

## Romance to the Rescue

I (Pam) love themed dates. In *10 Best Decisions a Couple Can Make*, we share some ideas from our readers and audiences as well. Here are a few themes to consider:

***Always and Forever:*** One man wanted to comfort his wife when her parents divorced, so he took her out on a date where the theme was “Always.” He filled the living room with helium balloons, and on the bottom of each was the word “Always.” Over dinner he gave her an inscribed bracelet with the word “Always” on the front. On the back he had inscribed their wedding date and “’til death do us part.” He danced with her to the song “Always and Forever,” and they watched the movie *Always*. By the end of the night she was sure he would always be there for her.

***Love Lifted Me:*** Another man created a thank-you date where he and his wife relived some of the best moments of their marriage. With each part of the date, he gave her a thank-you card with a puzzle piece inside. As the date progressed, the puzzle was a picture of a hot-air balloon. The last thank-you contained the directions to a field where a hot air balloon awaited them. The words “Your love lifted me higher” were penned on the card.

***Memory Lane:*** We often encourage couples to revisit their firsts: the first place you first met, the location of your first, “I love you,” the place you first kissed, the spot you had your first date, the destination you honeymooned. Nothing is more effective in sparking your love again than to realize what you have invested in the relationship. Having a date of firsts ensures you this won’t be your last!

***Yew- Haw!*** This is a “Yahoo! Do I love You!” getaway our sister-in-law gave Pam’s brother, Bret, as a birthday present. Bret is a real cowboy. He doesn’t simply dress the part; he actually ropes, brands, and drives cattle, but only on the weekends. During the week, he works in the oil industry, but his dream was to one day own a ranch and be a full-time rancher. As a gift to her midlife man, his wife took him to the national rodeo finals. They wore boots and shopped in all the cowboy booths. They ate down-home food every night and listened to country music on the radio—and a few years later the dream came true—he is now a rancher!

***Pacific Rim:*** Pam had to travel to Japan to speak to leaders, pastor’s wives, and missionaries, so while she was there she gathered up the makings for a dream date, Tokyo style. She brought home traditional Japanese music, a Japanese paper lantern, and a set of his and hers kimonos. She greeted me in the airport by placing a Japanese coin in my front trouser pocket and whispered in my ear, “Have I got a *yen* for you!”

**Superman/Wonder Woman:** One date, Pam wanted to thank me for putting her through college (she took a break from school during my undergraduate and graduate education and while we started our family). One of her nicknames for me is “My superman” so on this “You are my hero” date, she gave me gifts of all my favorite things. She wrote a feature article, complete with a picture titled “World’s Best Lover.” (You’ll never see that article in print because it hangs in the privacy of our bedroom.) She gave me my own star on our walk of fame (inside the star was a tie tac with the word that I am known for saying when I am preaching or teaching and I come across something I get excited about: “Wow!”). And of course she gave me everything with the Superman logo she could get her hands on each with a note of times I rescued her.

**Little Bit of Heaven:** By far, our most memorable romantic date was one that was almost a complete disaster. It certainly didn’t start out a disaster. I received a card in the mail that said, “Our love was made in heaven! Can’t wait to see you tonight!” I came home and all the kids had mysteriously vanished. Pam had arranged for them to spend the night at friends. She gave me some of my favorite snacks and some coffee. Then she disappeared with an, “I’ll be back in a moment to get you” as she floated into our room.

Well, “just a moment” became quite a long while. As time ticked by, I began to debate how I should handle this: *Do I go into our room and risk messing up some surprise Pam has dreamed up for us? No—too high a risk of ruining the mood. How long do I stay here? If I don’t go in and see if I can help, will she think I’m lazy and insensitive as I sit here eating chocolate and drinking my coffee?* Fortunately as I debated these “no win” options in my mind, Pam emerged from our room. I could see candlelight and hear romantic music. On her face I read discouragement and disappointment. Not the look you want to see at the beginning of an intimate rendezvous!

She lifted me up and led me into our room. As we entered I could hear an unusual popping and sizzling noise. In the dim light I looked around and spotted several pans of dry ice and water around our room. Instantly I knew what Pam was trying to do. She was attempting to make a cloud (heaven!) in our room.

I said, “Angel”, I think I know how to fix this problem.”

I moved all the remaining dry ice to the sink in our master bedroom. I then put the stopper in the bottom and filled the sink with hot water. I left the hot water running slowly so it leaked out of the overflow. Amazingly, a cloud began to appear and rolled across our floor until it filled our room as high as the bed. We spent the night in heaven!

What has been the theme of your love? Perhaps it is “Red Hot!” or you hope it might be, in that case you will discover over 200 red-hot ideas in our book, *Red Hot Monogamy*. You might want to start this date with some chips and salsa and see how many ways you can “spice” things up! Set a date and plan something to surprise your spouse! It might be a “heavenly” memory too.