

AFFORDABLE DATES

If you have the money, you don't need that many ideas. You can just buy a great date. But, many cannot do this or, at least not very often and this is offered as a way to stay active with your date life without breaking the bank.

1. **FOOD TRUCKS** – these are all over the city and provide some awesome food from everywhere and every style See <http://tacotruckscolumbus.com/> <http://streeteatscolumbus.com/> <http://roaminghunger.com/cmh/> for information and recommendations.
2. **TAKE A HIKE** – Highbanks, Sharon Woods, Inniswood, the paths along the Olentangy are great local spots. Hocking Hills, Glen Helen or John Bryant State Park near Yellow springs are beautiful for day trips. If you're near Yellow Springs grab a bite at - Take a trip to Yellow springs and have dinner at the Winds cafe <http://www.windscafe.com>. Or check out the Glen Helen Raptor Rescue. Urban hikes might include the Scioto Mile, German Village, the Short North, etc.
3. **COOK A MEAL** – What does she like to eat? Do some research; gather the ingredients & prepare a nice meal (e.g. see <http://allrecipes.com/Recipes/Taste-of-Home/Cooking-for-2/ViewAll.aspx>) for dinners for 2.
Don't spend so much time in the kitchen that you have to ignore her. Some meals can be staged over several days (i.e. prepping some parts of it) and then assembled on the day of your date.
Or, how 'bout this? Barter with someone who knows how to cook. Have them come over and prep a meal and later you can do this or something you're better at for them.
4. **MEET UP** – check out <http://www.meetup.com> or <http://upcoming.yahoo.com> You can find things that interest you there and then just show up. Also, check out <http://www.columbusonthecheap.com/12734-2/> for daily deals that might include great date ideas.
5. **WINE/BEER TASTINGS** – Many places around C-bus host wine or beer tastings. The cost isn't prohibitive and it can be a great date or a great start to a greater date.
 - Weilands Gourmet Market has beer tastings on Fridays 3-7 and Saturdays 11-6:30; Wine tastings on Fridays (call 267-9878 for details).
 - Giant Eagle Market District at the Kingsdale Shopping Center has a wine sampling station. You can get a smart card at the wine counter, put some cash on it and then sample from 10-12 different wines. See <http://www.marketdistrict.com>
 - Cafe Apropos has wine tastings every 2nd and last Friday of the month from 8-11 (2 whites & 2 reds for \$10 each). 443 W. 3rd Ave. Columbus, Ohio 43201
 - Bottles of wine are half off at Martini's on Sunday nights and I haven't found their discounted bottles to be too far over retail in price. Provide a preference and price range and the bartender will make a recommendation. They'll cork the leftover wine for you to take home.
6. **WATCH OR PARTICIPATE IN SPORTS** – If she's not into sports then this is a bad idea. Attending a professional sporting event might not be affordable but high school and some collegiate sporting events are free or cheap.
Run together, tennis, racquet ball, etc. Going to the gym together could end up more like being in the same building at the same time. It might be a good pre-date event but not a date.
7. **VISIT A MUSEUM OR ARBORETUM** – Some are inexpensive and sometimes they are free.
 - Columbus Museum of Art – free on Sundays
 - Franklin Conservatory – kind of expensive per visit but you can get a membership which would allow unlimited visits (note: there's an art glass artist on site year 'round). Also, Groupon often has half off coupons for this and other places.
 - Dawes Arboretum – take a road trip <http://dawesarb.org/>
 - Chadwick Arboretum – on the OSU campus www.chadwickarboretum.osu.edu This is free, 7 days/week from dawn til dusk.

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- St. Albans Episcopal Church in Bexley has what they call a contemplative labyrinth <http://www.st-albans-bexley.diosohio.org/>
- 8. CHECK OUT A DISTILLERY, MEADERY OR BREWERY**
- Middle West Spirits on 5th Ave. just east of High street <http://www.middlewestspirits.com/> or Watershed Distillery in Grandview <http://watersheddistillery.com/> have tours for a small cost.
 - The Brother's Drake Meadery <http://www.brothersdrake.com/> has tastings and tours
 - Rockmill Brewery near Lancaster Ohio offers tours and tastings of their Belgium Beer. <http://rockmillbrewery.com/>
- 9. TAKE A CLASS OR WORKSHOP**
- The Cultural Arts Center offers classes
 - Williams and Sonoma have free cooking classes <http://www.williams-sonoma.com/customer-service/store-events.html>
 - Check out <http://www.columbusarts.com/> or <http://www.culturalartscenteronline.org/> for art classes
 - Look at your local community continuing education classes you can learn a skill together or an exercise class
 - Make your own wine at Camelont Cellars
 - Make candles at The Candle Lab
 - Collaborate on an art project at Wild Goose Creative
 - La Chatelaine sometimes offers bread making courses
- 10. GALLERY HOP** – 1st Saturday of every month
- 11. SEASONAL DATES**
- Shakespeare in the Park at Schiller Park in the summer
 - Ohio State Fair
 - Fruit picking – apples, peaches, pears, plums
 - Festivals – Italian, Greek, Asian
 - Pumpkin patch
 - Christmas tree - <http://www.loghouseplantation.com/> cut your tree, haul it back on a horse drawn cart and toast your tootsies at the cabin fireplace afterward. BYO hot chocolate.
- 12. DAY TRIPS**
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| • Hocking Hills | • Piat Castles |
| • Downtown Cincinnati | • Roscoe Village |
| • Ikea or Jungle Jacks near Cincinnati | • The Wilds |
| • Amish Country | • Ikea |
- 13. OTHER IDEAS¹**
- Get coffee or tea (North Star, Zen Cha, Tea Zone, The Cambridge House, a higher end coffee shop (e.g. In Line Coffee, Pistachia Vera, Mozarts)
 - Plays, concerts & comedy clubs can be free or affordable (e.g. groupon). So, subscribe to a coupon site and see what pops up.
 - Walk through a book store
 - Study something together; listen to a teaching, read a book or article
 - Watch funny you tube videos together
 - Each month, send her a love note. Maybe you could include a date plan (e.g. I admired how caring you were with _____ the other day. I love being married to such a sensitive & kind woman. Let's plan on going to _____ Thursday night. I'm looking forward to it!)

¹ See Alan Burkholder's blog <http://columbusdatenights.blogspot.com/> for more ideas