below.

Three Far Flung Honeymoon Destinations



By Vanessa Roberts

Honeymoon planning might be the least stressful and most fun part of planning your wedding, but there's still a lot to consider. While celebrities such as Carrie Underwood, Molly Sims, Fergie and Tiger Woods choose luxurious locations like Maui, Tahiti, the Bahamas or the open seas aboard a \$57 million yacht, we regular folks don't have to sacrifice our savings to have an unforgettable honeymoon. You just have to know where to go.

There are some honeymoon destinations that are not only insanely beautiful, but that also won't drain your bank account. Of all the places I've traveled, here are my three

favorites:

Related: [Five Completely Unique Honeymoon Ideas](#)



1. Koh Tao, Thailand.

Koh Tao is a tiny slice of paradise close to the Gulf of Thailand that will steal your heart and let you honeymoon like a star for a fraction of the cost. It has crystal-clear turquoise water and luxurious beaches, making it hands-down the most beautiful island I've ever visited. Plus, the locals are very friendly, and everything is inexpensive. And it's not just the scenery and cheap prices that make this 13-mile island a honeymoon favorite. There are also boat cruises, snorkeling trips, world-renowned scuba diving, zip-lining and mountain hiking. When the day is done, you and your partner can settle down with \$10 luxurious massages, to-die-for dining right on the beach and 2-for-1 happy hour. Now *that's* what I call honeymooning!

2. Yangshuo, China.

Surrounded by hundreds of mountains in central China, Yangshuo is a destination for the adventurous couple who aren't afraid to step outside of their comfort zones. From bustling walkways

filled with bargains and delicious dining to bike riding through mountain-lined dirt roads and bamboo rafting down the Li River, this natural wonder will give you a honeymoon you're sure never to forget. Don't let the language barrier deter you! It's easily overcome by downloading any translation app to your smartphone.

All in all, this little mountain paradise is the perfect place for newlyweds who not only have keen senses of adventure and open minds, but are also looking to kick off their honeymoon with a bang.

Related: [Top 5 Most Traveled Celebrity Couples](#)



3. God's Own Country (New Zealand)

I never understood why New Zealand was referred to as God's Own Country until we stepped off the plane and onto the South Island. To say we were struck speechless is an understatement. The South Island of New Zealand is a spot at the bottom of the world that you have to see to believe.

Just looking at the soaring mountains and glacial lakes is exciting, but there are plenty of things to do in New Zealand as well. Like adventure? You can go bungee jumping, skydiving, surfing, hiking and more. If you prefer to relax, you can take a wine tour, go canoeing, explore the quaint towns or even see the sights from *The Lord of the Rings*. There's no shortage of things to do here, especially if you want to start your

married life in a truly thrilling and unforgettable style. How many celebrities can say they did that?

Photos: Courtesy of Vanessa Roberts

Justin Bieber Rents a Helicopter for Romantic Ride with Selena Gomez



Justin Bieber makes his mark as the king of romance once again when it comes to his pop star girlfriend Selena Gomez. The 18-year-old treated his lady to a lovely helicopter ride in

Toronto on Saturday while the two were in town to perform at Sunday night's MuchMusic Awards. According to [People](#), a source from Toronto says their five-star date in the air was "a relaxing and romantic break from work" and the two "were very excited." The couple's helicopter ride adds to a long list of unique dates Bieber has planned for Gomez since the teen stars started dating publicly last January. With that said, the next date the Biebs will plan is sure to be a step up from the rest.

How do you show your mate you care with a grand gesture?

Cupid's Advice:

The best way to show someone how much you care is through your actions. Here are some tips to effectively get your deepest feelings across without saying a word:

1. Plan a surprise: Surprises are extremely thoughtful and show how much you value the happiness of the one you love. Surprise your sweetie with tickets to their favorite concert or even a trip to their favorite place.

2. Breakfast in bed: Take the time to cook a wonderful meal first thing in the morning. Show them you thought of them before they ever stepped out of bed.

3. A thoughtful gift: Buy a gift your honey has wanted for quite some time. Not only will the purchase show you that listen to them, but it'll show you care enough to follow through.

What grand gesture would you use to show how much you care? Share your ideas with us.

How To Ease Your Nerves Before a Blind Date



By Nisha Ramirez

You're sure to have a lot of troubling questions before any first date. What should you wear? What will you say? Will you make a good first impression? However, when you're set up on a date with someone you've never met before, new questions about your mysterious potential partner are added to the mix. What will they look like? What will their personality be like? As a result, blind dates can be both the most exciting and the most nerve-racking romantic experiences of all. Take a deep breath, count back from ten and read our tips on how to stay calm before a blind date:

1. Spend the day with friends: Creating a relaxing and easygoing atmosphere early in the day can set the tone for a relaxing and easygoing date in the evening. Go shopping, see a movie, eat lunch with your friends or just do something you love. A fun-filled day will leave you in a positive mood and give you plenty to talk about on your blind date. Plus, if you wear an outfit that can easily go from day to night, you won't have to rush home and change your outfit 50 times.

Related: [Four Steps For Stress Free Dating](#)

2. Exercise: Before you slip on that hot outfit, work out! Exercise releases endorphins that will make you feel happy and confident. You don't have to hit the gym or a high-cardio Zumba class; it's enough to dance to music around your house. If you time your workout well, you'll still have a glow from your improved blood flow when you show up on your date.

3. Think positive: When trying to lose weight, experts tell their clients to picture a thinner version of themselves for added confidence and motivation. Why not try this for calming your pre-blind date jitters? Take a warm bath or sit in your living room while meditating on what you hope your date will look like and how the evening will go. By visualizing your evening as pleasant, you'll stay in that positive mindset.

Related: [Nine Unexpected Places to Find Love](#)

4. Be fashionably late: If you still feel nervous after trying the steps above, arrive at your date a bit late. This way you can scope out the venue and get a chance to see your potential mate before they see you. Just don't stand your date up. If you really have to leave, be sure that you've at least spent some time getting to know them first.

How do you ease your nerves before a blind date? Share your comments below.

Date Idea: Travel Abroad without Leaving the Country



By Amanda Martin

If you live in the U.S., you and your honey can get a taste of foreign culture without traveling overseas this weekend. Traveling abroad is expensive and impractical for a short trip, but there are many places in the states dedicated to celebrating an array of various cultures.

Take a trip to Frankenmuth, Michigan for the Bavarian Festival, voted one of the top 5 festivals in the area. Running through the summer months, you'll have a blast while

immersing yourself in German heritage. Enjoy games and rides with your other half, dance to live Bavarian music, indulge in ethnic food and try ice-cold, imported German beers. The two of you will be getting a taste of Germany without having to spring for a pair of expensive tickets across the Atlantic.

If you live in San Francisco, take a trip to the Chinatown area, which is the first of its kind in North America and home to the largest Chinese community outside of Asia. The entrance gate, which is on Grant Street, is the most photographed structure there. Take a few moments to admire the Dragon Gate, as it's called, before entering the area. Then, embark upon an unguided walking tour and get lost in the culture. Explore some of the oldest Buddhist temples and try authentic dim sum. Many other cities, such as New York and Chicago, have Chinatown neighborhoods as well. No matter what state you live in, visiting these cultural destinations will make you feel as though you've traveled half way around the world.

Experiencing life abroad without leaving the states is an inexpensive way to be romantic with your partner. You may have such a positive experience that you'll take your relationship to the next level and start preparing for an extended trip together.

What do you and your honey do to explore other cultures? Let us know in the comments below.

Rumor: Are Katy Perry and

Robert Ackroyd Back Together?



Chart-topping pop singer Katy Perry's relationship may be back on with fellow musician Robert Ackroyd after their break-up less than a month ago. The 27-year old Perry gave the Florence and the Machine guitarist V.I.P. treatment during the Capital FM Summertime Ball in London on Saturday. A source tells UsMagazine.com, "Katy made a real fuss over him and made sure he was well looked after." The two were also spotted together earlier in the week meeting up after the pop star's taping on the *Graham Norton Show*. Perry and Ackroyd first went public with their relationship back in March, just months after ex-hubby Russell Brand filed for divorce.

What are some things to consider about getting back with an ex?

Cupid's Advice:

Break-ups are beyond complicated, but sometimes getting back together can make them even worse. Here are some important things to remember to ensure you and your ex make it work the second time around:

- 1. Examine your feelings:** Make sure getting back together is something you both truly want and for all the right reasons.
- 2. Start with a clean slate:** Starting fresh is crucial in a recovered relationship. Leave the previous baggage and drama behind so you can move forward together.
- 3. Trust is a must:** Depending on how your relationship ended, ask yourself if you still trust this person. Without trust, a relationship never lasts.

What things have you previously considered before getting back with an ex? Share your stories with us.

'The Bachelorette' Star Emily Maynard Blows Up at 'Baggage' Comment





Bachelorette Emily Maynard is having some trouble finding her true love. On Monday's episode, set in London, suitor Kalon McMahon brought out a side of Maynard none of the contestants wanted to see after calling her daughter Ricki "baggage," according to [People](#). A hurt Emily exploded on Kalon, feeding him his own line, "I'd love to hear you talk, but not until I'm done," before immediately sending him packing. She also criticized her other dates for not sticking up for her in her absence.

What do you do if the person you're dating doesn't accept your child?

Cupid's Advice:

Any single parent knows how brutal the dating world can be. Here are some tips to make it easier if your significant other doesn't accept your child:

1. Leave: Any date that doesn't accept your child doesn't accept *you*. There's no point continuing a relationship with this person.

2. Be understanding: If you're dating someone who has never been a parent, you have to understand that they don't know what it's like. Try to show them how important your child is and maybe they'll come around.

3. Involve your child: The problem may be that you haven't had your child around enough. Take the little one out with you more so your significant other can see why your child is so amazing.

What would you do if the person you were dating didn't accept your child? Tell us in the comments below.

The Gaggle: Jessica Massa and Rebecca Wiegand Discuss 'The Gaggle' of Guys in Every Woman's Life





By Bernadette McCadden

Three years ago, Jessica Massa's best friend and now business partner, Rebecca Wiegand, was complaining about her love life – or lack thereof. As Wiegand was telling Massa about her dating dilemma, she was subconsciously resurrecting the different (platonic) men she had in her life. It was that very evening that Massa realized that her best friend actually had a gaggle of men around her and like most women, these men made up her list of non-dating romantic prospects. It was then that "The Gaggle" was born.

In Massa's new book, *The Gaggle: How the Guys You Know Will Help You Find the Love You Want*, Massa discusses what she calls the post-dating world. This is the place she says that the rules of traditional dating no longer apply. The gaggle of men in a woman's life can range from "the career booster" to "the boyfriend prospect," and this gaggle of guys can help you on your path to find love. 'The Gaggle' encourages women to stop worrying if every guy they meet is "the one" and, instead, to start wondering if he is a potential gaggle member.

CupidsPulse.com recently spoke with Massa and Wiegand and learned more about gaggles, non-dates and dating in the post-dating world.

What is so great about having a gaggle?

Massa: The beauty of the gaggle is that it really caters to the individual because finding love is such a personal journey. That's the difference between this method and other dating ideas that have so many rules, forcing you to conform to certain beliefs about why men fall for you and why they don't. This concept gives structure to your search for love and helps you think about it without telling you what to do.

Each woman's gaggle journey is different: the guys who populate your gaggle are different, how you deal with them is different and what you want out of them is different. No two gaggles are alike.

Related: [Do Fairytale Relationships Only Exist in Hollywood?](#)

In 'The Gaggle,' you talk about non-dates. Can you tell us about this concept?

Massa: Everything can feel like a non-date because, these days, everything and nothing is a date. Basically, it's any interaction you have with a guy, usually in person but sometimes online, to see if you have a spark. Maybe you're at a work conference, and all of a sudden, you're talking to the guy next to you about a recent vacation; then, you decide to grab coffee together. That's a non-date.

Wiegand: These non-dates happen in your love life without you even noticing. I followed up on a non-date with a guy I met at work who was also a theater performer. I went to one of his shows and talked to him afterwards; later that night, he sent me a friend request on Facebook.

What do you think is the biggest mistake women are making

today?

Massa: Women often spend their days wondering if every guy they meet is Mr. Right. It makes them judge men too harshly, and it makes the dating world seem too stressful. Instead, look at every guy in your life – old friends and new crushes alike – and think, “I feel a connection here. Is he in my gaggle?” Noting that you have a gaggle of guys, rather than focusing on one guy who could be your future boyfriend, will get you excited about interacting with men and dealing with the ambiguity that comes with it. Once I realized that I had a gaggle, I started viewing men as potential gaggle members instead of potential husbands. I was able to enjoy my love life and not worry about what anyone else thought.

Related: [Is that you, Mr. Right?](#)

Why is it important for women to understand and consider these ideas of a gaggle and non-date?

Massa: It’s important because it will impact the way you interact with men. It takes the stress out of the situation. You can just say, “Hey, there’s a guy in my life who wasn’t there before. I wonder where things will go with him.” Your energy completely changes when you approach dating this way rather than constantly wondering if you’re going to fall in love. Not to mention, your relationships with men will be more enriching and much healthier.

How does technology play into the post-dating world?

Massa: We have found that technology is the number one way to follow-up on a non-date. It allows you to be not too forward but still let a guy know that you had a great time, whether it’s by liking his Facebook status or replying on Twitter. People love to talk about technology as the death of romance, but we really feel that it allows you to cultivate these connections. It creates a middle ground, somewhere between “I’m going to ask you on another date” and “I’m never going to

talk to you again.” Technology will never be a replacement for face-to-face time, but you can chat throughout the day, explore each other’s interests and get to know one another in a more casual way.

You talk about keeping your gaggle around even after you’re in a relationship. Why is this step necessary?

Massa: What really impresses me are couples who understand that there is no way to fulfill each other’s needs completely and 100 percent of the time. To expect your partner to be your perfect match will lead to disappointment.

Wiegand: Our cultural discourse around relationships and marriage really feeds into this idea that once you find ‘the one,’ it’s happily ever after. But you still need a life outside of love.

I’m in a new relationship, and while I’m not keeping my “hot sex prospect” around, I still go out to dinner with other guys in my gaggle. Similarly, my boyfriend still texts his female friends. We recognize that the other person has their own gaggle, and we’re not threatened by it. This understanding allows us to be ourselves and feel comfortable with each other. That being said, there definitely has to be a greater level of trust and communication in relationships today than there has been in the past.

The Gaggle is truly inspiring for women and can change the way they have thought about dating (or non-dating) in the past.

If you’re interested in reading ‘The Gaggle: How the Guys You Know Will Help You Find the Love You Want,’ you can purchase it on Amazon. You can also keep up with Massa and Wiegand on WTF Is Up With My Love Life?! and through Twitter @jessmassa and @electra526.

Father Knows Best: 5 Relationship Rules Dad Taught Us



By Ché Blackwood

Fathers have the ability to influence all aspects of their daughters' lives, including areas most wouldn't even imagine. According to numerous psychological studies, a father's temperament, sense of humor and even facial features are stored in his daughter's memory bank, becoming favorable traits in her search for a partner. While some of this happens automatically, most dads aren't exactly passive when it comes

to doling out their wisdom, *especially* when it comes to dating. In honor of Father's Day, we've compiled the five best pieces of relationship advice ever given by dear ol' Dad:

Related: [Your Mom's Top 5 Relationship Mistakes: Don't Make Them](#)

1. Teach them how to treat you: Every woman remembers the night she brought home her first boyfriend, and how terrified she was when Dad brought him into the next room for "a talk." Sure, it mortified us then, but Dad was ensuring our dates knew his standards up front and that we were to be treated accordingly...*or else*. When you're on your own, it's still important to set ground rules at the beginning of every relationship. Being confident enough to strike out behavior you wouldn't normally accept without fear of scaring your new beau away is the key to creating the type of relationship you ultimately want.

2. Love isn't a guessing game: Dad was there on prom night, shocked by how beautiful we looked in our poufy pastel dresses. He was there at graduation with flowers and a look of pride on his face. And when we couldn't stop crying over our first breakup, Dad came armed with a box of tissues and an arsenal of hugs. We never had to wonder if he loved us or if he was interested in our lives because his behavior showed it. In the dating scene, you also shouldn't have to wonder whether your partner cares about you. Even if they're usually busy, it shouldn't be a stretch to expect our honey to accompany us to dinner parties or pencil in mid-afternoon phone calls just to say "hello."

3. Learn to spot red flags: Whether forbidding us from hanging around with a bad crowd or scowling at our leather-clad boyfriends, Dad seemed to judge people based on his own invisible list of "Disqualifying Characteristics." It frustrated us when we were 16, but his dedication to our well-

being mattered. As an adult, be sure to make your own list of “Disqualifying Characteristics.” If you can’t stand someone who drinks too often, has a short temper or simply refuses to clean up after dinner, it’s important to keep a mental record of things that bother you. The more red flags your beau exhibits, the less likely he’s Mr. Right.

Related: [Best Celebrity Moms \(Who Also Make Great Wives\)](#)

4. Make him come to the door: One quick way to make Dad angry was for a young suitor to come to the house and honk the horn rather than come to the front door. If Dad got his way, your date was probably sitting in that driveway for a very long time. Dad was right: it’s not old fashioned to want to be treated like a lady. If your potential sweetheart thinks it’s okay to honk the horn on your first date, how is he going to treat you six months later? Dad never forgot that the little things make for a special relationship, and neither should you.

5. A good father is priceless: The greatest lesson Dad taught was the importance of fathers in children’s lives. Whether he was at every recital or didn’t make it to a single one, Dad’s presence (or lack thereof) left a lasting impression. His choices, behavior and actions had major effects that still influence you today. There are few things as important as a Dad’s relationship with his children, so keep that in mind when you’re looking for a long term partner. If you wouldn’t want your beau’s behavior being repeated by your potential kids, maybe you need to rethink your status.

What did you learn from Dad? Tell us below.