



richie's rendezvous
creative dating ideas



by Rich Whiting

Soothing Soles & Magical Potions

I have somehow managed to finagle myself into a sweet situation: every issue I get to go out on a date with a beautiful girl and stick my boss with the tab. It's a cool gig, but there are some ground rules:

- 1) I have to take a NEW girl every time – no duplicates (even if I fall in love).*
- 2) My rendezvous must give our readers creative, informative and inspirational dating ideas that can be easily replicated.*
- 3) I can't run the tab up too much (yeah right;) Through extensive research I set myself up for awesome adventures. My ultimate goal is for you to duplicate my ideas when you are looking to add a little zing and romance to your relationship. We are in this together!*

I hate to be repetitive but I would like to once again stress that it is my goal is to catapult you & your significant other off your backsides and inspire you to experience life.

With that said I have devised a plan for a perfect evening. It's something supremely soothing & indisputably enjoyable. Something everybody can do but few know about. It's just right for you and yours.

Before we get started I would like to introduce my companion for the evening. This date is sure to crack you up. Her name is Lynn Koplitz and she is a famous stand up comedian & actress. You can catch her performing at just about every major comedy joint across the country from Comic Strip Live to California Comedy Club. You can also find her on Comedy Central, HBO, *Late night with Craig Ferguson* (CBS), *Later* (NBC) or on IFC's brilliantly new semi-scripted comedy show, "Zrock", in the role of "Dina", the band's hysterical manager.

Obviously, I'm not taking my date to a comedy club; I have something much more special planned:

- One hour of detox at an underground spa where we will be receiving a tranquilizing and scintillating reflexology treatment
- A chow down at NYC's most authentic and off-the-beaten-path Asian dining jewel
- Plus a special surprise

I meet up with my hottie humorist outside of NYC's first- ever reflexology parlor. It's called Angel Feet and it's like a present from the gods. This heavenly hideaway is ensconced in the deepest, darkest section of the west village; just make sure to look in-between the brownstones & below street level.

As I exchange pleasantries with Lynn my mood is instantly elevated by her presence. It's no wonder this gal is a comedian, she is the type of woman that effortlessly draws smiles from any human being she comes in contact with. It's almost like she possesses superpowers that make you chuckle. Plus, Lynn is smoking and I'm not talking about cigarettes. I actually found her by googling "hot female comedians". Enough said.

As we enter our haven we are instantly transported into an oasis of relaxation. The atmosphere is perfectly peaceful & completely calming. Trust me, this is no typical salon. This cozy little center is utopian -like. It has just two stations consisting of massively overstuffed, super comfy, pillow-laden armchairs & pleasantly plump foot-stools. Since they service only two patrons at a time, this place is the ultimate date destination.

For those of you out of the loop here is a quick history lesson on reflexology. It's an ancient art form dating back over 50,000 years. According to reflexology devotees, each part of the body is interconnected to the nervous system through the feet & hands. Stimulating specific nerves or trigger points in the feet promotes healing



Kyo Ya - A Rare Treat



Angel Feet



The Hidden Sake Joint

throughout the body. Problems related to sinuses, digestion, allergies, back pain & stress can all be alleviated.

Lynn tells me that her hip pain is melting away as the specialist works wonders on her tootsies. Meanwhile, my reflexologist is digging, kneading, rubbing, scrubbing, & stimulating every millimeter of my hoof. We absolutely love every second of our pampering, the only problem is that our 60 minutes fly by way too fast.

Now that we've reinvigorated our soles (no pun intended) it's time to tear up the town and fill up our tummies. We jump in a cab and head to Kyo Ya Restaurant, pretty much the closest thing you will find to Tokyo in NYC. As Lynn & I descend down the stairs of this unmarked spot I wonder whether I'm actually at the right place. It's VERY easy to miss, marked only by a minuscule "Open" sign on a wrought iron fence.

The space is lush with handsome cherry wood walls, soft lighting, brick ceilings, gleaming floors & gorgeous details. We are immediately seated at one of the highly sought-after tables (only 8 tables exist in this establishment so make sure to call well ahead of time).

As we chat over sips of some of the rarest sake found on the planet, we decide to be as aggressive as alligators when ordering. Basically we are going to order items that we would never eat, including things that we have never heard of.

Lynn is hysterical as she takes charge and orders for the two of us: "We will have one marinated beef tongue, some sea urchin, 2 shrimp mousse balls, a hatta hatta hot pot, a tasting of female smelt, beef maki, a smidge of mullet roe, 1 sunfish, and about 4 more rounds of sake with a bottle of plum wine on the side." Lynn is absolutely killing me. This gal is great! We dig in and drink up!

The presentation or should I say parade of eats is simply breathtaking. Each piece of dishware is handmade and freakishly unique, as a matter of fact we never even see the same plate or sake cup twice.

As for the fare, it is psychotically fresh. You actually have to order certain dishes 3 days ahead of time as they fly the ingredients in directly from Japan (how cool is that?). For all of you daredevils out there, they even have Fugu (poisonous blowfish) on the menu, which is deadly if prepared incorrectly.

We love this place. Granted not everything tantalizes our palates, but we don't expect it to. In fact, we sometimes have to dare each other to try the next selection. But our favorite, by far, are the beef maki rice balls. It's sautéed tajima beef wrapped with ginger flavored sticky rice. Holy Smokes, this entrée is bliss to my buds; make sure to order a healthy dosage of this divine offering.

This Kyo Ya is a jewel of a restaurant; it's not a scene, it's a sanctuary. You can always tell the authenticity of an establishment by its clientele and this place is just about 100% Japanese. P.S, have fun finding the restrooms that are cleverly hidden behind the walls.

As Lynn & I are walking out she decides to drop a surprise on me. She knows about a secret sake joint located just 3 blocks away. What a perfect piece to tonight's puzzle!

But here's the twist. I'm not going to give you the name or phone number of this speakeasy; instead all that I will divulge below is the address. Best of luck finding it because if you do indeed find this gem, you will discover one of the coolest escapes around. They serve up magical Japanese potions & even allow you to write on the walls, so don't forget your Sharpies™!

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