

# Giveaway: Datevitation: A Valentine's Day Gift That Your Partner Will Never Forget



*This post is sponsored by Datevitation.*

By Whitney Baker

Whether you've been dating your man for a few weeks or a few years, planning a spontaneous and unique date is never easy. Not only do you have to think of something that you've never done before, but you have to find an activity that you'll both

(hopefully) enjoy. And with holidays like Valentine's Day come an added pressure to please your partner.

[Datevitation](#) is here to help. Datevitation is the first and only fully customizable book of date coupons, allowing you to create a one-of-a-kind gift for your significant other. The library is full of hundreds of date ideas, ranging from simple gestures of love (like stargazing and cuddling) to adventurous activities (including skydiving and scuba-diving) to ways to reignite the romance in your relationship (like recreating your first date or enjoying a couples massage). You can change the text of each coupon to include a silly inside joke or sweet reminder of your love. Plus, you can personalize your coupon book with a special cover and heartfelt message on the first page. Books start at \$20, which includes five date coupons.



Thanks to Datevitation, you'll never have to wonder about what to do on your next date night. Plus, your boyfriend or girlfriend will be touched by your thoughtfulness and excited for the dates to come! In honor of Valentine's Day, two lucky CupidsPulse.com readers will receive a code to create a Datevitation gift book worth \$50.

**~~GIVEAWAY ALERT: To enter for a chance to win a Datevitation gift book, 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 winners via Facebook when the giveaway 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 Wednesday, February 20. Good luck!~~

Congratulations to Raz Kassam and Stacey Plapinger!

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## Giveaway: Embrace Your Feminine Self with fantasy twist and Couture La La



*This post is sponsored by Elizabeth Arden.*

By Whitney Baker

They say that scent is one of the primary forms of attraction. Lucky for you, in today's perfume world, there are so many fragrances to choose from that you're sure to find one that pleases your partner's senses. For those of you who have yet to discover a scent that screams (or smells like) "you," Valentine's Day is a wonderful time to continue your search. Two fragrances that you must try are Britney Spears's *fantasy twist* and Juicy Couture's *Couture La La*.

*fantasy twist* gives you not one but two scents to make your own. Joining two of Spears's best-selling fragrances in one unique package, it includes *fantasy*, a potion of succulent fruits, white florals and creamy musk that results in a cupcake accord, and *MIDNIGHT fantasy*, an intoxicating blend of woody musks, vanilla and exotic fruits. As the pop star said, "I wanted to combine two of my favorite fragrances into a sophisticated bottle, giving my fans the power to choose the scent they desire at any given moment."

With *Couture La La*, Juicy Couture introduces their second fragrance, which reveals the daring and unexpected side of the well-known Juicy girl. "She's confident and fearless but at the same time flirty and feminine," LeAnn Nealz, President and Chief Creative Officer of Juicy Couture, explains. "*Couture La La* evokes her free spirit, and in turn, she makes a statement without even trying." If this woman sounds like you, this fragrance, which blends sparkling fruits, white florals and smooth wood, is the perfect one to spray.

And now for the fun part: we're giving away two bottles each of these two delightful fragrances. Four CupidsPulse.com readers will win a bottle of either Britney Spears's *fantasy twist* or Juicy Couture's *Couture La La* – just in time to impress your man after Valentine's Day!

**~~GIVEAWAY ALERT: To enter for a chance to win a bottle of BRITNEY SPEARS's *fantasy twist* or Juicy Couture's *Couture La*~~**

~~La, 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 four winners via Facebook when the giveaway 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 Tuesday, February 19th. Good luck!~~

Congratulations to Ashley Elizabeth Gehm, Bryan Elfant, Amy Orvin and Lynette Barbieri!

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## Giveaway: Pure Romance For This Valentine's Day







*This post is sponsored by Pure Romance.*

By Whitney Baker

If you're trying to plan the perfect Valentine's Day date for you and your man, you may be feeling a bit stressed as the holiday quickly approaches. Trying to keep the night low-key but romantic and special, you've decided to cook a gourmet meal – paired with a nice bottle of wine, of course – before the two of you enjoy a candle-lit dinner and some alone time at home. Perhaps you want to give your partner a sensual massage as a calorie-free dessert. Wanting to look your best, you've also bought a new dress and some sexy heels. But what else can you do to let your love know how much you care?

For some much-needed help with the evening's plans, look no further than [Pure Romance](#) and its premiere line of relationship and intimacy products. The company's goal is to empower, educate and entertain women as they strengthen their relationships and marriages. Not only can you purchase these

fabulous items for yourself, but you can also host a girls' night to introduce your friends to these products.

One lucky CupidsPulse.com reader will win a Pure Romance gift basket filled with the following goodies (totaling \$107 in value), sure to reignite the spark in your relationship – or perhaps even light a new one! – just in time for Valentine's Day.

- **Burning Desire:** To set the mood, light this soy massage oil candle and enjoy its sweet fragrance. Once it melts, the candle doubles as a warm, rich body balm that lasts up to 20 massages.
- **Pulsa Bath Ball:** This sponge, which requires two AA batteries, can be used to lather up in the shower or bath and doubles as a personal massager.
- **Body Dew:** A spritz of this moisturizer will leave your skin feeling soft and sexy.
- **Serenity:** This aromatherapy massage lotion will help you feel relaxed and confident, ensuring you a blissful night of romance.
- **Body Bling Brush:** Kissable Body Bling makes your skin appear to be a rich, shimmering gold and can be worn throughout the day and night.
- **Lip Locked:** Two tubes of Naughty and Nice flavored SPF 15 lip balm will help your kisses be better than ever before.

~~GIVEAWAY ALERT: To enter for a chance to win a gift basket from Pure Romance, 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 winners via our Facebook page when the giveaway 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 Monday, February 18. Good luck!~~

Congratulations to Sarah Northcutt! We hope you enjoy your

prize package!

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# How Celebrity Couples Overcome Their Stressful Lives



By Whitney Baker

While it's tempting to think that celebrity couples never experience the ups-and-downs of real life, that's not always



the case. Like everyone else, they must survive personal heartbreak, career letdowns and various forms of rejection – and they must do it all in the public eye. Of course, being a Tinseltown twosome means that they have money and means to overcome their stressful lives, perhaps by doing one of the activities below.

**1. Learning something new:** Although stars are often on set for long hours or traveling for various commitments, there is always downtime during their hectic schedules, giving them time to pick up a new hobby. For instance, Curtis Stone, who has a son with fiancée Lindsay Price, hopes that he and Price can learn how to speak Spanish and then teach their son the language.

**Related Link:** [Celebrity Couples Who Have Turned Over a New Leaf](#)

**2. Taking an extravagant vacation:** Thanks to their hefty paychecks and flexible jobs, stars can jet off to Mexico or the Caribbean on a whim. Some of them even own their own private planes, making it extra easy to take a last-minute vacation. After co-hosting ABC's *New Year's Rockin' Eve* with Jenny McCarthy, Ryan Seacrest headed down to St. Barts for some fun in the sun with his long-time girlfriend Julianne Hough. This trip provided some much-needed R&R for the busy couple: Seacrest is gearing up for the twelfth season of *American Idol*, while Hough is promoting her upcoming movie *Safe Haven*. Likewise, Reese Witherspoon, Jim Toth and their three children spent the holidays in Hawaii.

**3. Enjoying normal, domestic activities:** Sometimes, just doing basic, everyday chores helps alleviate the pressure that comes with being rich and famous. When their schedules align and Carrie Underwood and husband Mike Fisher are both at their Nashville home, they like to keep things simple: they often spend time cooking and watching television together. Underwood

likes to keep a similar routine when she's on tour, often doing her own laundry on her days off.

**4. Donating to charities:** While stardom certainly comes with stress, it also includes many wonderful perks. One way for stars to fully appreciate how blessed they are is by giving back – and no couple does this better than the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. Kate Middleton is making sure her charitable donations reflect on her pregnancy; in January, she gave both a hamper of new baby products and a package of baby clothes to one of her favorite causes, East Anglia Children's Hospices.

**Related Link:** [Recovering Neuroscientist Don Vaughn Talks About Finding Love and Changing the World With Music](#)

**5. Adopting a puppy:** Similarly, many celebrities show their goodwill by rescuing dogs from local shelters. These furry creatures provide them with constant companions despite their busy schedules. At the start of the New Year, Miley Cyrus and Liam Hemsworth adopted a Chihuahua-mix puppy, Bean, who joins their family of four other rescued dogs. Likewise, Katherine Heigl – who even started her own animal companion charity – and husband Josh Kelley have a full house: they're raising their two daughters alongside seven rescued dogs.

**How do you and your partner handle stress? Tell us in the comments below!**

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## **Exclusive Interview: Sarah**

# Darling Talks 'The Bachelor', Country Music and Her Top Pick for Sean Lowe!



By Whitney Baker

Having been a longtime fan of [The Bachelor](#), rising star Sarah Darling loves when her fellow country music artists make special appearances on the show. As many of you saw last night, Darling was that lucky singer on Monday's episode, performing a surprise concert in Whitefish, Montana, on Sean Lowe's one-on-one date with Lindsay Yenter.

“It was an awesome experience to be a part of such a big show, especially with me being a new artist,” Darling said. “Sean is just like he comes across on television: super down-to-earth and sweet, like a Southern boy.”

**Related Link:** [The Bachelor Season 17, Episode 4: Deception of Love](#)

And what about the bachelor’s date with Yenter? “It was so romantic and gorgeous. They were slow dancing in a crowd of people and looked like they were having the time of their lives,” she shared. “It was definitely a magical moment.”



As for her song choice, ‘Home to Me,’ Darling’s most recent single, is a great fit for *The Bachelor*, a show that takes the search for love to the most unexpected place: reality television. Describing the song, Darling says home “isn’t necessarily a place but a feeling. A person can be home to you, no matter where you are – and even if the two of you are apart.”

That notion rings particularly true for Darling, who is currently in a long-distance relationship. With her boyfriend living in London, it’s important for them to spend time together even when they’re apart. “We like to have Skype cooking dates, which is really fun. And we make sure we always have something to look forward to.”



**Related Link:** [Tips for Making a Long-Distance Relationship Work](#)

Of course, being on *The Bachelor* wasn't this country music star's first experience with reality television. In 2003, shortly after moving to Nashville to pursue her music career, she traveled to Las Vegas to compete on *The Entertainer*, a show on E! hosted by Wayne Newton.

After landing in the top three, she returned to Nashville with a better idea of what was next for her. "It really taught me what I wanted to do and what I didn't want to do," Darling said. "For me, I decided that I needed to focus on songwriting, so that's what I did."

Of her songwriting process, Darling explains that she tries to focus on what's going on in her life at that particular time. "I never know when I'm going to get inspired, but when I do, it's usually a really fast process. I feel like the best songs are written very quickly and very true to the moment."

Country music fans are already looking forward to hearing more of Darling's songwriting on her upcoming album, which will be released this summer. "This album represents how I've always wanted my music to be portrayed," she shared. "My producer, Dan Huff, listened to me, and we worked together on making an album that was really 'me.'"

"It really lets me be an artist and be different, which is really, really good," she adds.

As Darling puts the finishing touches on her album and prepares for the Valentine's Day opening of her Weekend Road Trip Tour with Scotty McCreery, she stills finds time to keep up *The Bachelor* and Lowe's search for love. So who is her favorite contestant this season? "I'm a big fan of Lesley M.!"

*You can check out Darling's 'Home to Me' EP on iTunes and catch her on tour with Scotty McCreery. For more information,*

follow her on [Twitter](#) or visit [www.sarahdarling.com](http://www.sarahdarling.com).

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# Why Being Too Picky is Ruining Your Relationship



By Whitney Baker

When it comes to finding the love of your life, it's important to know what you want. Even so, having a checklist that you refuse to deviate from means you could miss out on meeting Mr. Right. And if you're already in a relationship, you may be

looking past the good stuff about your man because you're too hung up on the not-so-right things that you wish you could change. Below are a few reasons why being too picky is ruining your relationship. Pay attention and think about what you need to do before you sabotage your chance for love.

**1. Demanding too much of your loved ones may drive them away.**

Smothering your sweetheart may lead to feelings of resentment and irritation, while constantly talking down to your cute coworker may make him see you as a nuisance instead of a potential partner. Whether you're developing a new friendship or trying to improve your romantic relationship, be understanding and open about other people's differences. See their unique personalities as a positive thing and help to foster their individuality.

**Related Link:** [Love Lessons from Holiday Movies](#)

**2. Nagging can be as harmful to your relationship as infidelity.**

If your significant other isn't living up to your idea of an ideal mate, you may be tempted to ask him to make some changes. If he resists, this cycle could turn into nagging, the interaction in which one person makes a request over and over again, while the other person continually ignores it. According to an article in 'The Wall Street Journal,' every couple will face this issue at some point – and depending on how they deal with it, this form of toxic communication can be the end of a partnership.

**3. Pointless arguments mean you spend a lot of wasted time being unhappy.**

By constantly wanting something different, something more, from your sweetheart, you're bound to cause a lot of unnecessary disagreements. One fight leads to another fight, and before you know it, you forgot why you were arguing in the first place. Rather than constantly quarreling, look past your pickiness and remember why he makes you laugh or how he surprised you on your birthday last year. If you can't

think of anything good about your partner, you may be fussing over silly things to cover up a deeper issue.

**4. You miss out on the great aspects of your relationship – or a great person who could be your perfect match.** When you're too picky about the way your man folds his clothes or how your girlfriend chews her food, your mind becomes too crowded with negative thoughts to appreciate the happiness that your partner brings you. When it comes to meeting someone new, you should be open-minded towards everyone. Who knows, you may even find the person of your dreams in the most unexpected place! And even if the fling is short-lived, you can use the experience to improve your next relationship.

**How has being too picky affected your relationships? Share your answers in the comments below.**

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## **Giveaway: Spend Valentine's Day in a Champagne Bubble Battle**







*This post is sponsored by Wine Battles.*

By [Whitney Baker](#)

There isn't much time left before Valentine's Day, and if you're anything like the staff here at CupidsPulse.com, we are always looking for unique ideas to celebrate the holiday. Recently, we stumbled upon a very cool way to have a memorable night with your significant other or best girlfriends. It's called [Wine Battles](#), and we have a feeling it's going to be a hit once more people hear about it.

Wine Battles is a tournament-style wine-tasting competition that provides you with the chance to taste amazing wines in the comfort of your own home while enjoying a great bonding experience. Every Battle is designed for a specific period of time, either three or seven weeks, and focuses on a specific varietal or theme. Each week during your Battle, you will receive two naturally contrasting wines as well as educational materials to help you improve upon your wine tasting skills

and understand your individual palate. The wines are voted on each week until a winner is declared based on the popular vote of the tournament's battlers. This experience allows you to enjoy wines outside of your comfort zone and improve your wine-tasting skills. To make the battles even more fun, you can post your scores and notes online and also share on Facebook and Twitter. By the end of the tournament, you're sure to be a more knowledgeable wine enthusiast.

Just in time for the most romantic day of the year, Wine Battles is hosting what they call a [Champagne Bubble Battle](#), a special, one-night event featuring Laurent Perrier Brut L-P and Alfred Gratien Brut Classique. You and your lucky partner can sip the finest wines from the Champagne region of France as you enjoy spending time together. The Bubble Battle is packaged in a handcrafted, wooden wine box and includes an assortment of premium chocolates as well as your choice of Valentine's Day card. It also contains the Wine Battles Getting Started Guide and professional tasting notes for each of the competing vintages.

If the Bubble Battle sounds like just what you had in mind for February 14<sup>th</sup>, don't miss our giveaway! One CupidsPulse.com reader will win a Champagne Bubble Battle to enjoy on with their sweetheart! Now, this is a unique idea we really like!

~~**GIVEAWAY ALERT: To enter for a chance to win a Champagne Bubble Battle, 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 Tuesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>. Good luck!**~~

**Congratulations to Bari Rubin for winning a Champagne Bubble Battle!**

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# Sabra Ricci Couples Astrology with Food in 'Sexy Star Sign Cooking'



By Whitney Baker

Learning your sweetheart's favorite foods is something that takes a lot of trial and error – and it may even involve throwing your hard work in the trash. However, celebrity chef and acclaimed astrologist Sabra Ricci knows a secret: if you pay attention to your partner's astrology sign, you'll have a

better chance of pleasing his or her picky palate. Her newest book, *Sexy Star Sign Cooking*, which was released on January 8, 2013, is the perfect guide if you're hoping to impress your girlfriend or boyfriend and make your next date night unforgettable. As Jenny McCarthy said of the book, "Sabra Ricci's passion for cooking for Hollywood stars and her lifelong fascination with astrology come together."

Ricci took some time out of her busy schedule to share why astrology and cooking go hand in hand as well as her tips for cooking a romantic meal.

**Your first book, *Lobster for Leos, Cookies for Capricorns*, told readers how to use star signs to prepare delicious and healthy meals. Why is your new book, *Sexy Star Sign Cooking*, a logical follow-up?**

While health is important, everyone is interested in improving his or her love life. So I wanted to provide a fun and entertaining guide to help people find their perfect match.

**Can you define "foodstrology" for our readers?**

"Foodstrology" is a word I coined for combining food and astrology. Each sign rules different parts of the body, so I created recipes based upon foods that support each part.

**How do you determine the "romantic foods" for each sign?**

The romantic foods are aphrodisiacs. I chose aphrodisiacs that support each part of the body – brain, heart, immune system, etc. – to put any sign in the mood for love.

**Are there any astrological signs that are most compatible when cooking together?**

Generically speaking, like attracts like, so all three fire, water, earth, and air signs are compatible with each other. Opposites also attract, but if you really want the magic formula for compatibility, have your chart done by a



professional.

**Related Link:** [Wolfgang Puck of 'Top Chef: Seattle' Says Taste Is the Most Important Part of Cooking for Your Loved Ones](#)

**Let's say a couple is on their second date – what's the safest bet if the man decides to cook for the woman? Is it important that he know her sign before determining the night's menu?**

We've been playing it by ear for most of our lives, sticking with the following formulas: candlelit dinners of steak and champagne, lasagna and wine or some other delicious meal. If he knows her sign beforehand, he will be more assured of cooking what she will love, but it is not crucial.

**What about a woman who is hoping her long-term boyfriend proposes? What should she cook for dinner?**

They always say the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. So by choosing the right aphrodisiacs for his sign, he will be putty in her hands, and she will soon have a big rock on her ring finger!

**What's your all-time favorite meal to cook for your husband?**

Ossobuco, a Milanese specialty of cross-cut veal shanks braised with vegetables, white wine and broth.

**Related Link:** [Celebrity Nutritionist and Trainer Jackie Keller Says, "Those Who Exercise With Support From Their Partners Do Better Overall"](#)

**Have you ever been a chef for celebrity couples (like Julia Roberts and Danny Moder or Jenny McCarthy and Jim Carrey before they split)? Any fun stories to share?**

I've actually worked for both couples several times. They are amazing, and it's always a memorable experience. One occasion that comes to mind was Julia and Danny's third anniversary party with twins in tow and 10 of their best friends for a

tropical extravaganza.

**And finally, do you have any plans for future books?**

Yes, there will be additional books as part of the series. In conjunction with the cookbooks, there will be an exciting announcement too, so stay tuned!

*To purchase 'Sexy Star Sign Cooking,' visit Amazon. For more information on Ricci, visit her [cookinproductions.com](http://cookinproductions.com) or follow her on Twitter.*

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## How Celebrity Moms Keep an Active Dating Life





By [Whitney Baker Johnson](#)

Dating as a single mom is never easy, especially if you're trying to balance a busy career with raising your children. Even for celebrities, who have luxuries that not all single moms can afford, it's still a tricky thing to manage. The famous faces below have figured out a few ways to find love while still playing the most important role of their lives:

**1. Make It a Family Affair:** Before she got hitched, Reese Witherspoon was often seen with Jim Toth and her kids from her marriage to Ryan Phillippe. Rather than try to make time for romance *and* family, she simply included Ava and Deacon on her dates. The newlyweds even took her children on their honeymoon to Belize!

Michelle Williams has taken a similar approach in her relationship with Jason Segel. The couple is constantly seen with Matilda, Williams' daughter with Heath Ledger, and they even split their time on both coasts based on the little

girl's school schedule.

**Related:** [Three Tips to Stress Free Holiday Dating](#)

**2. Date a Blast From Your Past:** Sometimes, it's easier to date a guy from your past instead of searching for someone new. Denise Richards, mom to three girls, took this route, dating Heather Locklear's ex Richie Sambora. While it may have ruined her friendship with Locklear, she is still in an on-and-off relationship with the rocker.

Perhaps taking a cue from her former friend, Locklear, who has a daughter with Sambora, dated Jack Wagner, her costar from *Melrose Place*, for over four years before ending their engagement.

**3. Meet Your Match on Reality TV:** Emily Maynard, single mom to daughter Ricki Hendrick, has tried not once but *twice* to find love on reality television. First, she won the heart of *Bachelor* Brad Womack, only to end their engagement a few months later.

Rather than give up, Maynard tried again, becoming the most recent *Bachelorette*. She accepted Jef Holm's proposal, but they too broke up less than three months after the show ended. Despite this double dose of heartbreak, she has no regrets because she says she did fall in love with both men.

**Related:** [5 Bachelor and Bachelorette Couples We Can Learn From](#)

**4. Stay In Your Inner Circle:** Dating someone who your kids already know eliminates the need for awkward introductions and potential tension. Heidi Klum, who split from Seal after almost seven years of marriage, is now in a relationship with her bodyguard, Martin Kirsten. Luckily, her four children are already comfortable with him and are used to him being around.

Similarly, Courteney Cox has been rumored to be dating her *Cougartown* costar, Josh Hopkins. Coco, her daughter with David



Arquette, knows Hopkins from her time spent on set, making the transition easier for her mom.

**5. Depend On Your Ex:** Staying on friendly terms with your ex can help your dating life as well. Jennie Garth, who recently split from her husband of 11 years, Peter Facinelli, has already been spotted with three different men. Thanks to her co-parenting routine with Facinelli, she has time to date while her three daughters hang out with their dad.

Likewise, Ashlee Simpson and Pete Wentz split time with their four-year-old son, Bronx. They both are frequently seen out and about with their significant others and even reunited recently to celebrate their little boy's birthday.

**What's the best dating lesson you learned from celebrity moms? Tell us in the comments below!**

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**Dr. Brandy Engler Says, “‘The Men on My Couch’ Taught Me That Love Is Hard and Complicated”**





By Whitney Baker

When Dr. Brandy Engler opened her sex therapy practice for women in New York City, she was shocked that it was mostly men reaching out for her help. As she began working through their heartache, she discovered that she had her own issues to face as well. In *The Men on My Couch: True Stories of Sex, Love and Psychotherapy*, Dr. Engler, along with David Rensin, weave together her personal story and her patients' journeys, sharing the lessons both learned and taught throughout her first year as a psychologist. We chatted with the first-time author about her new book and what she has coming up next.

**Why were you surprised that more men than women came to you after you opened your practice?**

Traditionally, men tend to seek psychotherapy less than women for issues like depression or anxiety. Similarly, I hadn't seen any statistics that showed that men were more interested than women in sex therapy.

**What question about love and relationships do you find your clients asking most often?**

The question that they tend to come to therapy with is: Should I break up with my significant other? They feel confused about a decision, which drives them to therapy. The second thing that most often brings people to me is feeling broken-hearted and wanting to know how to stop hurting.

Once in a while, couples that are about to get married or are newly married come in as well. They want to know how to communicate or understand each other better. They're usually in pretty healthy relationships but are just looking for guidance.

**What motivated you to write a book about your experiences during that first year?**

Because of my time spent with these men, I gained a lot of new insights that really excited me. The more I sat with them and explored their true motivations for being there, I felt like I was uncovering answers that went far beyond the simple and conventional conclusions that we draw about men – things like men just want to have sex, men want sex more than women or men are less emotional about sex. The more I listened to them, the more I saw how vulnerable they were.

The first chapter of *The Men on My Couch* talks about a guy named David, who was a relatively happy guy. He recognized that he was cheating a lot, which led him to the question, "Am I even capable of love?" I thought that was such an interesting question. It ended up becoming a theme in the book, which is why I put it in chapter one.

**Can you tell our readers a bit of your personal story, as discussed in *The Men on My Couch*?**

Originally, I wasn't going to include my personal story; I just wanted to focus on what was happening during my sessions

with the men. But I realized that I was learning a great deal, which I thought would be important, particularly for female readers.

Initially, I felt taken aback by some of the men's behavior. Like the guys who were total womanizers. They made me nervous, and I started to become super jealous and unsure of myself. I had to start working through my own anxiety. I started looking at my relationship and asking myself, "Is this really love?" I had to assess my own notions about love.

**Related Link:** [Top 10 Dating Dos and Don'ts](#)

**What lessons learned during your therapy sessions most impacted your own life?**

Psychologists are necessarily trained on "what is love" – that's more of a social or philosophical question than it is psychological. So I had to really examine that idea, and throughout the book, that's really what I'm learning. I learned that love is much more of a skill and that it's actually kind of hard and complicated.

I had to learn to be patient and understanding with each of my male clients even when it was hard for me. It felt amazing when I was actually able to be very loving towards my clients. My ability to do so became very healing for them; instead of me just reaching them in a cognitive way, I was now fully present and invested in helping them.

**If you had one piece of advice to share with our readers, what would it be?**

This is another theme of the book: to truly understand your own motivation. You need to become more conscious about the way that you love. Instead of really loving each other, a lot of people bring fear and deficit to a relationship. They're trying to get a need met instead of bringing fullness to the relationship. People don't realize that though; they feel some

sort of want, and they go after gratifying it, so they're basically using the other person. When people become more aware of what's driving them, they become very full and happy and satisfied in their relationships.

**We understand that ABC recently optioned your book for a TV series – anything else you can share with us about this deal?**

Yes! We have an amazing writer – she worked on 'Will and Grace' and 'Ugly Betty' – who wrote the pilot. In January, the networks will decide what shows to pick up, and ABC is interested this year. It was a contender this past January as well, and it made it to the final round.

**And finally, you're already working on another book called *Libido*. We'd love to know more about this project!**

*Libido* will be all about women and how they get in touch with their desire, which was the original focus of my work. It'll be conversational in tone (as was *The Men on My Couch*) and include some history as well. In the past, women were viewed as very sexual – even more sexual than men. So this narrative that we have that men are more sexual than women is only a couple of hundred years old. It's a totally manufactured story that a lot of people buy into, but it's not true.

*To purchase 'The Men on My Couch,' click here. You can also learn more about the book by visiting her site or following her Twitter.*

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## **Celebrity Nutritionist and**



# Trainer Jackie Keller Says, “Those Who Exercise With Support From Their Partners Do Better Overall”



By Whitney Baker

You may have heard the saying, “The couple that exercises together, stays together.” But is it really true? We turned to celebrity trainer, nutritionist and NutriFit co-founder Jackie Keller to find out how to exercise with your honey, what’s it’s *really* like to work with the stars and how to avoid that dreaded holiday weight gain.

When it comes to working out with your sweetheart, Keller believes that success varies from couple to couple. There are numerous ways to approach your joint workout routine. “Some strength training requires that couples work together: one lifts, while the other spots,” she says. “Additionally, many runners prefer to run with company to make the time pass more easily. There are also a lot of stretches that are better done with assistance.”

She adds, “One thing we know for sure is that those who exercise with support and encouragement from significant others – friends, family or lovers – do better overall in achieving their goals.”

Of course, if you exercise with your boyfriend or girlfriend, it’s important to remember that men and women should train differently. Even if you have the same objectives, your bodies will respond to cardio work and toning moves in unique ways. Of this dissimilarity, Keller shares, “With women, I will usually work on the process as much as the result. With men, it’s usually the result that overrides any concerns about the process.”

**Related Link:** [QuickieChick’s Video Dating Tips: Why Hating Your Body is Destroying Your Love Life](#)

Keller, a licensed and certified wellness coach, nutrition educator and Le Cordon-Bleu-trained culinary expert, has worked with celebrities such as Angelina Jolie, Charlize Theron and Penelope Cruz. She has also trained celebrity couples including Zach Braff and Taylor Bagley, Eric Winter and Roselyn Sanchez, and Jake Gyllenhaal and Reese Witherspoon (before they split). Speaking about her experiences working with these famous twosomes, she says, “I have no complaints about our couples. They have been uniformly delightful. I think that having the support and participation from their significant other helps both of them with the process.”

Given that celebrities need to look good for their job, they can tap into a deep level of determination that everyday people have a harder time grasping. “The public does not cut celebrities any slack, and they knew it when they chose that professional path,” Keller explains. ‘They don’t fight the need to look good – they accept it and embrace it as part of the package.’”

Lately, we’ve all taken note of Matthew McConaughey’s extreme weight loss for the upcoming film ‘The Dallas Buyer’s Club.’ According to a recent news spot on ‘Good Morning America,’ he has lost nearly 25 percent of his total body weight. Despite the medical risks that come with this drastic weight loss, Keller believes that there is a healthy way to make these changes. She cites Anne Hathaway, who trimmed up for ‘The Dark Knight Rises’ by eating NutriFit meals three times a day for nearly a year, as an example. “She looked fantastic!,” Keller says. “It can be done without compromising health or delicious meals.”

Perhaps we can avoid any unwanted holiday weight gain by taking a cue from the stars. Keller recommends that you look to exercise as one of your must-do daily tasks, like brushing your teeth and showering. As far as diet is concerned, she says to eat a good breakfast, no matter what your dinner plans entail. “There is no such thing as ‘saving’ calories to enjoy later,” she says.

**Related Link:** [How to Find Love Amidst Holiday Crazy](#)

Keller also suggests that you wear snug-fitting clothes, especially at events with a buffet meal, because you’ll eat less if your waistband is tight. And, of course, Keller says you should be aware of how much alcohol you consume, as “drinking uses up calories in a non-nutritive way and loosens up your inhibitions so that you’re far more likely to eat badly.”

When asked what food she *does* enjoy during the holidays, Keller says that she is a fan of “seasonal favorites,” like persimmons, tangerines, oranges, spinach, swiss chard, collard greens and grapefruit. For specific ideas, you can check out the recipe section of Keller’s blog at [www.Nutrifit.wordpress.com/recipes/](http://www.Nutrifit.wordpress.com/recipes/).

*For more information on Jackie, go to [www.JackieKeller.com](http://www.JackieKeller.com). You can also keep up with her on Facebook and Twitter.*

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## **Andy Puddicome, Author of ‘Get Some Headspace,’ Shares the Ingredients for a Perfect Relationship**





By Whitney Baker

As a former Buddhist monk, Andy Puddicombe knows a thing or two about meditation. Considered to be the United Kingdom's foremost expert on mindfulness, he founded the Headspace organization in an attempt to demystify the practice of meditation. To further this goal, Puddicombe wrote *Get Some Headspace: How Mindfulness Can Change Your Life in 10 Minutes a Day*; he was inspired by his "desire to make meditation accessible, practical and relevant to modern-day living." CupidsPulse.com had a chance to interview Puddicombe about the importance of meditation and how finding balance can lead to greater happiness and improved relationships.

**Can you define "headspace" or "mindfulness" for our readers?**

Mindfulness is the ability to be present and in the moment. Most of us have experienced this at some time, perhaps whilst watching a sunset or listening to music. The problem is that it seems to pass quite quickly, and before long, we are caught



up in lots of thinking or struggling with difficult emotions.

So we need some way of training the mind to be more familiar with the state of being present and engaged with what is happening now. This is where meditation comes in. It is simply a technique that allows us to become more familiar with this quality.

And headspace is the result of both. When we are present in life, there is a sense of being grounded; we are not easily put off balance by challenging emotions, and at the same time, we are fully aware that our thoughts do not control us. When we have a sense of headspace, we are at ease with our thoughts, our emotions and our body; perhaps just as importantly, we are at ease with those around us as well.

**For people interested in finding more balance, what is the number one technique you recommend using to clear the clutter in their heads?**

I always recommend starting with something simple. Go to [www.getsomeheadspace.com](http://www.getsomeheadspace.com) or download the Headspace App, and you can learn a classic mindfulness technique for free. It takes just 10 minutes a day, and it provides all the essential elements for learning how to step back from thought and to experience a greater sense of calm, clarity and balance in the mind.

**What areas of our lives will be enriched by daily meditation?**

When we meditate, we are fine-tuning the mind. It doesn't just change our relationship to one or two particular things; it changes our relationship to everything in life. It fundamentally changes our perception of everyone and everything. It allows us to stop projecting what we think and instead see the world for what it really is.

**Related Link:** [Get Back In the Dating Game This New Year](#)

**When it comes to love, how can mindfulness help us be our best selves and thus attract our best matches?**

Mindfulness has been shown to reduce stress, worry and anger, whilst increasing the qualities of happiness, openness and empathy. Needless to say, when we are looking for love, we want the very best of us to shine. We want to be able to let go of our impatience, nervousness and maybe even our desperation. At the same time, we want to be able to connect with our partner, to meet them where they are in life, to see them for who they are and not what we want them to be. That is the starting place for any healthy relationship.

**For someone who is still nervous and unsure about a new relationship, can mindfulness help calm their fears and give them confidence? How so?**

Absolutely. In fact, a study at University of California-Los Angeles showed that, by learning to be more aware of our emotions through the practice of mindfulness, we can reduce the intensity of anxiety by up to 50 percent.

But perhaps more importantly still, as we get to know ourselves better through the practice of mindfulness, we're able to recognize the tendency to run away from difficult situations or to get very defensive when we feel unsure or insecure. This is replaced by the ability and willingness to just stay with that uncertainty, to embrace it and allow it to be part of the journey. There is a certain feeling of freedom that comes from the certainty that nothing is certain. This, in turns, tends to have a very positive effect on the relationship.

**Related Link:** [Three Steps to Stress Free Holiday Dating](#)

**And finally, how can mindfulness help us get the most of our current relationships?**

Mindfulness helps us to be present. This means that, when we

are with others, we are actually with them rather than simply being there in person but elsewhere in our mind. It allows us the space of mind to listen to others, to understand others, to be less critical and judgmental of others. At the same time, it encourages the qualities of openness, flexibility and empathy. Most of all, it allows us to give others the opportunity to be themselves, which is the only way either person is ever going to be truly happy. If you were putting a mix together to make the perfect relationship, it is difficult to imagine a better list of ingredients.

*To purchase Andy Puddicombe's 'Get Some Headspace,' visit Amazon. You can also follow him on Twitter, Facebook and his site at [www.GetSomeHeadSpace.com](http://www.GetSomeHeadSpace.com).*

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## **Giveaway: The Best Celebrity Fragrances of 2012**





*This post is sponsored by Elizabeth Arden.*

By Whitney Baker

While the season of gift giving is upon us, it is also the season of stress and crowded malls and last minute shopping. With the endless options of presents, how do you ever decide what to get your sister, best friend and co-worker? One idea – something that is unique and smells good to boot – is purchasing a new perfume. With that thought in mind, we decided to round up the best celebrity fragrances of 2012 – and hopefully help you out with some of your holiday shopping. Plus, two lucky CupidsPulse.com readers will win a bottle of Wonderstruck by Taylor Swift!

**1. Girlfriend by Justin Bieber:** It's no surprise that the pop superstar's first scent, Someday, was the biggest celebrity fragrance launch in history. The name of his second fragrance, which debuted in June of this year, captures a dream-come-true for so many of his fans: to be Justin Bieber's girlfriend.

Perfect for the Belieber in your life, Girlfriend combines fruity notes of mandarin and blackberry with exotic scents of pink freesia and star jasmine, topped off with vanilla orchid and luminous musk.

**Related Link:** [Extravagant Celebrity Gifts Within Reach of Your Budget](#)

**2. FAME by Lady Gaga:** Of course, this musical sensation makes sure everything she does is one notch above the rest – and the development of her first fragrance was no different. FAME is the first-of-its-kind black Eau de Parfum: using fluid technology, it is black in the bottle but invisible once airborne. Created with her little monsters in mind, it smells of belladonna, incense and apricot and empowers its wearer with its mysterious scent.

**3. Pink Friday by Nicki Minaj:** Nicki Minaj partnered with Elizabeth Arden for her debut fragrance, named after her ‘Pink Friday’ album and world tour. Building off of her signature sound and style, she wanted this scent to be a celebration of her life and a reflection of herself. The fragrance includes mouth-watering fruits, pink foral petals and the warmth of vanilla, musk and woods. If the smell isn’t enough to grab the attention of Minaj’s Barbz, the outrageous bottle design will surely do the trick.

**4. Nude by Rihanna:** Described as “sassy and feminine” by the songstress herself, this fragrance – the third one by Rihanna – is a sweet floral and fruity scent with a vanilla background. With a base of sandalwood, orchid and “second skin” musk, the fragrance offers a feeling of intimacy and bare skin to its wearer. The simple yet beautiful bottle design adds a touch of sophistication to the scent as well. As Rihanna said at the fragrance’s launch, “It’s subtle but makes a statement no matter what.”

**Related Link:** [Top 3 Pre-Date Primping Rituals](#)



**5. Wonderstruck Enchanted by Taylor Swift:** The newest scent in this country crooner's Wonderstruck fragrance collection, this perfume smells of creamy flowers, like peonies and white freesia, mixed berries and vanilla musk. Of Wonderstruck Enchanted, Swift says, "Wonderstruck is about that moment when you instantly feel a connection to someone, but then there's that feeling of being completely enamored – enchanted – when you know a little more about that someone." It's a perfect present for anyone who loves Swift's honest and heartfelt lyrics.

~~GIVEAWAY ALERT: To enter for a chance to win a bottle of Wonderstruck by Taylor Swift, 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 winners via Facebook when the giveaway 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 Monday, December 24. Good luck!~~

**Congratulations to Jessica Wroblewski & Shannon Pacella!**

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**Relationship Expert Kailen  
Rosenberg Shares Dating  
Advice for Finding the Love  
We Deserve**



By Whitney Baker

You may recognize relationship expert Kailen Rosenberg as “the love guru,” “the love whisperer” or, as Oprah Winfrey recently named her, the official “ambassador of love.” With her starring role on *Lovetown, USA* from the Oprah Winfrey Network/BBC Worldwide, she put her education and experience to the test: Oprah asked Rosenberg and Paul Carrick Brunson to transform Kingsland, Georgia, into a town filled with grace, kindness and open hearts. Of how she helped the community with her dating advice, she says, “What I look for isn’t necessarily what *is* working, but what is not. I seek out what is broken, the areas that sabotage relationships and love, and help each person to work through their pain and heal, so that they can experience the love and the partner they truly deserve.”

# Relationship Expert Shares Personal Beliefs on Love and Dating Advice

While fans await news of season two of the hit show, Rosenberg is hopeful, recognizing that viewers and critics alike enjoyed the first season. "Oprah's heart and intentions are completely pure. *Lovetown, USA* was meant to be a social experiment on love," she shares. "And it worked! It proved that, when one focuses on nothing but love, healing in the most broken places can take place."

**Related Link:** [How to Find Love Amidst Holiday Crazy](#)

Of course, some heartaches are easier to mend than others. As viewers saw on *Lovetown, USA*, the relationship expert was tasked with helping two single dads find love. She approached it much like any other match. "What matters most is this: Is the person kind? Is he emotionally healthy and ready for love?"

Drawing from her own marriage, Rosenberg understands how tricky it is to find a partner that is a good fit for both you and your children. "My husband (who had never been married and had no children) is an amazing stepfather. We have a blessed family because of his genuine care for himself, me and my sons," she says. "It all depends on the values of the two people coming together."

As for how to know when you've found a relationship to last lifetime, Rosenberg believes that it's just a feeling. She elaborates on this love advice and shares, "When you meet your soul mate, there's something inside of you that's different; you can't explain it. There's a piece of your new partner that challenges you to become a better human being. You grow and love more deeply because of that experience with each other."

Rosenberg, a master's-level certified life and love coach, is a successful matchmaker both on and off the show. She's helped

over 400 couples find each other and credits this accomplishment to “teaching people to love and know themselves authentically and to heal what needs to be healed *before* getting into a relationship.” Expanding on this idea further, she explains, “When people are able to listen to their inner voices and are fully aware, they make for better partners and create better relationships and better marriages.”

**Related Link:** [E!'s Newly-Engaged Ashlan Gorse May Head Back to France for Wedding to Philippe Cousteau Jr.](#)

## **Kailen Rosenberg Talks Relationships and Love and Her Next Project**

While Rosenberg's impressive success rate may suggest otherwise, many people are choosing to remain single rather than look for love. In fact, the Census Bureau statistics show that more than 44 percent of adults 18 and over are unattached. Even so, she isn't deterred; she even views this number as a positive thing. “Younger people want to take their time and are more sincere about love and marriage, wanting something different than generations before,” she says. “As much as people want to believe in marriage, I think they are more afraid.”

She then adds, “The good news is that they rarely give up on love, wanting to believe that it can still be real and wonderful.”

As for what's next, Rosenberg doesn't plan to slow down anytime soon. She is currently working on a book, which will be released by Simon & Schuster in fall 2013, and tells us, “It will focus on teaching both singles and couples how to find and experience real love.” Additionally, she has received offers to do her own television show to further teach people

about love.

Even with her credentials, the dating expert knows just how difficult it can be to find love. For single women and men looking for a relationship, she offers this advice: "Know what is absolutely amazing about yourself, but don't be afraid to look at what isn't so lovely and great. Work on healing it and getting to a great place from within, so that when you find love, you can give and receive it at its fullest."

*For more information about Kailen, please visit [TheLoveArchitects.com](http://TheLoveArchitects.com). You can also follow her on Twitter at [@KailenRosenberg](https://twitter.com/KailenRosenberg).*

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## **E! 's Newly-Engaged Ashlan Gorse May Head Back to France for Wedding to Philippe Cousteau Jr.**



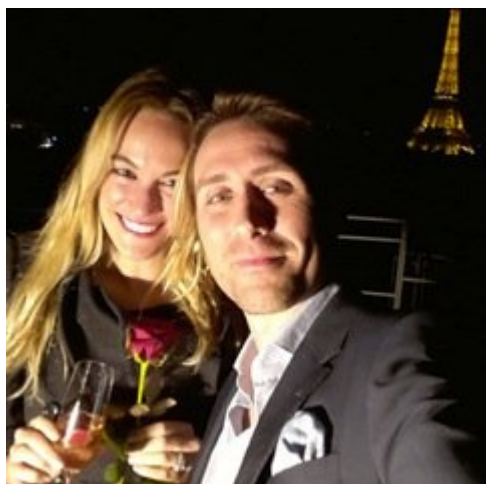




By [Whitney Baker Johnson](#)

You may recognize Ashlan Gorse as a correspondent and fill-in anchor on E! News or the new face of Murad Skincare, but lately, she's jumping into a different role: fiancé. Last month, her boyfriend of two years, Philippe Cousteau Jr., proposed on top of the George V Hotel in Paris.

"I was totally surprised!," Gorse says of the romantic proposal. "Our friend, Jeff Leatham, is the artistic director for the hotel, and he decked out the roof with candles and flowers. Just before the stroke of 10 p.m., Philippe snuck me up there and proposed while the Eiffel Tower sparkled in the background."



Of course, the famous landmark wasn't the only thing sparkling that night. Cousteau popped the question with an engagement ring he designed with the help of jeweler Jorge Adeler. Considering how shocked she was at the proposal, Gorse had no input when it came to her ring. However, Cousteau did keep her opinion in mind. "I had shown him a vintage oval ring that I loved a while back," she shares. "He used that ring when designing mine but made it his own."

She adds, "Honestly, it's more beautiful and more perfect than any ring I've ever seen."

The couple met in 2010 at an environmental event where Cousteau was giving a speech. Gorse knew right away that they had something special. "I called my sister the next day and told her, 'I think I just met the man I'm going to marry.'"

**Related Link:** ['I See Your Soul Mate': Sue Frederick Discusses How to Find the Love of Your Life](#)

Given their successful careers and busy schedules, they've had to make an effort to ensure that they get to spend time together. Of their long-distance relationship – Gorse has to be in Los Angeles during the week, and Cousteau often travels for work – the entertainment journalist says, "It's not always easy, but you make it work. Philippe always comes home to me in between expeditions, speeches and meetings, and we are usually together two or three weeks each month."

Keeping a long-distance love going can be challenging, but

Gorse believes that “if it’s meant to be, you’ll make sacrifices to see each other.” When she and Cousteau are apart, they talk, text and e-mail all day long – “unless, of course, Philippe is off somewhere like the Arctic.”

When they’re lucky enough to be in the same place, they always make time for just the two of them. “Philippe is the most romantic person I’ve ever met or even heard of!,” Gorse shares. “Our favorite nights are at home, cooking together or sitting in the backyard with our dog.”

Her go-to date with her fiancé is just as low-key as those relaxing nights at home: a simple picnic, something they can do “on the beach, in the hills or just around the corner.” She’s even got a menu planned: two really good cheeses, apples, radishes, cherry tomatoes, grapes, a baguette, butter and salt along with a half bottle of white wine and a half bottle of red wine.

“It doesn’t really matter where we are as long as we’re together,” she adds.

Now, in their limited time together, they have a wedding to plan. They’ve started to kick around some ideas: “We want to get married in France at a vintage estate. We want to have a fun three- or four-day party with our family and friends and lots of great wine.”

We all look to celebrities for ideas and inspiration – especially when it comes to weddings – and given her line of work, Gorse is no different. She thinks Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds as well as Natalie Portman and Benjamin Millepied did a great job of making their big day personal, something that she hopes to emulate with her own wedding. “I really want to make the day about me and Philippe, so we are going to make everything as meaningful as possible to us and our guests.”

**Related Link:** [Why Fans Are Obsessed with the Love Lives of Celebrities](#)

While it's easy to get caught up in craziness of their daily lives or the many details of wedding planning, Gorse keeps what is most important in mind. "We both know how truly blessed we are to have found each other, and we cherish every moment we have together, especially the little ones," she shares.

*You can catch Ashlan Gorse on E! News or keep up with her on Twitter at @AshlanGorse and Facebook.*

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## **Giveaway: Spice Up Your Date Night with Booty Parlor!**





*This post is sponsored by Booty Parlor.*

By [Whitney Baker](#)

Your weekly date night with your man is here again, and it's your turn to plan something. To keep your relationship from getting stale, you decide to spice things up – after all, you can only go on so many dinner and movie dates. But where do you even begin? How can you surprise your honey without blowing your budget?

Look no further than [Booty Parlor](#), America's premier sexy lifestyle brand. Built on the premise that confidence is the sexiest thing a woman can have, this company sells award-winning products such as pheromone-laced perfume, aphrodisiac lip-glosses and kissable body toppings. Ultimately, Booty Parlor wants every woman to feel sexy and satisfied.

Founded by married couple Charlie and Dana B. Myers in 2004, Booty Parlor products are sold in many boutiques and hotels as



well as online. Not only will Booty Parlor products make for a fun and romantic date night, but they will help enhance your relationship and improve your connection to your man.



Lucky for you, one CupidsPulse.com reader will win a Booty Parlor gift set including the following items:

- ‘The Official Booty Parlor Mojo Makeover: Four Weeks to a Sexier You’
- Flirty Little Secret Firming Cream with Pheromones
- Flirty Little Secret Firming Bronzer with Pheromones
- Flirty Little Secret Luminizing Body Butter with Pheromones
- Flirty Little Secret Perfume Oil with Pheromones
- Kissaholic Aphrodisiac Plumping Lip Gloss (in Swoon)
- Skin Honey Kissable Body Topping
- Don’t Stop Massage Candle
- Romantic Rendezvous LoveKit

**GIVEAWAY ALERT:** ~~To enter for a chance to win a gift set by Booty Parlor, go to our [Facebook](#) page and click on the “like” button. Then, leave a comment under our Booty Parlor giveaway post and let us know that you want to enter the contest. We will contact the winner via Facebook when the giveaway is over, and he or she will have three days to respond back with his or her contact information. The deadline to enter is 5:00 p.m. EST on Monday, November 26th. Good luck!~~

Congratulations to Leisa Allen for winning the Booty Parlor gift package!

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## Help Your Pet Make a Good First Impression On Your New Partner with Comfort Zone® Products



*This post is sponsored by Comfort Zone® products.*

By Whitney Baker

You're ready to have your new man over to your place for the first time, but there's one big (and furry) problem: your sweet but very-protective St. Bernard doesn't warm up to strangers easily. Rather than take out his uncomfortable and uncertain feelings on your guests, he usually chews up a few pairs of shoes and barks until the neighbors call to complain. You understand that pets can get stressed when their environment changes – and an unfamiliar person in their territory is certainly a big difference.

Lucky for you, Comfort Zone® products help reduce stress-related behavior in dogs and cats by mimicking their natural pheromones and allowing them to feel calm and comfortable. The products are 95% effective at reducing scratching and urine marking for cats, and also help reduce excessive barking and chewing in dogs.

[Comfort Zone® with D.A.P.®](#) (Dog Appeasing Pheromone) products for dogs helps control excessive barking, destructive digging, chewing and house soiling – leaving you with plenty of time to entertain your boyfriend on his first (and hopefully not last) visit. Plus, Comfort Zone® products will help your four-legged friend make a better impression on your partner.

In addition to helping your dog or cat feel comfortable with your new man, Comfort Zone® products can help manage stress-related behavior in your pet caused by thunderstorms and loud noises such as fireworks as well as transitions such as moving into a new home, being left alone more frequently or traveling.

Comfort Zone® products are available at pet specialty stores including PetSmart and PetCo, independent pet stores and online. You can learn more about Comfort Zone® products at [www.petcomfortzone.com](http://www.petcomfortzone.com) or on their Facebook page.



# Giveaway: Stand Out From the Crowd with Posh Life Bling! Celebrities Love It, So Will You!



*This post is sponsored by Posh Life Bling.*

By [Whitney Baker](#)

You've been trying to catch the eye of your cute co-worker for weeks. You know the two of you would hit it off, but you can't seem to get his attention. One day during lunch at a nearby park, as you're playing on your cell phone to give yourself a much-deserved break from your stressful day, he suddenly starts walking your way! You wonder what finally grabbed his attention...and then you notice the light reflecting off of your phone case from [Posh Life Bling](#).

Thanks to Posh Life Bling, you can accessorize your phone with a custom crystal case that will make it – and you! – hard to miss. Posh Life Bling was created for the girl who loves to shine and stand out in the crowd. They say the phone you carry is an extension of your personality, so why not make your phone a creative reflection of your uniqueness?

In addition to their popular phone cases, Posh Life Bling sells crystal laptop covers, home phone covers, camera cases and more. Posh Life Bling has created custom designs for celebrities including Beyoncé Knowles, Khloé Kardashian, Jessica Alba and more. Plus, their products have been featured on television shows such as 'Project Runway.'



Khloe Kardashian.  
Courtesy of Posh  
Life Bling.

One CupidsPulse.com reader will get to choose one of the three



fabulous designs for an iPhone 4 or 4s, as seen above: Tamra's Cross, Lavish or Gretchen's Peacock. With a custom case from Posh Life Bling, you'll never have to worry about capturing your crush's attention again.

~~GIVEAWAY ALERT: To enter for a chance to win a Posh Life Bling case for your iPhone 4 or 4s, go to our [Facebook](#) page and click on the "like" button. Then, leave a comment under our Posh Life Bling giveaway post and let us know that you want to enter the contest. We will contact the winner via Facebook when the giveaway is over, and he or she will have three days to respond back with his or her contact information. The deadline to enter is 5:00 p.m. EST on Monday, December 10th. Good luck!~~

Congratulations to Lynette Barbieri!

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## Wolfgang Puck of 'Top Chef: Seattle' Says Taste Is the Most Important Part of Cooking for Your Loved Ones





By Whitney Baker

Fans of reality television will recognize world-renowned chef and restaurateur Wolfgang Puck. Not only was he responsible for the food served at the infamous wedding of Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries (filmed for 'Keeping Up with the Kardashians'), but he has also appeared as a guest judge on previous seasons of 'Top Chef: Las Vegas' and 'Top Chef: New York.' And now, Puck is excited to join the tenth season of the cooking-competition series in Seattle as a permanent judge alongside Tom Colicchio, Gail Simmons, Hugh Acheson and longtime friend Emeril Lagasse with Padma Lakshmi returning as host.

This season of 'Top Chef: Seattle,' which premieres on Wednesday, November 7th at 10 p.m. EST on Bravo, focuses on the contestants going back to the basics, something that Puck considers incredibly important when cooking. "I really believe that cooking to learn the foundation is the most important part," he shares.

As for this season's 21 chef'testants, Puck says, "I saw that there were a lot of talented people who did great dishes, but a lot of them also lacked fundamentals."

Having a strong foundation of cooking skills can also come in handy when preparing a dish for your significant other. When cooking a meal for your partner for the first time, Puck recommends preparing something you feel confident cooking, "not something completely new where you are unsure of how many minutes you have to cook it or if the seasoning tastes good or if the combinations of spices and herbs are just right." Additionally, it's important to buy the best quality ingredients and to keep it simple.

**Related Link:** [Tips to Keep Things Exciting with a Date Night at Home](#)

Now that you've chosen the right ingredients and a simple recipe that you know how to cook, how do you know if what you've prepared is a hit or a miss? "I tell all of my young chefs – and everybody in the kitchen – that the most important thing for a chef is to taste," Puck explains.

Another cooking lesson that ranks high in Puck's opinion? Learning from your loved ones. After all, the chef began cooking professionally at age 14, and before that, he spent time in the kitchen with his mother, who was a chef in the Austrian town where Puck was born.

Growing up, Puck's mother followed the farm-to-table ideology that is sweeping across America's restaurants, and as the chef shares, it was totally logical at the time. "You know, we went outside into the garden, picked the vegetables and made a vegetable soup" – a statement that reiterates the high importance that Puck places on knowing basic skills in the kitchen!

**Related Link:** [Date Idea: Turn Up the Heat in the Kitchen](#)

Of course, Puck has come a long way since then, having changed the way Americans approach the art of cooking by combining classic French and Asian techniques. Though he's sitting at the judges' table now, Puck can't help but look back and consider how a young Wolfgang would've done on 'Top Chef': "I think I would have done pretty well because I always had good instincts about food, and I was always very clear about using great ingredients."

Even so, the playing field was quite different when he first entered the scene. "At that time, you didn't have as many talented young chefs who worked really hard and were really good at it."

Considering the changing culinary landscape, none of this season's contestants reminded Puck of a younger version of himself; however, that's not to say that they didn't impress him. Offering a glimpse at the upcoming season, he shares, "There are a few contestants who actually had their own ways. You know, there are so many chefs who can execute great recipes, but there are very few who actually have their own ideas for those great recipes."

"When somebody is a 'Top Chef' winner, you almost expect them to have their own ways and their own ideas – and then execute them perfectly," he adds.

*Be sure to tune in to this season of 'Top Chef: Seattle,' which premieres on Bravo on Wednesday, November 7th at 10 p.m. EST. For more information about Wolfgang Puck, you can visit his official site at [www.WolfgangPuck.com](http://www.WolfgangPuck.com).*

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# He's Texting His Ex: Should You Be Worried?



By Whitney Baker

When it comes to your boyfriend and his ex, be sure not to let your own insecurity and jealousy make you crazy with worry. If you trust your boyfriend, you should trust him until he gives you reason not to – and texting his ex may have a perfectly acceptable explanation. Did they remain close after they broke up and before you came into his life? Do they share the same group of friends and often hang out in groups? Does he always tell you where they're going and what they're doing – and even invite you too? If so, you may need to accept her



role in his life and not let it ruin your own relationship with him.

Of course, there are a few situations that warrant your worry. If any of the circumstances below sound familiar, it may be time to have a heart-to-heart with your boyfriend about his ex and their texting habits.

**Related Link:** [3 Times in Your Relationship When It's Better to Be Safe Than Sorry](#)

**1. He is often unreachable or cancels your plans without a good excuse.** Honesty and good communication are two markers of a strong relationship. If your partner is being completely open with you about his friendship with his ex, then you have no reason to worry. However, if he starts to hide details about their time together or acts elusive about his activities, it may be time to have a chat.

**2. He seems distant and uninterested in your relationship.** Regardless of your boyfriend's ex (or exes), your relationship should be his number one priority. Sure, he once loved her, but that doesn't give him the license to forget about the special connection that you share. If you're starting to feel like the third wheel, remind your guy of how great you are together: surprise with him a home-cooked meal and nice bottle of wine, and over dessert, let him know that you feel like you're drifting apart and want to do whatever it takes to keep that spark alive. Maybe a gentle reminder from you will keep his ex off his mind – and his list of texting buddies– for good.

**Related Link:** [Is Dating Your Ex Off Limits?](#)

**3. Your friends have started to notice his interest in her and have expressed their concern.** It's understandable that you don't like when a third party butts his or her head into your life and interjects unwanted opinions. Even so, when it does

happen, it usually comes from a place of love. If your friends are worried about your relationship, there's a good chance you're acting too lenient when it comes to your man's ex. After all, you want her to stay in his past, not become his present.

Before you get too bothered by your boyfriend's behavior, it's important to remember one thing: most guys are going to have ex-girlfriends. While you may not like the fact that they're friends, it's ultimately his decision. Plus, he is choosing to date *you*, so don't spend too much time worrying about *her*.

**Tell us: What would you do if you caught your man texting his ex?**

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## Pros & Cons: Splitting the Bill on a Date





By Whitney Baker

“Going Dutch” is becoming more and more popular, not only with your closest friends but also with your partner. While it’s still typical for your man to pay for your date-night bill, it’s equally common for couples to split the bill. Of course, for a special occasion, such as your partner’s birthday or an announcement of a job promotion, it’s nice to cover the entire bill as a surprise to your significant other. But other times, you may want to go halvesies to show them that you can still pull your own weight. Still, there are both pros and cons for splitting the bill on a date.

**Related Link:** [Celebrity Women Who Are the Breadwinners of the Relationship](#)

#### **Pros:**

**1. It keeps things fair and balanced.** It’s nice to feel like you’re contributing to your relationship: emotionally,

financially or otherwise. If you want to split the bill on your next date, approach your partner about it. They're sure to appreciate your effort. There are even apps like Tip Calculator Free to make the math easy for you.

**2. It shows your independence.** This is especially important for women, who still sometimes suffer from the old-fashioned notion that their boyfriends are expected to pay for every meal. Modern women are proud of their financial freedom. In fact, some women make more money than their significant others. One way to show your success to your date is by footing your half of the bill.

**3. It's just a nice thing to do.** If you're in your twenties or thirties and going out on a first date with a new guy, he's probably paid for his fair share of dates already. Offering to split the bill will defy his expectations, which could make him like you even more.

#### **Cons:**

**1. It may signal a financial problem for your partner.** What if your man is asking you to split the bill because he can't afford to pay for it? It's never good to assume anything, but if you notice that he wants you to cover your half of the bill every time, he may be hiding something from you.

**Related Link:** [Five Signs Your Partner Is Using You for Your Money](#)

**2. It makes the date more platonic.** If a guy asks you on a date, chances are, he'll take care of the bill, especially if he plans to ask you out again. However, if he offers to split it with you, he may be more interested in just being friends. Either way, it's important to make sure that you two are on the same page, so this can help you make that judgment.

**3. It takes away the "treat" aspect of the date.** When you

split the bill, it's kind of like taking yourself to dinner rather than going out for a special evening with your significant other. Sure, it's perfectly fine to go halvesies for a random pizza lunch on Wednesday afternoon, but don't let that habit carry over into Saturday night's fine dining.

**Do you think that the advantages of splitting the bill outweigh the potential problems? Tell us below.**

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## **Entertainment Journalist Francine Brokaw Talks About Tinseltown Twosomes and Life 'Beyond the Red Carpet'**







By Whitney Baker

Francine Brokaw's writing career, which spans over two decades, has taken a few twists and turns: she's focused on everything from politics and travel to celebrity interviews and entertainment news. Her new book, *Beyond the Red Carpet: The World of Entertainment Journalists*, out today, looks at the ever intriguing world of the rich and famous. Lucky for us, she shares never-before-told stories and behind-the-scenes secrets about Hollywood's hottest residents. Having interviewed celebrities like Johnny Depp, George Clooney and Tom Hanks, Brokaw knows what it takes to get these folks talking about life on and off the red carpet.

We chatted with the author about her experiences in the entertainment industry, specifically those celebrity interviews about lasting love and messy break-ups, and her advice for up-and-coming journalists.

**Related Link:** [Dating After Being Dumped: How to Avoid Messy Rebound Relationships](#)

**Tell us a little bit about what inspired you to write this book.**

Nobody really has any idea what entertainment journalists do and experience. I think when people hear the words “entertainment journalists,” they think of the hosts on shows like ‘Entertainment Tonight.’ That’s a very minute percentage of us. We’re actually in the trenches, dealing with the publicists and celebrities. It’s a totally different life than what people have in mind. Like I say in the book, Kevin Costner mentioned that our friends probably think we have these wonderful and fabulous lives, but it’s really a lot of hard work.

**Do you have a favorite story from the book that you can share with us?**

I always love speaking with the veteran actors. I love James Garner; he was just so open talking about fellow actors, like Steve McQueen (who he co-starred with in ‘The Great Escape’) and Kim Novak (who worked with in ‘Boys’ Night Out’). He brought them down to earth and told us things about them that they probably wouldn’t want the public to know. He was very candid.

Julie Andrews is always fun too.

**Can you walk us through a celebrity interview? What goes on behind the scenes?**

I usually have a list of questions that I want answered or that I need answers to for a specific article. Then, when the celebrity mentions a new project or some aspect of their personal life, you can go into further detail about that topic. A one-on-one interview requires a lot more research than a roundtable interview or press conference – you can’t rely on other journalists to ask questions that you may not have thought of.

I will say I have had to run into the paparazzi while going into interviews, and it's frightening. I feel for celebrities because these photographers are really intruding into their lives. As an entertainment journalist, I don't want to be thought of as intrusive.

**Have you ever interviewed a celebrity couple – either together or separate? Any stories to share?**

I haven't had the opportunity to interview a celebrity couple together, but I have spoken to partners separately.

I interviewed Catherine Zeta-Jones and Michael Douglas at different times, and they seemed to be very compatible. Catherine's interview was at a resort in the Palm Springs area, and she was so excited that her husband was able to come along. She said that he was probably golfing, which was one of his passions, and she tried to catch sight of him out the window. I thought that was really sweet.

I've also spoken with both Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston. I interviewed Brad right before the break-up, and he let nothing slip about their impending divorce. And then a few months later, we hear that they've split. I interviewed Jennifer afterwards, and she didn't want to talk about it at all.

**Related Link:** [4 Things Jennifer Aniston Taught Me About Love](#)

I interviewed Hilary Swank during her almost-decade long marriage to Chad Lowe, and she said how great they were together. Someone asked about the basis for their relationship, and she implied that trust and honesty were the most important things. And then we read later on that he was hiding his addiction from her. When I interviewed Chad right after the break-up, he refused to talk about anything related to his personal life.

Then there's Mandy Moore, who was so gushy about her relationship with Andy Roddick. She called him her soul mate

and told me all about how they met, how they were meant to be together. And that didn't last. It's funny to hear what people say about their relationship and then see how things play out.

**How do you approach the topic of love and relationships in an interview? How personal is too personal?**

If they happen to bring up a dating partner or spouse, that's my invitation to ask about their love life. I've had celebrities mention the great love of their life and talk about their fabulous relationship, and then they break-up a few months later. It's interesting to see what people volunteer.

For instance, around Valentine's Day, one of my friends asked Antonio Banderas, who is married to actress Melanie Griffith, if they had any specific plans for the holiday. He happened to say that their relationship was really going well but that he can't guarantee that it is forever, which I thought was very honest of him.

**And finally, what advice do you have for someone interested in entertainment journalism?**

Be prepared to do a lot of work. It's not easy; it requires a lot of preparation, research and time. It takes talent to bring information out of celebrities. Plus, it's a 24/7 job – sometimes you need to do a phone interview with a celebrity who is working in Europe; the time zone is different, but you have no choice because you're at the beck and call of the celebrity.

Also, you can't always rely on research. I read a story on IMDB about an actor saving someone from drowning, so I asked if it had really happened. He said that he didn't know where they got that and it had never happened. You have to put question marks by a lot of things that you find online and figure out if it's fact or fiction.

Brokaw leaves us with this final observation when the interview is done. "I gotta tell you, it's much easier asking the questions than answering them!"

*You can purchase a copy of 'Beyond the Red Carpet: The World of Entertainment Journalists' in bookstores and online nationwide today. You can also purchase a signed copy when you buy it from her website at [www.FrancineBrokaw.com](http://www.FrancineBrokaw.com). For more information about Brokaw, follow her on Facebook and Twitter at @FrancineBrokaw.*

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## How Celebrity Couples Celebrate Labor Day Weekend







By Whitney Baker

Labor Day weekend is often filled with beach and barbeque, giving people an opportunity for an extra day off before the summer ends. Some celebrity couples like to keep things simple as they spend time together with the sand and the sun, while others add a little glitz and glam to the usual date plans.

In anticipation of the upcoming holiday weekend, let's look back at how the hottest duos in Hollywood celebrated Labor Day last year:

**1. Partying in Las Vegas:** Stars seem to flock to Sin City for a final summer blowout. Before she was on baby bump watch, Nicole 'Snooki' Polizzi hosted a bash at PURE Nightclub inside Caesar's Palace with then-boyfriend Jionni LaValle. That same night, Carmen Electra and her former fiancé Rob Patterson hosted a party at Nikki Beach in the Tropicana Hotel.

**Related Link:** [Date Idea: Venture Out on Labor Day](#)

**2. Lying Poolside:** Other celebrity couples prefer to focus on relaxing and soaking up the last bit of summer sun. Gabrielle Union and Dwayne Wade spent the afternoon at a Miami Pool with Wade's two sons, while Dave and Odette Annable enjoyed some newly-wedded bliss before celebrating their one-year anniversary in October.

**3. Saying "I Do":** Many celebrity couples choose to [tie the knot](#) over this three-day weekend. Last year, Lauren Bush wed David Lauren, son of fashion icon Ralph Lauren, on his private ranch in Telluride, Colorado. Additionally, Mark Ronson, a well-known DJ and the brother of designer Charlotte Ronson and DJ Samantha Ronson, and actress Josephine de la Baume celebrated their wedding with a two-day celebration in Aix de Provence, France. It sounds like the perfect way to mark the end of the summer.

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

**4. Hanging Out with Their Kids:** Some Hollywood pairs opt for a more traditional route and enjoy low-key plans with their family. The Malibu Fair and Chili Cookoff was a popular spot last year: Tori Spelling and Dean McDermott took their kids, while Pink and her husband Carey Hart were there with their daughter. Also in Malibu, Nicole Richie and husband Joel Madden spent Labor Day on the beach with their two children.

**5. Working:** Even celebrities have to show up to work on a holiday once in a while. With the 13<sup>th</sup> season of *Dancing with the Stars* underway, many of the dancing duos, including Cheryl Burke and Rob Kardashian as well as Lacey Schwimmer and Chaz Bono, were spotted practicing for the next show. Similarly, Selena Gomez was in Colorado for her 'We Own the Night' tour, keeping her away from boyfriend Justin Bieber.

**What are your plans for Labor Day weekend? Tell us below.**

# Amy Laurent Tells Us How to Navigate a New Relationship and Go From '8 Weeks to Everlasting'



By Whitney Baker

Matchmaker and reality star Amy Laurent didn't realize how much she needed her own help until she began filming Bravo's

'Miss Advised.' As viewers saw throughout the first season, she quickly learned how hard it was to be open to love and how scary it was to feel vulnerable. That was the catalyst she needed to write her book, which she began working on two-thirds through filming. *8 Weeks to Everlasting: A Step-by-Step Guide to Getting (and Keeping!) the Guy You Want* isn't about getting the ring or getting to the altar; it's about building a strong foundation for a lasting relationship with your perfect person. "This book offers simple guidelines that every women needs to follow when they first meet someone they like," Laurent explains. "It's about how to change your approach to dating so you don't lose yourself in it." No one knows the importance of these parameters better than the author. We had a chance to chat with her about what rules to follow, what lies men tell and what she's learned in her search for love.

### **How did you develop your dating philosophy?**

I found that women kept asking the same questions when it came to men and the early stages of dating. I've been giving women solid advice on how to handle these situations, and they've come back to me and thanked me for everything I said. But here I am, getting back into dating myself, and I'm totally stinking at it. During the course of filming 'Miss Advised,' I realized that I needed my own coaching. Talk about a sense of urgency! It was like, "Oh my god, I need to take everything that I've been telling women to do and turn it into a handbook so I can find a guy for myself!"

No matter who we are, whether were the expert or not, we really need rules that are clearly laid out, week-by-week, about how to date men. It's the first eight weeks that are the most torturous for women!

**Related Link:** ['Miss Advised' Star Amy Laurent Says, "I've Always Seen Katie Holmes With Someone Who Is More Mellow and Chill"](#)

**In the introduction of your book, you tell women that they're in charge of their fate and they can have any kind of relationship they want. What is preventing women from finding their ideal relationship?**

Accepting less than what we deserve. There are boundaries that teach a new guy in your life what is acceptable and if you are a relationship girl or a casual dater. Your actions towards him define how he looks at you; you teach people how you want to be treated.

How many of us get excited about a guy and then start to cancel our plans with girlfriends because he suddenly calls and asks us out? That's the complete opposite of what you're supposed to do, but we've all been there. We're so emotionally invested in this guy that we've only been out with a handful of times that he has an affect on whether we have a good day or not. As women, we need to remember that we're in control. If someone isn't respecting you or treating you how you want to be treated, you get to choose to write that person off.

**You banish women from making the first move, yet so many of our male readers tells us they *want* a woman to approach them first. What are your thoughts on that?**

One of the biggest points in my book is that women should *never* initiate. You don't call or text a guy first; you don't suggest that you get together on a Friday night. You have to let the man take the male role. If you become aggressive, he's going to lose interest very quickly.

As a matchmaker, I work very closely with men, and they tell me things that I wish they would say to more women's faces. If a guy says he loves when a women takes the initiative and asks him out, he's lying to you. Any man will say that it's cool at first – it's less work when the woman comes to him. But he'll also tell you that he's never dated that girl for longer than two weeks. That's the truth.



**Related Link:** [Subtle Ways to Get a Second Date](#)

**What love lessons did you learn from filming 'Miss Advised' and writing this book?**

First, I gained a newfound respect for my clients. It had been so long since I put my heart out there, and I realized that my clients do it everyday. It's not easy!

I also learned that dating is about enjoying the process, weeding out the jerks, finding your perfect person and having fun along the way because you're in control. One of the keys is balance: you need to stay open enough but also hold the reins and pace yourself.

**Lastly, if there were one piece of advice you could give women looking for love, what would it be?**

One thing I said repetitively is that, if a guy genuinely cares about you and wants to get to know you, he is going to try to impress you – and you should let him. You really have to communicate what kind of relationship you want, and you have to stick to that.

And buy my book, of course!

*You can buy '8 Weeks to Everlasting: A Step-By-Step Guide to Getting (and Keeping!) the Guy You Want' on Amazon. Be sure to keep up with Laurent on Facebook, Twitter and her personal site at [www.AmyLaurent.com](http://www.AmyLaurent.com).*