

NAVIGATE YOUR LIFE



SIMON DUNSTON

WHISK HER AWAY

Whether it's a Valentine's Day jaunt or a romantic holiday, follow these 12 steps to ensure it gets a little dirty >>>

BEFORE YOU GO

1 Good deals mean more cash for champagne. Websites such as expedia.com.au and stayz.com.au locate the best prices. Found a deal? Hop onto Google Earth to establish whether your "beachside hideaway" is actually hidden away and by the beach, as the advertisement claims.

2 In a recent survey by Expedia, the Whitsundays were voted the most romantic domestic holiday location. And it's a no-

brainer for loved-up types. But thinking outside the box could get you more brownie points. Think about what she likes to do. Is she into activities like bike riding or hiking? Or is she more into lazing by the pool and enjoying a massage? Or does wine tasting and a cosy fire to enjoy her favourite red by sound more apt?

3 Avoid being one of 30 million travellers a year cursing lost baggage. Pack light and take it on board with you. This way you'll avoid the check-in queues and bag carousel. Better half

not able to fit her shoes in a carry-on? >>> Surprise her with the getaway so you get to pack for her. In the couple of weeks leading up to the getaway, note the clothes she wears often and base your packing around that. Just don't forget to pack some sexy lingerie.

4 Plan ahead – roughly. "Don't put together an hourly itinerary, but make a couple of reservations," says relationship expert Brenda Della Casa, the author of *Cinderella Was A Liar*. "Then she has a choice of restaurants and it means you're not wandering around a strange

2 DOES SHE HAVE PATIENCE?

The same University of Texas study shows empathy and patience are vital for long-lasting unions.

"If she doesn't have these traits, then once the honeymoon period is over and she sees the 'real you' – foibles and all – she'll be out the door," says Kerner. Taking the dog, the car and the *Mad Men* box set with her.

THE TEST Hit the shops

Take her to the supermarket and see how she reacts to stressed shoppers. "How she treats others is an indication of her true nature," says Van Epp. "If she can't empathise with strangers, expect her to treat you with the same disdain later."

FAIL If the corner of her mouth curls up slightly, it's a sign of contempt, according to Dr Paul Elkman, professor

of psychology at the University of California medical school.

PASS She's mimicking the slack-jawed checkout girl's expression – and not for laughs. Studies by the Université Paris found that when we empathise with people, we mimic their facial expressions when they talk to us.

3 IS SHE FATALISTIC?

While you don't want to be dating a martyr, you do need to make sure she can take responsibility for her own actions. "If she can't face up to her own faults, every time you argue she'll pin all the blame on you," says Haltzman.

THE TEST Ask about her day

The next time she's sounding off about her lunatic boss, listen carefully. "Is she always the victim or does she admit she may have played a part in what happened?" asks Haltzman.

FAIL She's passive rather than active in her narrative. "If things keep 'happening' to her, she may be unable to face up to her own [bad] behaviour," says Van Epp. Beware: she'll expect you to repeatedly rescue her and pick up the pieces.

PASS She doubts herself. "If she questions what she did or mentions that she'll change her behaviour, this shows problem-solving ability and adaptability – two traits crucial for maintaining a relationship," says Van Epp.

4 HOW DOES SHE TREAT HER LOVED ONES?

"How she treats those closest to her predicts the way she'll treat you," says Van Epp.

THE TEST Meet the parents

"You'll see how she treats the people who love her. Parental behaviour will be her blueprint for a relationship," explains Van Epp.

FAIL You disagree with the way her family handles and resolves conflict. "Take careful note of her family's arguing style – do they sulk or scream? How similar is this to your own?" asks Van Epp.

PASS Her parents resolve differences. "It's not the arguing that kills a marriage; it's the arguing style," says Dr John Gottman, the author of *Why Marriages Succeed or Fail*. "Don't get personal or defensive." Make sure you have five positive interactions for every fight.



SEX COACH

Jacqueline Hellyer boosts your bedroom know-how

Q *When receiving oral sex from a girl for the first time, what is the most chivalrous procedure at the "moment of truth"? Should I warn her? Withdraw? Tell her I'm going to aim for her breasts? Is there anything particularly offensive that I should avoid?* – BL

A It depends. If it's one of those wild and random just-met-in-the-nightclub type blowjobs, then go for it, just don't ruin her dress. If it's someone you've got to know, then ideally you'll already have asked what turns her on in the to-swallow-or-not-to-swallow department.

But if you're not sure, let her know as you approach the point of no return, then ask if she wants you to pull out. She can always nod or shake her head without interrupting the flow. If it's withdraw and she's naked, then breasts should

Q *I am a 28-year-old bloke who was a virgin until recently when I met a great girl. But since meeting her, I can't get a proper erection, even when going solo. Is it just nerves or should I get myself checked out?* – DK

A If it's only started happening since you lost your virginity then it's probably nerves. If you found the first time anxiety-producing, which is normal, and that meant your erection was less than firm, then chances are you're suffering from ongoing performance anxiety so that any sexual act, even solo, is causing the same result.

The best solution is to lower your expectations and relax. Rather than thinking about your performance and how well you're doing or not – and what she's feeling or not – just relax and enjoy the sensation of her body (or your own).

It's not just about the penis. Focus on the play and the pleasure, not the performance. Spend plenty of time on touching, kissing and playing rather than intercourse, so that you're relaxed and happy, and your penis will probably do its thing just fine.

Jacqueline Hellyer is a sex coach and author (jacquelinehellyer.com). Got a question for her? Log onto yahoo7.com.au/menshealth.