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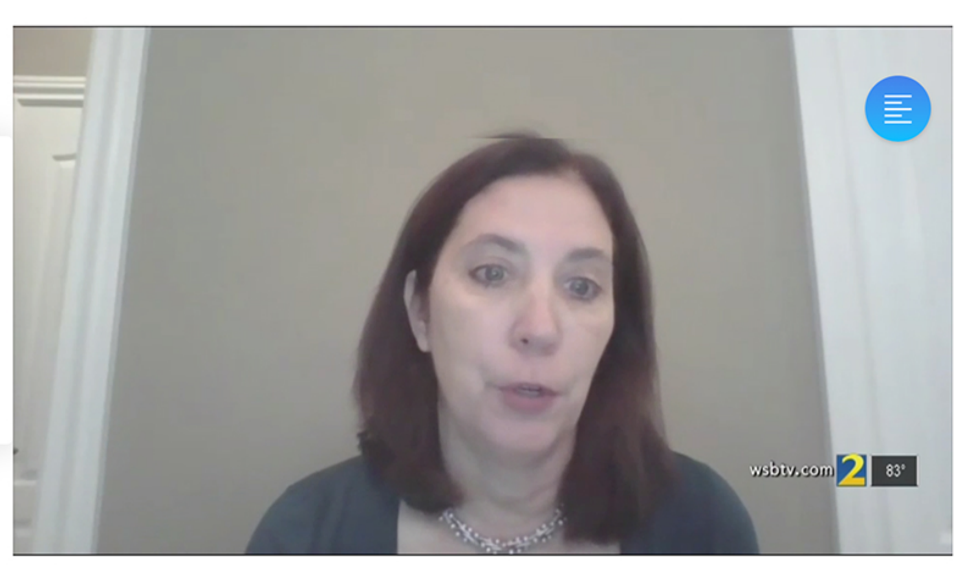
Great date ideas for people who work odd hours



PULSE | 19 hours ago

By Rose Kennedy, for The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

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While the need for social distancing removed a lot of dating opportunities this past year, vaccinations are providing the opportunity to meet people in person.

If you're a nurse who works long shifts, at night or is on an unpredictable schedule, however, lifting quarantine restrictions solves only one set of problems. You'll still have those schedule-based impediments to going on fun dates.

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Explore Pulse: a digital magazine for nurses in the Southeast

But there's good reason to try to find suitable alternatives. "Planned time together, whether for a romantic dinner or a walk on the beach, enhances your friendship as well as your emotional connectedness," psychologist Dianne Grande said in Psychology Today.

And the easing of quarantine restrictions is a good time to tap into the many relationship benefits of trying something new on date night — or date day, depending on your work calendar.

"Even dates can get old ... if you're always renting a movie or going to the same restaurant," according to the American Psychological Association blog. "Experts recommend breaking out of the routine and trying new things, whether that's going dancing, taking a class together or packing an afternoon picnic."

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And psychologist Jason Whiting advocated skipping the "Wal-Mart and dinner date." "Instead, go to a trampoline park, take a pottery class, or discuss a weepy relationship movie. Act like good friends who are creative and have a fun time building a long-term relationship," he advised in Psychology Today.

In that spirit of novelty and adventure, here are six solid date ideas, including a sample venue, for nurses in Georgia:

Hit up a bookstore

The opportunity to enjoy perusing books is back. If the intoxicating scent is a forgotten pleasure for you and your mate, or you want to see if a new date shares your love of all things literary, make a date to visit a bookstore.

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When your free time is ordinarily at odd hours, so much the better. Many bookstores by their nature cater to those who are off work on weekdays or dating on weekend afternoons.

Bookish (1188 Glenwood Ave. SE, Atlanta), for example, is open noon-5 p.m. Tuesday-Friday (an hour later on Wednesday), along with daytime hours on the weekend beginning at 10 a.m. on Saturday and 1 p.m. on Sunday.

It's an intimate place that sells new and used tomes and encourages visitors. Bookish is a good choice as people transition out of quarantine, too. It's still limiting capacity and will set up a private browsing session if you like.

Explore This is metro Atlanta's favorite bookstore

Rent bikes together

Being off work when the rest of the world is toiling away at the 9-5 is a huge asset for bike riding dates. Not only are the popular paths less populated (and easier to reach on public transportation) during the week, you may also have better luck with bike rentals.

Atlanta Bicycle Barn (151 Sampson St. NE, Atlanta) is a good place to start. It includes free helmets with rentals and opens at 10 a.m., and is convenient for a breakfast-then-bike-ride date. They don't take reservations, however.

Explore 6 of Atlanta's best bike trails

Go on a picnic

You may be far more familiar with takeout than you ever wanted to be, since that was the only game in town during the heyday of quarantine. For daytime picnic dates, though, that know-how will come in handy.

Packing your own food and going somewhere to dine is romantic and relaxing. To make it even more appealing, pack a luxury item you rarely indulge in.

Another option is getting someone else to pack the picnic for you. Serenbe General Store (10642 Serenbe Lane, Chattahoochee Hills) will assemble a gourmet selection of artisan cheeses and salads, along with wine from the estate.

You can meander around the planned community's preserved forests and nature trails, and find a meadow for supping. The general store opens at 8 a.m. Monday-Saturday and 11 a.m. on Sunday so you can use your schedule advantageously to get an early start or even do a picnic breakfast.

Explore These Atlanta sandwiches are perfect for a picnic, according to Thrillist

Take a fitness class

Both a new person of interest or someone you're sharing your life with might enjoy a shared fitness class. Many Georgia gyms and fitness centers are back to offering suitable drop-in classes.

Another date idea to consider: Hire a personal trainer for a shared session.

Sweat Equity Fitness (10 Jackson St. SE, Atlanta), for example, offers discounted personal training for couples, both via Facetime and in person, and will travel to clients in some situations. Their gym hours start at 6 a.m. on weekdays and 8 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

Explore 'Work in' with these virtual exercises from Alpharetta fitness studios

Play tennis

Men's Health recommends tennis as a daytime-friendly date for people who are still getting to know each other. "You're far apart but close enough that you can talk in between serves," it explained. "If you've been all about cardio lately, it'll come in handy."

Established couples might also enjoy a few volleys, and being available on weekday midmornings gives you more choice of courts.

Atlanta Parks and Recreation maintains a list of all its tennis courts, along with a way to make reservations via Kourts.com.

Explore Avondale Estates unveils new tennis court reservation system

Rent kayaks

A jaunt in kayaks lets you be active, do something exhilarating and still stay socially distanced.

And there are numerous places in Georgia to rent one, including several in the Atlanta metro area that launch from flatwater within the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area.

Sandy Springs Nantahala Outdoor Center (5450 Interstate N Parkway, Sandy Springs) is open daily 9 a.m.-6 p.m. It rents kayaks and, if you're feeling lighthearted, inflatable kayaks.

Explore Kayaking in Georgia: 5 spots to launch your weekend

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