

Date Idea: Get Dorky Together



By Deanna Atkins

Just because Valentine's Day is over doesn't mean that you can't continue the love fest. It's the perfect time to get as dorky as you want with your beau.

Stay in for the night and break out your favorite *Star Wars* movie or a more action-packed selection from *The Bourne Trilogy*. Feeling like a comedy? Get "groovy, baby" with your love, and put on *Austin Powers*. If you're up for it, you can wear a laugh-out-loud, 70s-themed outfit. Don't be afraid to act out the characters or scenes you're watching, even if that means pausing the flick to reenact a light-saber battle or practice your best Dr. Evil voice.

Another way you can get dorky (and impress your man) is by

playing a few rounds of video games. Dabble in some Xbox Live so you can each talk to one other through the microphone in your headsets. It will be a fun way to connect, especially if you play Nazi Zombies in *Call of Duty*. Your goal will be to slay the living corpses using shotguns, molten cocktails and machine guns while simultaneously protecting one another. If blood and gore isn't your style, dig out your retro Nintendo 64 to play some old-school *Mario Kart*. Racing each other head-to-head will be a friendly competition that could continue all night.

You and your honey can also choose to stay in and build a gigantic fort in your living room. If you want to get out of the house for a bit, unleash your inner nerd with a trip to a planetarium. Gaze at the stars as you get lost in the dreamy atmosphere. You can take turns testing each other's constellation knowledge or just enjoy learning something new together. You could also visit a nearby museum. Whether your guilty pleasure is biology, natural history or modern art, there's a geeky institution for you!

If you're feeling creative, set up a scavenger hunt that you know your other half will enjoy. Accompany your partner on the hunt, giving him or her clues along with a handmade treasure map. This activity will give you a ton to bond over.

Showing your sweetheart how much you love him or her is as easy as being yourself. You don't need to go to a five-star restaurant to have an amazing time together.

What are some ways to be a dork with your loved one? Share below!

10 Steps to a Remarkable Relationship



By Harriet Lerner, Ph.D.

This Valentine's Day, give your partner the best gift of all – a remarkable relationship! Dr. Harriet Lerner, one of our nation's most loved and respected relationship experts, reminds us that while it takes two people to couple up, it only takes one to make things a whole lot better. Here's how:

- 1. Warm your Partner's Heart.** Make a concerted effort to focus on the positive. Do three little things every day that make your partner feel loved, valued and special.
- 2. Dial Down the Criticism.** People become more allergic to criticism over time. Remember this: No one can survive in a

marriage (at least not happily) if they feel more judged than admired.

Related: [How to Master Being in a Relationship](#)

3. Apologize. You can say, “I’m sorry for my part of the problem” even if you’re secretly convinced that you’re only 28% to blame.

4. Don’t Demand an Apology. Don’t get into a tug of war about his failure to apologize. An entrenched non-apologizer may use a nonverbal way to try to defuse tension, reconnect after a fight, or show he’s in a new place and wants to move toward you.

Related: [What Kim Kardashian Taught Me About Marriage](#)

5. Stop Being So Defensive. Defensiveness is the archenemy of listening. The next time your partner has a criticism try to listen only to understand—that is, no interrupting, offering advice, defending your position, or correcting facts. Save your defense for a second conversation.

6. Say it Shorter! Your partner may avoid conversation because it feels awful to him. Sometimes the culprit is the sheer number of sentences and the intensity in our voice. Slow down your speech, turn down the volume, and make your criticism in three sentences or less.

7. Sweat the Small Stuff. When you say you’ll do something, do it! Never assume that your overall contribution to the marriage compensates for failing to do what you say you’ll do, whether it’s picking up your socks or moving the boxes out of the garage by Sunday.

8. Know Your Bottom Line. Be flexible in changing for your partner 84% of the time, but don’t sacrifice your core values, beliefs and priorities under relationship pressures.

9. Be self-focused. Connect with friends and family, pursue

your interests, and be of service of others. If your primary energy isn't directed to living your own life as well as possible, you'll be over-focused on your partner in a worried or critical way.

10. Choose happiness over winning the argument. Your partner's happiness and the tone of your marriage mean a whole more than who is right and who is to blame. Don't lock yourself into negativity at the expense of your happiness and well-being. Step aside from old anger and hurt.

Harriet Lerner, Ph.D., author of Marriage Rules, is a clinical psychologist whose many acclaimed books have topped six million copies in combined sales. She is a dynamic, sought-after speaker who has appeared on The Oprah Winfrey Show, CNN, and NPR, and she hosts The Dance of Connection blog on psychologytoday.com.

Long-Term Relationships: 5 Ways to Keep the Spark Alive





By Christina Steinorth MA MFT

I wanted to get away from the more standard type of Valentine's Day articles that seem to surround gifts and intimacy, so I asked this question on my Facebook page: *What topic should I write about for Valentine's Day?*

While I received many great answers, one that seemed to pop up more than others was: *What about an article for those of us who are in long-term relationships or have been married for many years?* I gave it some thought, and my fans were right—there isn't a lot of advice relating to Valentine's Day and long-term relationships.

I loved the idea.

As many of you know, come April, I will have been married to my husband for 14 years (we've been together for almost 16). While we don't have the hot, crazy, spark of love we may have had at the start of our relationship, what we have now is something far sexier—a deep understanding and admiration for each other that makes our love life even *more* passionate than it was when we first got together. We didn't get to this

point by accident though—it has taken a lot of work and as well as consistent effort on both of our parts.

Related: [4 Steps to a Stronger Long Term Relationship](#)

Here are my five best tips for those of you who are in longer term relationships to keep your spark alive:

1. Start doing things together. A lot times, especially in longer term relationships, we start to live our own lives so to speak and do less and less things with our partners. Start doing activities together three to five times a week—go for a walk, go for a bike ride or shop for and cook a meal together once a week. It will bring you closer and give you shared experiences to bond over.

2. Touch each other and do it often. Touch doesn't need to be sexual to draw us closer to our partner. Rub each other's shoulders from time-to-time. Hold hands when you walk. When we touch each other, it helps us feel more connected with one another.

Related: [What's Love Got to Do With It?](#)

3. Be someone your partner will *want* to spend time with. Put the nagging and criticism aside and be charming, fun and engaging again—our partners are more drawn to us when we're happy.

4. Reconnect with each other for at least ten minutes a day. Do it either before you get out of bed in the morning, or before you go to sleep at night or any other time during the day that you can sneak off and have ten minutes of uninterrupted conversation. Power down all of your electronics, make eye contact and just talk. It doesn't need to be serious—just talk about your day and what your plans are for tomorrow. Have light hearted chit-chat—it will help stop you from drifting apart from one another and it will help bring the spark back.

5. Act loving even when you don't feel like it because people will always remember how you make them feel. If you don't have loving words to share, loving actions can go a long way too.

Christina Steinorth MA MFT is a psychotherapist and a popular relationship expert on radio and in print. Her advice has been featured in publications such as Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Woman's Day, Fox News Magazine, and The Chicago Tribune, among many others. Her critically acclaimed new book is 'Cue Cards for Life: Thoughtful Tips for Better Relationships' (Hunter House, 2013). Learn more at <http://www.christinasteinorth.com>.

**Giveaway: Take Your
Relationship Out of the Box
with Déjà mor**





This post is sponsored by Déjà mor.

By Whitney Baker

In honor of Valentine's Day, we wanted to bring you a giveaway that is sure to enhance your love life! Déjà mor offers the first subscription service for couples that delivers romantic care packages right to your door. Each customizable shipment is filled with specific products and detailed instructions, separately designed for each individual's needs.

As CEO Rodrigo Fuentes says, "52 percent of Americans are dissatisfied with their love life. Children, work and busy lifestyles often don't give couples the time, creativity or confidence to be their romantic self. That's where Déjà mor comes in: we help couples easily and confidently express love through intimate experiences."

The beautiful sample box includes directions for preparing a sensual bath and bubble bath, rose petals, a glass vial for a secret message and suggested romantic phrases to include in the vial. Add a bottle of wine, and you've got everything you need for a romantic evening with your partner.



Three types of subscriptions are available from DéjÀ mor: the yearly (\$29/month), the monthly (\$35/month) and the gift (\$136/three months). In addition to the personalized care package, each subscriber receives access to members-only content on the DéjÀ mor website, including romance tips and special content to improve your experience.

Lucky for you, one CupidsPulse.com reader will win a three-month gift subscription to DéjÀ mor – perfect for adding a little intimacy to your relationship!

~~**GIVEAWAY ALERT: To enter for a chance to win a three-month gift subscription to DéjÀ mor, go to our Facebook page and click “like.” Leave a comment under our giveaway post letting us know that you want to enter the contest. We will contact the winner via Facebook when the contest is over, and they will have three days to respond back with their contact information. The deadline to enter is 5:00 p.m. EST on Thursday, February 21st. Good luck!**~~

This giveaway is now closed.

How to Deal with Someone

Difficult in Your Relationship



By Elizabeth Davis

The reality of human interaction is one of both inevitability and need for acceptance since it often goes against one's favor. This is especially true for those who are difficult to deal with, and one may even become your better half. For better or for worse, it's still a drag when you have to deal with a partner who may not be as agreeable as you would have hoped.

It's understandably hard to stay calm and collected when the stress of having to deal with someone difficult on a daily basis starts getting to you. Of course, the last thing you need is to lash out and go crazy all of a sudden, which is not

a very good thing for anyone. Here are a few things that you can remember in order to deal with such a person:

Marcus Aurelius, the great Roman emperor, wrote in his *Meditations* these words of wisdom.

“When you wake up in the morning, tell yourself: the people I deal with today will be meddling, ungrateful, arrogant, dishonest, jealous and surly. They are like this because they can’t tell good from evil. But I have seen the beauty of good, and the ugliness of evil, and have recognized that the wrongdoer has a nature related to my own – not of the same blood and birth, but the same mind, and possessing a share of the divine. And so none of them can hurt me. No one can implicate me in ugliness. Nor can I feel angry at my relative, or hate him. We were born to work together like feet, hands and eyes, like the two rows of teeth, upper and lower. To obstruct each other is unnatural. To feel anger at someone, to turn your back on him: these are unnatural.”

That’s pretty deep, but also quite insightful about how we can look at the people around us, including those who are close to us. Maintaining a relationship is about patience and acceptance, so if you’re in love with someone who may be difficult at times, then you need to follow a few things in order to get the most of the situation.

Related: [How to Master Being In a Relationship](#)

Be Objective

Face that person in a calm and objective way, looking at the facts and ignoring the bad things. You have to be able to see the fundamental truth while still being able to see the silver lining. Even when things get bad and even downright bizarre, staying objective and getting the facts straight should give you that edge to keep yourself together, despite the negativity that can take down almost anyone.

Maintain a Mature Attitude

The topic of maturity has always been a convoluted one, and there is a tough question regarding what makes one mature. In any case, it's not something that can be acquired overnight. Such a mindset requires practice and the careful building up of patience amidst adverse situations. Maturity is about being able to balance everything you have in life, and it's definitely hard to pull off. But if you really do care about that person, then you should be able to find a way somehow by being mature about everything.

Be Assertive

Sometimes, you do have to put your foot down and make yourself heard whenever things do get too far. Of course, don't do it in a hysterical way, but in a conducted manner that will both make you understood and sympathized with at the same tie. Call the person out without provoking antagonism, which is easier said than done. Just remember to do it out of necessity rather than anger, and you'll somehow find a way to deal with the person's mischief and immaturity without having to resort to anything drastic.

Related: [Why Amazing Confident Women Remain Single](#)

Have a Sense of Humor

The British Royal Marines are perhaps one of the most elite group of soldiers anyone can ever encounter in this world. In the face of war and adversity, they remain calm and capable of facing even the most life-threatening obstacles. They're also known for the one trait that every Royal Marine is required to have, which is a sense of humor. As strange as it may seem, it's that ability to smile and joke around in the face of adversity that makes them so strong.

That is also the trait that can help any person get through the toughest of times in life, including a relationship with a

“difficult” person. Being able to laugh during bad times is a great load off anyone’s shoulders. So there is no need to be so serious and that person could eventually realize the folly of what has been done as you laugh and joke about what has transpired. Of course, as long as you don’t do it in a mocking and condescending manner.

Elizabeth Davis has 20 years of experience as a relationship adviser. She writes and shares more relationship tips and marriage advice on her blog RelationshipsAdvice.co.

Second (and Third) Marriages: Destined For Divorce?





By Jim Duzak for Galttime.com

Statistically speaking, the more times you've been married in the past, the more likely you'll get divorced again if you remarry.

The divorce rate for first marriages (meaning a marriage in which neither person has been married before) is reportedly between 40 and 50%. But for second marriages (at least one of the spouses has been married once before), the rate jumps to between 60 and 67%. And for third marriages (at least one of the spouses has been married twice before), it's a whopping 70-73%.

Are second marriages really doomed for divorce? How so? Why would this be? Don't people learn from their mistakes? Well, unfortunately, many people don't, or they rush into another marriage for the wrong reasons or before they've figured out what went wrong last time.

HERE ARE SOME COMMON POST-DIVORCE SCENARIOS:

– You may be blind to the role you played in the breakup. The

problem was always something your “ex” did or didn’t do.

- **You may be stuck in your comfort zone**, even when that comfort zone is harmful to you (like if you’re someone who always seems to be attracted to partners who abuse you or cheat on you).
- **You’re an incurable optimist when it comes to relationships**, always falling in love too fast and always seeing your latest partner as the answer to your prayers.
- **You fear living alone**, and will get married just to have someone to come home to.
- **You may be looking for a quick fix to the psychological wounds that divorce inflicts**, rather than taking the time to heal.
- **If your ex was unfaithful during your marriage**, you may immediately try to get revenge by taking up with someone else.
- **You may lack basic skills**, such as household, financial or job skills, and will get remarried just to avoid having to learn them.
- **If your ex filed for divorce first, left you or neglected you sexually or romantically**, you may feel rejected and unattractive, and you may marry the first person who makes you feel the spark or lavishes you with compliments.

In addition, second and third marriages often involve the challenges of dealing with stepchildren and/or difficult ex-es. If those challenges aren’t anticipated and addressed, a remarriage can be shaky from Day One.

The good news is that divorce statistics—sobering as they may be—are only evidence of what has happened in *other people’s* marriages.

They don’t predict how *your* marriage will turn out. If you or

your future spouse are getting married for the second, third, or even the fourth time, you can “beat the odds” if you’re well-matched, emotionally mature, and truly understand what went wrong in the past—including accepting responsibility for your own mistakes or wrongdoing.

But if you recognize yourself or your partner in at least one of the scenarios I listed, you should temporarily hold off on getting remarried. You may need to do more soul-searching. You may need to have frank discussions with your partner, and ask him or her some tough questions. You may even need to seek outside help from a therapist or other professional. But all of this will be worth it if you can enter into your new marriage knowing that you’ve done everything in your power to ensure that you’re not setting yourself up for another divorce.

The Pros and Cons of a Long Engagement





By Marni Battista

The latest news in Hollywood is Britney Spears and Jason Trawick's somewhat long-anticipated breakup. The couple met when Trawick was Brit-Brit's talent agent, and he gradually transitioned to her beau post-Keven Federline divorce. The two had been engaged for just over a year, and we presume one of their resolutions must have been to start off 2013 single.

They parted amicably, according to their reps, but could the lengthy engagement have caused the split? Or did it just make it clearer that they should call off the whole thing?

If you've already been divorced and are engaged to be married a second time – like Spears was – it's a good idea to discuss if you're setting a wedding date immediately or planning to take it slow.

Related Link: [Dating After Divorce: Lessons We Can Learn from Taylor Swift, Queen of Heartbreak](#)

A year-long engagement in the '50s and '60s would have seemed endless to a blushing future bride, but these days it seems to

be more common. In fact, modern couples are holding their “I do’s” for two, three, even five years before actually tying the knot. There are plenty of reasons: costs of a wedding, the pressure of daily life (it’s hard to schedule a manicure, let alone pick a wedding date) and commitment anxiety. While it makes sense for some couples that are on a second or third marriage, is it really better to wait it out?

PRO: You get ample time to figure out if you’re truly a match.

Although the core idea of being engaged is that you’ve both already decided you want to be together long-term, having a lengthy engagement can help ensure you’re making the right choice. In Spears’s case, it seems that this is exactly what happened: they weren’t a great match.

When you’re in a healthy, serious relationship, you’re openly communicating about your values and goals...and by the time you get to an engagement, you hopefully have decided you’re a good fit in multiple ways.

However, time will certainly tell. Being committed to each other on a higher level than being boyfriend and girlfriend should bring more conversations and actions that will help prove to you whether or not you’re on the right path. Ideally, you’ll be sure that you’re both on the same page, and you’ll be able to make the right decision *before* getting married.

In addition, a lengthy engagement can ensure that children from previous marriages have time to adjust to a new person in the parent role, which can ultimately create a better transition from mom’s boyfriend to stepdad.

CON: Lack of marriage can indicate to the other person a lack of commitment.

Related Link: [5 Signs He’s Not Ready to Commit](#)

A lengthy engagement can certainly be interpreted by one

person that the other person isn't fully invested in the relationship. If you choose to have a long engagement period, make sure you're clear as to why you're choosing to wait and that the items on the "when this happens, we'll be ready" list are specific and measurable. Communicate consistently regarding how those benchmarks are going to be hit and be open to shifting them if the results take longer than anticipated.

When you're fighting with your fiancé, you can simply decide to leave...whereas when you're in a marriage, people seem more likely to want to work out the issues to save their relationship. Additionally, there is data that supports the fact that modern society may be growing indifferent about the institution of marriage. It's an important issue to discuss with your fiancé. Together, you should decide a realistic time period for your engagement; being open about it will help give clarity to your individual feelings and can also bring you closer.

There are both pros and cons to a lengthy engagement; you will just have to decide for yourself what time frame is best for you.

Marni Battista, founder of Dating with Dignity, is an expert dating and life coach with a 10-step system to manifesting love for your self and others. You can contact Marni at marni@datingwithdignity.com.

5 Ways to Avoid a Bad Date Before It Happens



By [Michelle Danzig](#)

Bad dates are inevitable. Many magazines even feature an entire page devoted to embarrassing and awful [date](#) stories submitted by avid readers. Prepare yourself, because everyone will experience an awkward, boring or just plain awful date at least once in their lives. The talkative; the obnoxious; the rude; the stand up—we've all been there. With the New Year here and [Valentine's Day](#) approaching, you may find yourself scrambling to find dates. Don't just settle because you may end up discouraged. Here are some excellent tips from the [experts](#) on how to avoid a bad date before it happens:

1. Get to know each other first. With today's technology, there is no reason to not get to know the person you are planning on spending a potentially romantic evening with. If you met on an [online dating](#) site, this may have already happened. Online relationships have become extremely successful because you must read a person's profile before meeting them. [Dateologist Tracey Steinberg](#) says, "Always speak

on the phone for at least 10 minutes to see if you have anything to talk about and if he can hold up his end of the conversation. It requires a lot less energy to end a bad phone call than a bad date.” Similarly, dating relationship advisor and comedian [John Powers](#) recommends “When you’re exchanging emails, texts, or phone calls you should listen carefully for awkwardness, hesitation or anything unusual. If this person is social and friendly then they should come across as natural and relaxed through any type of [communication](#) exchange. Pay attention to how they express themselves. If you sense anything out of the ordinary you should cancel the date.”

Related: [Date From Hell: 10 Ways to Get Out of It, Tactfully](#)

2. Make a mutual decision on the venue. If you don’t like sports at all, don’t agree to go to a sporting event. If you hate jazz music, don’t offer to take your [date](#) to a jazz club. Powers says, “Being in an uncomfortable situation always makes for a bad date. Arrange to meet in a public place where

you feel safe and secure. Go someplace you have been before and allow the date to be whatever it will be.”

3. Keep it short and sweet. Dating Coach and the author of the book *Gratitude, Giggles & Grace*, [Tracy Fagan](#), recommends starting with a small investment. She says, “For first dates, only [commit](#) to coffee or a drink. You can make it through 30-45 minutes, no problem. If you commit to a full meal, you may sign up for more than you really want to invest.”

Related: [Getting Back in the Dating Game This New Year](#)

4. Don’t go on a date immediately after a breakup. No matter how you feel after a breakup, going on a date right away is not a great idea. Take some time to reflect on and heal from your [breakup](#) before you end up chewing off your date’s ear talking about your [ex](#). Powers also recommends not rushing into dates. He says, “Being in a hurry leads to desperation and

lack of interest. To avoid a bad date it is important that you do not accept every date that is offered to you. Be selective and feel free to turn down a date if it doesn't fit your schedule [or needs]."

5. Trust your instincts. According to Fagan, If something doesn't feel right, it most likely isn't right. She says, "Even if you have agreed to meeting, and over the course of continued conversation, if the other person starts making you feel uncomfortable—politely—cancel the date. One of my dating mantras that share in my book says, 'You can't make Mr. Wrong right and you can't make [Mr. Right](#) wrong.'" Similarly, Powers suggests, "Bail on a date if you're just not feeling it. There is probably a good reason you were not feeling it."

What are some ways you avoid a bad date before you go on it?

Date Idea: Dress Up





By [Sarah Ribeiro](#)

Tired of being cooped up all winter? Refresh everything you learned in college acting class by pretending to be someone you're not. Dress up with your [honey](#) and have the time of your life revitalizing your imagination.

Search for nightclubs having costume parties and spend the night dancing in your babe's arms dressed as the king and queen of the ball. Many city nightclubs have themed nights, such as sci-fi, masquerade, 80's attire, 'Alice in Wonderland' or even 'Twilight.' Club Oberon in Boston has a weekly "Donkey Show": while their dance party rages on, a subtle re-enactment of Shakespeare's classic [romantic](#) comedy 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' is performed around the club. Additionally, Marquee in Manhattan throws a European party every Friday, celebrating the party cultures of different European nations.

Go to a cosplaying (costume playing) convention and tap into your inner nerd, dressing as your favorite comic book character and reaping the benefits of watching early film footage and trailers. Ohayohcon and Setsucon are two huge conventions that are traditionally held the last weekend in

January in Columbus, Ohio, and at Penn State College respectively. Be sure to stick around once the convention ends: the after parties are usually at local nightclubs where you can party all night with your [sweetheart](#).

If you enjoy more ancient stories, visit a renaissance fair or even try out LARPing (live action role playing). You and your honey can dress as medieval royalty and play pretend in another century. Live out a fairy tale adventure together as your knight in shining armor saves you, a damsel in distress, from the hands of an evil dragon. You can act as your favorite 'Lord of the Rings' character or get into a more recent groove and dress up as someone from HBO's 'Game of Thrones.'

If you don't have the money to be hitting up the city (or don't live near one), stay in for the night. During the day, head to your closest Goodwill store and get 20 dollars worth of old, strange clothing and accessories. Once you get back home, come up with the most ridiculous outfits that you and your [partner](#) can create. If you want, you can even put outfits together for each other. Make up scorecards and judge each other on creativity and hilarity.

At the end of the [date](#), the two of you can take a photo in your get-ups and frame it as a memento of the silly and imaginative time you had together.

What are your favorite dress up dates? Tell us below.

Shakira Welcomes a Baby Boy



By [Nic Baird](#)

Shakira and Gerard Piqué announced the [birth of their son](#) Milan Piqué Mebarak, Jan. 22, on [Shakira's website](#), reports [People](#). The post explained the name Milan (pronounced MEE-lahn) means dear, loving, gracious, and eager. The [newborn](#) weighed 6 lbs., 6 oz, and the hospital reports both mother and child are in excellent health. "I'd like to ask you all to accompany me in your prayers on this very important day of my life," Shakira tweeted earlier in the day.

What are some ways to choose a meaningful baby name with your partner?

Cupid's Advice:

You don't need a line from Shakespeare to realize your child will be able to live with whatever name you throw their way. You and your [partner](#) should decide together on a name. The

process of naming your baby is emotional, and deserves all the significance you give it:

1. Name books: Even if just for inspiration, or to explore the different cultural options, name books can be a helpful way to get started. It's a helpful way to remind yourself of promising name choices that might have slipped your mind. Discuss the ones you like with your significant other.

2. Traditional choices: Consider naming your [child](#) after a member of your family. It can be a meaningful way to symbolize the unity and [love](#) you all share. It can also be traditional to give your baby a name with religious significance. Just make sure it speaks to you and your partner personally.

3. Mutual enthusiasm: While most every name has some significance, meaning, or at least a history, you and your partner should pick a name you both enjoy above all else. Give every suggestion some thought, but don't make any hasty suggestions. If you both find ones that feels right, then that's good enough.

What are some ways to choose a baby name? Share your comments below!

5 Things Women Wish Men Knew





by [Johanna Lyman](#) for [GalTime.com](#)

The biggest challenge with romantic relationships is having excellent communication. It's also the single most powerful thing you can do to maintain a great long term relationship. Sadly, men and women tend to have very different styles of expressing themselves.

We all know men and women are different when it comes to expressing their feelings. But we've come up with the top five things women just wish men would know! Is that too much to ask?

Unfortunately, men get the short end of the stick. Women aren't usually as straightforward as men when it comes to communicating. Many of us grew up believing that if a man really loved us, they would "just know" how to please us. I know that not only is that untrue, it's also really unfair to men. But the fact remains that it's one of the unrealistic expectations little girls are fed in their formative years. If you want to read more about unrealistic expectations, click [here](#) to get a preview of the first chapter of my new

book, *The Soulmate Myth*.

Related: [6 Things to NEVER Say to Your Man](#)

I thought I'd give the men out there a little cheat sheet to help them understand us better.

5 Things Women Wish Men Knew

1. **We're suckers for romance.** You probably know that, right? Never ask, "Do you want flowers?" Just do it. If we have to ask for it, it doesn't count. If you really want to impress your girlfriend, you'll get major brownie points for sitting through a chick flick with her. On the other hand, the little things count just as much as the major gestures. Sending a card for no reason is one way to make her melt.

2. **PLEASE listen to us.** I know it can be hard because we talk so much. But when you don't listen, we take it as a sign of disrespect and it really pisses us off. When you listen, it's great if you check in by verbally agreeing occasionally or even questioning to get clarity about what we mean. When you get that glazed look in your eyes, we know we've lost you.

Related: [4 Things Men Worry About](#)

3. **If you ask, we'll tell you exactly what sexually makes us melt.** The trick is to ask in the moment. If you ask over dinner, most women will be too uncomfortable to give you a straight answer. But if you're doing it almost perfectly and ask what else you should do, she'll beg you for it. And here's a big hint: real women don't respond to sex the way porn stars do. It takes a little time for our motors to warm up.

4. **When you give a compliment, be specific.** I know I have nice legs, but if you tell me you love how my thigh curves "like that," it's a real turn on. Also, you should know that you can never give too many compliments, as long as they're sincere. Really. Even the most confident women I know don't get sick of

being complimented.

5. **NEVER, ever forget a birthday or anniversary.** See #1 for reference. In fact, see #2 as well. Write it down, or double check for the birthday on Facebook. Don't even joke about forgetting either one; we won't think it's funny. There's just no excuse.

What do you wish your man knew about you? Let us know in the comments.

5 Ways Your Friends Can Help Save Your Relationship



By Ashley DelBello

Bringing your friends in to help with your relationship woes can be tricky, but there are several times when it's essential to have them by your side. Whether it's during a fight with your significant other or when you just need someone to talk to, your friends know you best and can prove helpful.

Before pulling them to into whatever situation it may be though, you need to be prepared to hear things that you may not want to hear as your friends will also provide you with the truth – which may or may not be pleasant.

Read on to find out why [your friends are a necessity in your love life](#):

1. Friends give you an excuse for much needed alone time. If you spend too much time with someone, he or she is bound to annoy you at some point – which is normal, but may mean you could use some time apart even if it's only for a few hours. Your friends provide you with a reason to get out of each other's faces and enjoy some time to yourself. Healthy relationships stem from couples who can have fun with and without their significant other.

Related: [5 Ways to Stop Sabotaging Your Relationship](#)

2. Provide a change of pace. You love spending time with each other, but sometimes it may get a little boring with just the two of you. Consider hanging out together with one of your mutual friends to help liven up the dynamic. Just make sure to choose a fun person that you both enjoy hanging out with!

3. Proof your texts. Or email or whatever conversation you're about to have with your beau. Sometimes we can be so upset with the person we're dating that we want to immediately call them out on it. However, if you're hesitant to push that send button or have that nagging feeling that you may be

overreacting, call a friend first. A friend of mine even has a designated person who she calls or sends her text to first when she's feeling it could be a bit overboard. Talking it out with a friend or even just sending them the text may just be all you need before potentially causing unnecessary havoc in your relationship.

Related: [How to Master Being in a Relationship](#)

4. Someone you can candidly vent to. Sometimes you just need to vent about whatever is annoying you about your partner and a friend can be that healthy outlet. However, for bigger issues your friend shouldn't be the only one that you're communicating with. You can save the small ones or the minor venting for friends, but don't forget that you should also be able to talk openly with your lover.

5. Make sure it's a trustworthy and rationale friend that has met your partner. If your friend knows your significant other, it's easier for that friend to provide objective and more useful advice. Your friend will be able to see both sides and hopefully help you to a clear path of resolution.

Tell us: How have your friends helped you in the past with your relationship? Was it helpful or hurtful?

Date Idea: Get Off the Grid





By Sarah Ribeiro

Stay away from a boring date night this weekend and go on a spontaneous road trip with your partner by hopping in the car and driving with no plans in place.

Start off in your town, exploring neighborhoods you've never seen and finding restaurants, cafes or other niche spots for future dates together. Then, take it one step further: skip the highway and take a back road to somewhere random on the map, maybe a nearby town or a tourist attraction that you've been meaning to see. Don't forget to bring a camera so the two of you will always remember the places that you visited.

For added adventure, go out of the state. Take the highway as far as you dare and stop at the cutest bed and breakfast that fits within your budget. Find a famous landmark in a neighboring state or follow the signs to the most intriguing spot advertised on the highway. Some great – and somewhat strange – tourist spots include Ruby Falls in Tennessee, the Oz Museum in Kansas, Lizzie Borden's Bed and Breakfast in Massachusetts or the Mob Museum in Las Vegas. Look for more

unique tourist attractions at Roadside America and pick out your favorites.

Cash in on your significant other's interests and find somewhere that fits with his hobbies. Is he a gamer? Look for a retro arcade in a small town. Is he a wine or beer connoisseur? Visit a vineyard or brewery for some local flavor and be sure to take home some free samples.

You can check things off your bucket list during the trip too. Drive down to your local airfield and take your journey on a thrill-seeking twist by going skydiving or taking flying lessons. Enjoy a hot-air balloon ride or even get completely off the grid by going off-roading.

In the car, do your best to keep your man entertained. Play some old-fashioned car games, like Twenty Questions – a great way to get to know your sweetheart better – or the traditional License Plate Game, where you compete against each other to find license plates from each state (bonus points for international plates). Be sure to bring some healthy snacks with you too, like granola, trail mix or fresh fruit.

The most important thing to remember on this date is to not to plan a thing. Let the road carry you and your partner to a memorable weekend.

What are some of your best off-the-grid locations? Share them in the comments below.

Prince Harry Is Named 'Most

Eligible Bachelor in the World'



By Meghan Fitzgerald

The charming young and single royal, Prince Harry, was declared the number one most eligible bachelor by *Town and Country*. Although this hot headed lad has had his dilemmas with scandalous and risque behavior, *Town and Country* says, "He's the wild-card royal, the naughty one, the one who goes out with rah women, hangs out with a fast crowd, downs too many drinks, and goes home at the wrong moment. That's why we all like him best." His outlandish behavior has scored him the throne of the most eligible behavior. According to [People](#), Harry surpassed 39 other men, including George Clooney and Connor Kennedy.

How do you determine if someone is out of your league?

Cupid's Advice:

Determining if another person is out of your league can be a very challenging aspect of life. Most of the ladies out there have heard about the rule, or the exception. They attempt to scrutinize the guy they may or may not have a crush on and figure out what the deal is. Is he into me? Is he too cool for me? Am I his type? Here are some ways to help decide:

1. You're constantly chasing him: To every women, there will be that one guy that you crave, the one guy where you want to talk to every single day. The problem which ensues where the guy does not feel the same way, they express their feelings slyly, they rarely return phone calls, they don't seem interested whatsoever. Unfortunately, for some odd reason women tend to want a guy more if they don't want them. I can abide by this preposterous rule, it gives the guy you're chasing a mystery about him. Where does he go? What does he do? Why can't I have him? The best thing here, is to saddle down, get off your horse, and start looking for a different man who wants to be with you.

2. Expectations: Women tend to give men higher expectations, or give themselves higher or lower expectations. Simply, expectations tie in to numerous problems pertaining to "leagues." These expectations given to men can make you think that he is entirely out of your league. This also works in reverse, where you give yourself lower expectations and think you're not good enough for the other person. To entirely decide whether this person is out of your league, you need to throw expectations out of the window and go with your gut.

3. Confidence: Confidence ladies and gentlemen needs to be prominent. In the beginning, of course looming into this confident all-knowing being is more than difficult. However, after practice and assistance, your confidence will come

naturally. Confidence is key when determining if someone is out of your league. If you want to go up to someone at a bar, do it. It is as simple as that. You need to saddle up, unholster your confidence and get your flirt on. You could be missing out on the love of your life by degrading yourself or thinking you are better than someone else.

Did you ever go for someone “out of your league?” Share your experience below.

Meeting Her Friends: How to Leave a Positive Impression



By Ty Witherspoon

So, you've started dating someone new and are starting to take things to the next level. One thing that you have to look forward to is meeting the new woman in your life's friends, but if you're not careful, your first meeting could end up being a disaster! Remember, most women put a lot of emphasis on what those they care about think of their new mate, so you'll want to do your very best to leave a positive and lasting impression. Chances are, if her friends like you, then she'll like you even more, getting things off to a great start.

Dress the Part

Consider where you will be meeting these friends and then be sure to dress appropriately. If you're all going out to a nice dinner, for example, you won't win any points by showing up in ratty jeans and a t-shirt. In fact, this type of outfit isn't really appropriate for any first-time meeting, no matter how casual. Whether you're dressing up or dressing down, make sure you look well-groomed and well put together in general. Splash on a little cologne or aftershave (but not too much!) and remember to flash your pearly whites.

Related: [Pros & Cons: Bonding with Your Man's Friends](#)

Be Genuine

When you first meet new people, it's natural to feel the urge to impress them or to prove yourself. After all, these people don't know the first thing about you, but you want to make them like you as quickly as possible. Hold back on the bragging, however, as this can make you seem rather full of yourself, which nobody finds attractive. Instead, simply focus on being genuine, polite, and kind. Express interest in the people you are meeting and ask them questions about their own lives. You can certainly answer any questions that come your

way, but remember that the night—and the conversation—shouldn't be all about you.

Don't Be a Flirt

If you want to end up in the doghouse so fast it'll make your head spin, then all you have to do is flirt with your new girl's female friends. While most guys wouldn't be so brazen as to openly flirt, do watch your interactions with her girlfriends. Don't spend an inordinate amount of time talking with any one woman in particular, and keep tight reins on your eyeballs. Getting caught ogling cleavage is never a wise move!

Related: [What to Wear to Meet His Family](#)

Be One of the Guys

When guy friends are going to be around, your first instinct is likely to try and determine the relationship these guys have with your new girl. In some cases, you may just have to accept that she's still friends with her ex or that she has guy friends who have taken on protective big brother or fatherly roles. Remember that it's okay to be a guy and to talk about "guy stuff", but make sure you're not running your mouth off about other girls or getting too personal.

This article was composed by Ty Witherspoon, a freelancer based in the greater metropolitan area of San Francisco; this piece is dedicated to the team from Kanetix.

No More Excuses: 10 Ways to

Ditch Bad Dating Habits



by Suzanne Casamento for GalTime.com

How many times have you heard your girlfriends (or maybe even yourself) say, “All the good ones are taken,” or “There aren’t any nice guys in this city”?

Those excuses are ridiculous. The truth is, there are good men everywhere. And we women have opportunities to discover those men while going about our everyday lives. **But first we need to shift our attitudes and strategies. Here’s how:**

1. Stop listening to that negative inner voice. You know that voice that says, “You’re never going to meet anyone”? It’s lying. But the thing is, if you believe the awful things she says, other people will too. So when you hear that voice start, shut her down. When she realizes you no longer believe

her, she'll go away.

2. Stop making excuses. "I'll start online dating after I lose 10 pounds." "I'm too busy at work right now." "After I get my raise, I'll have more money to go out." What's your excuse? Whatever it is, lose it.

3. Stop doing the same things and expecting different results. Have you and your wing girls been hitting the same bar every Friday night for the last three years and wondering why you never meet anyone? You have to change your game in order to win.

4. Stop waiting. The man of your dreams isn't going to suddenly appear at your front door. You have to invite him over first. In order to do that, you need to stop waiting and start dating.

5. Stop staring at your phone. There are good men everywhere. The key is putting down your cell phone long enough to notice. Imagine all the opportunities you may be missing because you're busy scrolling through pictures of other people's kids on Facebook.

Once you break all those bad habits, you'll be ready to replace them with good habits, like:

1. Replace negative thoughts with positive thoughts. Compliment yourself. When your hair looks covergirl perfect, look at yourself and say, "Damn, your hair looks good!" And when you see your pilates classes are paying off, tell yourself you love your abs! Sounds silly, but the same theory about believing the bad applies to the good things. So tell yourself how awesome you are and others will believe it too.

2. Be honest with yourself. If you were making excuses about why you weren't dating before, do some digging and work out the "why." If you discover you're afraid, that's fine. Then be

kind and gentle with yourself and take things slowly.

3. Be proactive. Love is one of our most basic needs as humans, so feel free to go get it! Use your tools. Whether you choose online dating, match making, speed dating or going on that blind date your Aunt Martha has been wanting set you up on, just do something to move toward your goal of love.

4. Learn from your experiences. As you date, recognize what you like and don't like. Do you like to test the waters with a coffee date before launching into a full dinner date? Are you more comfortable giving someone your number than asking for his? Do you like to communicate via text or by phone? As you discover what works for you, maximize those things!

5. Have fun! It's flirting, not a funeral. Enjoy it! Make eye contact. Smile at strangers. Say, "Hi." Introduce yourself to the hot guy at the dog park. Ask the hottie buying cauliflower if he thinks it's worth it to go organic. Get caught looking.

Dare to date.

Prince William and Kate Middleton Reveal Baby's Due Date





By Nic Baird

Prince William and Kate Middleton are having the baby in July, [People](#) reports. “Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are delighted to confirm they are expecting a baby in July,” read the statement from the royal couple’s office. While the couple will not be revealing the baby’s gender, the Duchess is not expecting twins. “The Duchess’s condition continues to improve since her stay in hospital last month,” the statement also said, referring to Kate’s bout of severe morning sickness.

How do you know when to announce your pregnancy to family and friends?

Cupid’s Advice:

If you’re going to become a parent, you shouldn’t stop congratulating yourself. Make sure you and your partner take time to reflect on your happiness together. Be excited! However, it can be daunting to announce it to the world. Be confident that this is good news and share it with others!

1. Confirm it with your doctor: It's important you see a doctor as soon as you suspect your pregnancy. They can advise you further about any complications. You can also ask about healthy activities for your pregnancy, you can use these to spend quality time with your partner, friends, and family.

2. You've discussed it with your partner: Make sure you've spoken to your partner about the pregnancy, before you share it with others. It's very important you explain what this pregnancy means to you, and they have an opportunity to share their feelings as well. Once you've set things out, go ahead and celebrate the upcoming child with friends and family.

3. Tell your parents: The first people who you should tell are your parents. In most cases, they'll be the people who are the most eager to hear the news. Make sure you make an effort to inform both your and your partner's parents that you're having a baby.

When would you tell friends and family about your pregnancy? Share your suggestions below!

Ben Affleck Tells Jennifer Garner 'You Are My Everything' During Golden Globes Speech





By Nic Baird

Ben Affleck won Best Director and Best Picture for *Argo* at Sunday's Golden Globes, UsMagazine.com reports. "I want to thank my wife who is the reason why I'm standing here," he said, as the camera showed his admiring wife, actress Jennifer Garner. "I adore you. I love you so much. Thanks for sitting through this. You are my everything." He and Garner are parents to children Violet, 7, Seraphina, 4, and Samuel, nearly 11 months.

What are some ways to publicly announce your love for your partner?

Cupid's Advice:

It might not be the right time to get married, or maybe you're not that concerned with the institution. Either way, there are many ways you can deepen your love with your partner. Follow your heart, and prioritize your happiness:

1. Moving forward: Both of you should want to see your relationship develop. Finding ways to spend more time together, and bringing your lives closer are benefits you can

find without marriage. Make time for your partner and find new ways to enjoy their company.

2. Children: A child is a huge commitment, and shouldn't be considered lightly. Many times a baby can pop into your life unexpectedly. No matter how it happens, a child is a celebration of your love. You might feel pressure to get hitched, but giving a baby the significance it deserves is most important.

3. Special occasions: Spending the holidays with your loved ones shows their importance in your life. Making Valentine's Day and anniversaries special with thoughtful celebrations will reflect the love you share.

How do you think someone can publicly announce their love? Share your comments below!

Ways to Remain Confident In Your Long-Term Relationship





By Samantha Menjor

It has been a little over a year since the beginning of your official relationship with your significant other. While things are still going strong, you can't help but to feel that your lives together have become more of a routine than the unsolicited passion you once held for each other. Weekly lunch dates and the occasional Saturday night movie have become the staple of your relationship.

While there's nothing wrong with schedule and structure in your life, the lack of excitement and surprise in a long term relationship can cause a lack of confidence in you, your partner, and your future together. It makes one think that if the spark is gone only a year later, will your bond survive another year or even more, the next levels of a union such as moving in together and marriage? This common issue in the realm of love and relationships is one with several solutions that will not only increase the confidence between you and your beau, but bring the both of you closer and more in love than ever:

Related: [4 Steps to a Stronger Long Term Relationship](#)

1. Know your “love languages” – Receiving Gifts, Acts of Service, Words of Affirmation, Physical Touch, and Quality Time. According to NY Times Bestselling author and marriage expert Gary Chapman, these are the five different ways in which people communicate and understand love. Understandably we need a little bit of each category; however there is usually one that speaks to each of us individually. While quality time may be most important to you, your partner may express their love best through words. Once you figure out which language you each relate to you can truly strengthen your long term relationship.

2. Spend Time Apart – Many times we forego our hobby interests, and friends to make time for each other in a relationship. With our busy schedules spending time together is often hard. However, it is important to still engage in those activities that made you happy before you met your partner. Whether it's a night out with your friends or going to the gym be sure to take moments for yourself. This will make time spent together much more appreciated.

3. Don't Settle into a Dating Rut—Dinner and a movie makes a good first or second date. However after several months of being together it may get a little boring. You are way past the point of getting to know each other so get adventurous with your dates. This is a great chance to experience your partner's pastimes and maybe adapt it as your own. If you both enjoy the outdoors, for example, a nature stroll with a picnic at the end is a good way to switch it up. When you get creative with your dates you'll never have to worry about a lack of excitement in your relationship.

Related: [Top Three Dating Faux Pas](#)

If you think your long term relationship has come to a standstill, take these suggestions into consideration. These are just three out of several ways to revive and better your bond for years to come. It's important to realize that because

you and your partner have been dating long term everyday will not be as thrilling and passionate as the first stages of your relationship. Increasing the confidence in your long term relationship is vital them to success and happiness of you both for the future.

Drew Barrymore Steps Out with Will Kopelman and Their Daughter Olive



By Nic Baird

Actress Drew Barrymore stepped out with husband Will Kopelman and infant daughter Olive in NYC, Saturday, [UsMagazine.com](https://www.usmagazine.com) reports. The actress held her man's arm as they walked casually in jeans, sweatshirts, and warm coats, pushing the baby girl in her red stroller. Little Olive had a fleece onesie to keep her warm in her stroller, as well as a monkey stuffed animal to keep her company.

What are some ways to introduce your new child to the world?

Cupid's Advice:

While you may be excited to tell a few people in person, how do you let everyone know you're having a child? Besides wearing a sign, you should take a methodical approach to inform the people in your life. They'll want to know, and here's how you tell them:

1. Picture postcards: Anyone interested by the news that you had a child will want to see a picture of the baby. A shot of the newborn with family is something people will stick on their fridges. If you're having a baby shower, you could use the postcards to get the details out.

2. Baby shower: Civilization designed baby showers as a template to announce an upcoming child. Once you've told your inner circle of friends and family, you can send out baby shower invitations to everyone else. If you haven't been caught by surprise, you should have ample time to plan your baby shower by scheduling it closer to the due date. The invitations will serve to let the word out, and you'll probably get some gifts out of it.

3. Other rituals: Baptisms, and other religious ceremonies have friends and family congregating. Any sort of family ritual is a good opportunity to assemble the important people in your life for such an important day in your life. Cigars are a traditional way for a new father to spread the word to

friends, and perhaps work colleagues. It's just something you can give out, besides cupcakes.

How did you announce your pregnancy? Share your experiences below!

Girls: Would You Pass The Bride-To-Be Test?



By Girls Meet Guys

We've all been there before, as a dutiful bridesmaid, friend or even as the bride herself. How well do you know your partner and what things should you know?

I've been to more than one hen's night before as each of the above – friend, bridesmaid and bride. Invariably, at some point the bride takes part in a game in which she is asked ten to twenty questions about her husband-to-be, just to see how well she really knows him or perhaps, doesn't know him. Whether you've answered the questions yourself or been an onlooker chances are you've uttered the words, 'I wouldn't know that about him'. Of course, you could be forgiven for not knowing the name of his third grade teacher, but some things you really should know.

Related: [What Kim Kardashian Taught Me About Marriage](#)

His Forte

We all have something we do really well, so do you know what your partner's special skill is? Maybe he has the MacGyver factor and can get out of any situation with a paper clip. Maybe he's so handy he could have his own home improvement show. It doesn't have to be a news-worthy skill though; it could be as simple as his ability to give the best foot massage known to man. Big or small there will be something, so if you don't know what your man's skill is you might want to ask. It could even surprise you and you get the chance to lavish him with praise and score some brownie points along the way.

The Secret

He doesn't have one? Wrong! He has one. It could be funny, tragic, criminal, heart breaking or embarrassing, but he will have one. He may not care that you know but just didn't think to mention it or he may really prefer that you didn't know. You may say, 'Wow! I didn't know that about you.' You may also be completely shocked. How you move forward depends on what exactly he reveals and how strong your relationship is.

Related: [Kirstie Alley Reveals Her Past Secret Relationship](#)

[with Patrick Swayze](#)

Idiosyncrasy, Quirk Or Annoying Habit

He's a noisy eater. He grinds his teeth in his sleep. He will only use white towels. He taps his foot when he's anxious. Chances are you won't notice these things in the honeymoon stage but as time rolls on you will. None of us are perfect and we all have things we'll find odd, amusing or down right annoying about our partner. Relationships are all about understanding and tolerance, so without a good dose of each, your relationship may feel the strain.

Dreamtime

What were his childhood dreams and aspirations? Whether they were real or fantasies of grandeur they are a window into the heart of your partner. The innocence of youth becomes dulled by the layers of time and to peel these back is to reveal a greater appreciation of who your partner is.

Is He A Giver Or A Taker?

It's easy to be kind to the ones we love, but how would he score if a perfect stranger were involved? Would he give to a beggar on the street, offer an elderly person his seat on the train, or stand up to a bully? We all like to think we would pass if tested and likewise with our significant other. So how would your man stack up?

You may know all these things about your other half and pass the bride-to-be test with flying colours but if you've never considered these things maybe it's time to ask.

Girls Meet Guys is a free dating site for Australian singles who know how to have fun! Girls Meet Guys provides genuine free dating sites Australia reviews for serious singles.

Are You Making Requests or Demands in Your Relationship?



by Jane Greer, PhD for GalTime.com

Prince William canceled an important appearance to stay home with his wife, the Duchess of Cambridge, while she dealt with a second round of severe morning sickness. Many times you want your partner to support you, but work or personal needs take priority. So what was different in this situation, and how can you communicate your needs to your partner? Sometimes, it is all in how you ask.

You know what it's like to have something demanded of you,

right? From the time we were little kids and we were told to wash our hands and look people in the eyes, to our romantic relationships when we're told to get the dry cleaning or to make that dinner reservation, we know it doesn't feel very good. If anything, it puts you on the defensive and makes you not want to do something. So imagine how your partner feels when you tell them to clean the house or take the dog for a walk. Who wants to do something nice for someone when they are forced to do it?

In my book *What About Me? Stop Selfishness From Ruining Your Relationship*, I talk about this as being one of the important rules of engagement.

Learn how to make a request rather than a demand.

To put it simply, ask nicely. This will tell your partner that you respect them, and will give them the opportunity to make a choice. When you make a demand of your partner, they often feel manipulated and controlled by you because they feel they have to do what you are telling them to do. So rather than being cooperative, they'll be resentful. When you make a request, however, it gives your partner the freedom to make their own decision about the task at hand and lead them to, hopefully, decide to follow through because they want to please you. It gives your partner the chance to take ownership of whatever it is you are asking of them.

In the end, it allows you to have a conversation about what you want to get done, and offers the opportunity to have a give and take. It also lets you move away from a parent-child dynamic and into an equal partnership, which is where every healthy and happy relationship should be.

Date Idea: Bring the Beach to You



By Sarah Ribeiro

Escape the cold winter months and bring the beach to you. Have your own island getaway by planning a romantic and private stay-cation.

The first step for this amazing date weekend is to crank up the heat in your house. Forget about how chilly it is outside by keeping your thermostat set to summer temperatures. You and your sweetheart can pretend you're on the beach while lounging around in each other's arms, blasting Bob Marley and dreaming of the sunshine. To really relax, dim the lights and lead each other in a soothing yoga and meditation session.

For dinner, enjoy grilled pork and pineapple kebabs and picture yourself in paradise. To really set the mood, keep a beach-themed film on in the background; 'Forgetting Sarah Marshall' is a great romantic comedy set in Hawaii. After you're finished eating, head back to the kitchen and have a friendly dessert-making competition with your partner: prepare the the most tropical dessert you can think of, like key lime pie, fried ice cream or chocolate-dipped coconut macaroons. For something a bit easier, keep a bowl of fruit handy and feed each other. Passion fruit is tropical and in season in January, and it tastes great cubed and frozen.

For some added fun, turn your bathtub into a Jacuzzi. You and your honey can soak in the tub, drinking pina colodas and margaritas. Perhaps you'll even be inspired to plan a real vacation together. Grab some travel brochures or pull up a travel website, pick out your favorite tropical locations and consider what activities you can do there: horseback riding in Hawaii, nightclubbing in Ibiza, hang gliding in Brazil. Figure out ways that you and your sweetheart can start saving up for your romantic getaway.

After a nice long soak, break out the coconut oil and give your love a tropical spa treatment: spread some beach towels on the bed and take turns giving each other massages. Find your favorite massage bar at lushusa.com – their Heavenilli bar is made specifically for the bedroom. If you want a challenge, create your own home spa treatments, like a simple seaweed wrap, or try a home-made facial with fresh fruit, olive oil or yogurt. No matter what, keep each other pampered in true vacation style.

Have any ideas for a faux beach getaway? Let us know in the comments.

Ryan Reynolds and Blake Lively Bundle Up in NYC



By Nic Baird

During these cold winter months, acting couple Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds bundle up as they head into New York's Nobu 57 on Monday, [People](#) reports. An onlooker describes them dressed casually. Reynolds had a knit hat, and Lively wore a "cute bright green puffer jacket" as they entered the Robert DeNiro co-owned restaurant. The pair have been married for five months.

What are some ways to make the most out of winter weather with

your partner?

Cupid's Advice:

Making the most of this winter wonderland meaning finding ways to experience the magic with your significant other. There are tons of activities that appeal to couples, and at the very least, tons of fire to cozy up to with your partner.

1. Sports: There are some great winter sports to share with your partner. They range in intensity from cross-country skiing to skating at a local rink. Look for something you two can enjoy together.

2. Recreation: It's easy to pick up a sled and head to a nearby hill. It's not too much work to whip up some hot chocolate by a fire for a date. There are tons of ways you can experience the season by just finding things to do around the snow and cold. Snow balls, snow forts, and snow angels transcend demographics.

3. Holidays: The most important part of winter, at least in regard to couples, is that there are three crucial holidays: Christmas, New Year's, and Valentine's Day. Find something special for each and you'll have fond memories of the season to share with your partner.

**How do you keep the winter season exciting with your partner?
Share your comments below!**