

2020

THE IT'S JUST LUNCH
GUIDE TO DATING



Chapter 3

**Places to go,
People to See**

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Whether you're heading out for a few martinis with friends, volunteering at the local dog shelter or taking a class in feng shui, you increase your chances of meeting Mr. or Ms. Right ten-fold simply by getting out of the house and switching up your routine.

So you've gotten as far as the doorstep — now what? In this chapter we'll take a look at some of the best venues to scope out potential dates and offer a few suggestions for making the most of them if the bar scene just isn't cutting it. The goal is to spend time in places you like, doing the types of things you really enjoy. Choose activities that will put you in a position to meet people who are like you or who at least have similar interests.

Coffee Shops/Juice Bars

Coffee shops and juice bars are great locales to make new friends



(if you don't drink coffee or juice, there are plenty of other options to please your palate!). Try scoping out approachable people and if you spot a hottie, ask them about their beverage of choice or ask them for a recommendation. Once you've broken the ice, suggest a move over to the sitting area for some frothy conversation.

Classes and Workshops

Signing up for classes at the local community college or university is really a win-win situation: you're doing something you enjoy, expanding your knowledge and meeting like-minded people.

If you want to improve your odds, why not join a class? Personal development, business management, computer classes, or tennis to name a few.

If no one in the class catches your eye, don't lose hope. Once you start to cultivate new relationships, these folks will introduce you to their friends and family.

Dance classes are a terrific way to meet other singles and are a whole lot of fun. Country and swing dancing are very popular. How about learning to tango, salsa or merengue? You'll pick up some hot moves, get in shape and best of all, dancing comes complete with partners who often rotate among the class.

Health and Sports Leagues

Fitness-conscious singles invest a lot of time working out by playing sports, visiting the gym or taking fitness classes. Clubs (like a hiking club) and leagues are especially popular, and this is a great opportunity to meet athletic singles. Most of the people you meet at these places are fun. They are outdoorsy, adventurous, fit and outgoing people who love to meet others. Keep in mind that most members want to meet people who

enjoy the sport, so don't join these clubs unless you have a real interest. If you are a beginner, there are groups and classes for every level to help you master the sport.

Golf is extremely popular these days, and the driving range, clubhouse, pro shop and putting green are great places to come across potential dates. Sailing clubs are popular on both coasts and around cities with large lakes. There are also several large ski clubs around the United States and many offer their own leagues and activities.

Finally, there's always the local gym. If you spot someone attractive while working out, ask for advice on toning up your glutes or which cardio machine yields the best results. Stay alert and don't close yourself off to everyone by clamping on headphones or immersing yourself in a magazine while riding the stationary bike.

Wine Tastings and Cooking Classes

A wine tasting, gourmet dinner event, or cooking class is a great networking opportunity. Some groups organize trips to vineyards and others hold tastings in local restaurants. If you really are up for an adventure, you can sign up for a wine-tasting trip to Italy, where you're sure to find romance and travel enthusiasts. If you want to stay closer to home, call some local restaurants that are known for their wine lists and see what events they're planning. You can also log on to www.localwineevents.com, which bills itself as the "largest wine and spirits calendar in the world."

Volunteer/Fundraisers/Political Campaigns

Did you know that there are volunteer groups just for singles? In many large cities, organizations like the Single Volunteers of New York City or the Leukemia Society of America offer opportunities



that bring together unattached volunteers. This is a rewarding way for you to connect with new people who share similar values. You get to make a difference in the world while meeting people who are also giving back to the community. Search online for “volunteer groups for singles” and enter your city to find local organizations.

If you support a certain political party, you can volunteer to help with campaign efforts. Many cities have a Young Democrats or Young Republicans group. Political fundraising events or parties that raise money for charities are another great way to meet people and network. Once again, you will encounter people who share your views and you’ll build a strong camaraderie as you work together on projects.

Bars and Nightlife

Regardless of how you feel about it, the bar and club scene is still a feasible place to meet other singles. We know several people with happy marriages who met in a bar or a club, but we’ve also heard quite a few horror stories too. Even though the quality of dates cannot be guaranteed here — and it’s more likely you’ll find a one-night stand than a lasting relationship — you will socialize with members of the opposite sex, and that alone improves your chances of meeting a new love.

Going out and being social opens up opportunities, so go have some fun — you never know when cupid will strike! As long as you keep your expectations in check and don’t confuse that warm heady rush you get after a few martinis with true love, you won’t be disappointed.

Though the odds of meeting your soulmate in a bar may not be great, there are some things you can do to improve your chances.

Take time to observe people and don't allow yourself to be drawn to the best-looking person in the room. Instead, sit back and watch how that person interacts with others. Are they friendly, polite, do they seem interested or drunk? Be open and accessible. Smiling and talking to various people sends the signal that you're approachable.

Bars and clubs, above all, are excellent places to test your conversation and flirting skills, to meet different types of people and observe body language first hand. (See more on this in chapter 4, "The Language of Love.") Your choice of watering hole is vast, depending on the type of company you'd like to keep. Different breeds of the human species gather at different locales, and frequenting one of those venues will increase your chances of meeting that type. We hate to put people into types that frequent certain types of bars, but it's true!

Let's look at some of the more common establishments:

The Wine/Martini Bar

If you prefer to focus on conversation and cocktails, then the wine or martini bar is a great bet. It tends to be a quieter setting, allowing for easier dialogue.

Who you'll find there: Anyone who loves wine! Professionals, usually well groomed and sophisticated.

The Scene: Swanky

Dress Code: Business to snappy casual.

The Sports Bar

Catch a game and a buzz as armchair quarterbacks and sports maniacs scream instructions at an impressive number of TV screens per square foot and enjoy American style bar food.



Who you'll find there: People of all ages who like sports - blue collar, professional, collegiate sports fans.

The Scene: Lively, oft loud, and lots of cheering!

Dress Code: Casual

Pub/Brewery

If you like beer, microbrews, bar food and food trucks, there are plenty of microbreweries and pubs to choose from! If it's English style, expect fish and chips, shepherd's pie and plenty of good old-fashioned brews on the menu. If it's American, expect burgers, wings, and fries. At microbreweries, you'll find craft enthusiasts and an ever rotating schedule of food trucks.

Who you'll find there: Locals, beer lovers, foodies

Vibe: A hospitable crowd partaking in the "eat, drink and be merry" mentality that you'll find in any neighborhood pub crossed with the casual familiarity of locals.

Dress Code: Casual.

The "It" Spot

Ultra cool interiors gleam with modern architectural angles, plush velvet couches, plasma TVs and hardwood floors.

Who you'll find there: The A-list crowd. You may find yourself dancing next to well-connected nightlife connoisseurs and local or visiting celebs.

The Scene: Stylish, sophisticated and sexy.

Dress Code: The latest trends.