

All Directions Lead to Love!

Sean works in a northern suburb of New York. Alyssa travels to Manhattan every day. Both live in Bergen County but were searching for love close to their commutes since these busy professionals spend most of their week engaged in successful careers. But when the right person comes along—whether from north, south, east or west—it doesn't matter because love changes everything.

For 34-year-old Alyssa, meeting Sean, 39, last October has added a whole new dimension to her life, which until that time was centered on a marketing career for a high-profile Manhattan financial services firm. "It gets you going for the day. Instead of just getting up every morning to a routine and going through the motions, I know I have something extra special added to my life, and that's Sean," Alyssa says.

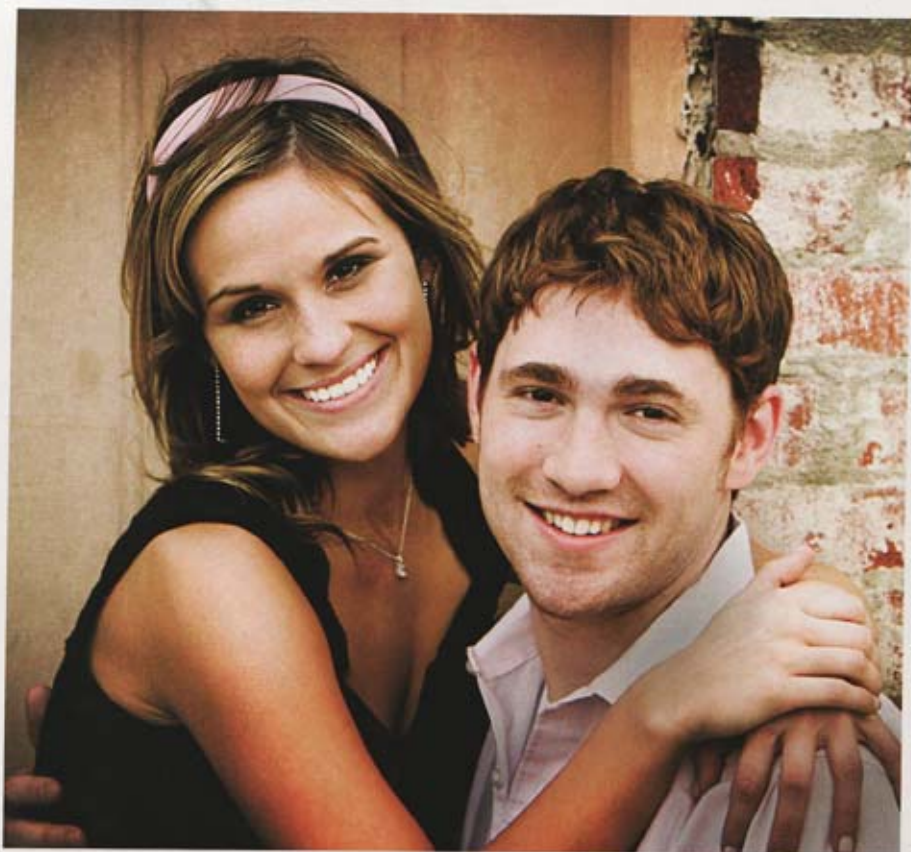
Sean, an IT consultant who was married briefly a few years ago, was immersed in building his career as well. He wanted to find a professional like himself who understood his commitment to his job. Sean felt that choosing a matchmaking service fit the trend that is occurring in

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Bergen County among successful men who don't have time to invest in a random search and want to find a quality person who is compatible. His hopes were fulfilled when he met Alyssa.

Alyssa had never attempted online dating because she preferred not to post her picture and profile on a Web site,

continued on page 54



The service caters to successful singles, ranging in age from 25 to 85, who are seeking introductions to people of similar education and backgrounds, and have a desire for a committed relationship.

choosing instead to keep her personal life private. Many of her friends were married, she wasn't crazy about the bar scene and she spent a lot of time commuting and traveling for her job, which kept her away from meeting eligible men in Manhattan. She knew the odds were slim of being "the lucky New Jersey girl who meets her Prince Charming in a grocery store or a laundry mat."

Instead, a few friends persuaded her to try a different approach: a match-making service in Bergen County called Great Date Now that uses an old-fashioned, offline, but tried-and-true method of finding a compatible mate.

"Before I met my matchmaker, I used to date people I knew from my office because they were available, but this wasn't the best of situations," Alyssa explains. "The first date my matchmaker arranged was with Sean, and we hit it off right away. It was a great match!"

It may have been a combination of perfect timing and destiny, but Alyssa's matchmaker had recently interviewed Sean and had an instinct that Alyssa would be a good match for him. A dinner was arranged at an Italian restaurant, and after staying until almost midnight, Sean felt Alyssa had the right qualities he was looking for.

"My first reaction was that my matchmaker was very accurate about Alyssa's description because she was really cute," Sean says. "I also liked the fact that she was career-focused yet she was also looking for a serious relationship."

Great Date Now's New Jersey matchmaker Georgette Carrillo conducts discreet interviews with her clients and takes the time to get to know them through a series of private meetings where she gets a sense of their personality, what they are looking for in a mate, their values, interests, hobbies and past relationships.

Alyssa says Georgette really understood what she was looking for in a partner. "I liked her honesty and her trustworthiness. I felt she truly cared about me and was with me every step of the way."

The service caters to successful singles, ranging in age from 25 to 85, who are seeking introductions to people of similar education and backgrounds, and have a desire for a committed relationship. The service conducts background checks on a client's marital status, age, education and residence to make sure the match is legitimate, something online dating can't guarantee. When a potential match is spotted, Georgette will arrange the date, right down to the choice of location and a reservation, as was the case with Sean and Alyssa.

"Basically, we do the asking out," explains Gary Ferone, Great Date Now's founder and owner, who was once divorced and spent a long time searching for his second wife, a reason for launching his company several years ago. "We try to prevent our clients from having to 'kiss the frogs' to get to that special person."

Since their first date was approaching Halloween, Sean asked Alyssa to join him at a friend's costume party, and the couple went together as a Roman God and Goddess. "I did it as a dare and she said 'great' which surprised me but it turned out to be so much fun," Sean says.

"I was nervous to meet all his friends," Alyssa adds, "but Sean is so funny that he put me at ease right away."

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Realizing it was too soon to meet their respective families but not too soon to date each other exclusively, Alyssa decided to ask Sean to join her for a romantic New Year's Eve weekend on the slopes of Vermont since they both love the outdoors, something their matchmaker had learned about them from the start. This is what convinced Sean of his matchmaker's success.

"It's great when someone actually takes the time to get to know you and all your best characteristics, because usually, when you meet someone through a friend, they might not take into account your personality and interests and it often doesn't work out."

"We haven't had a real argument yet," adds Alyssa who says Sean's easy-going nature complements her own. "I would encourage other young professionals in Bergen County to try matchmaking. It worked for me and I know it can help others."

Kathryn Moschella is a freelance journalist who has written articles on general interest topics for various regional newspapers. For more information about Great Date Now, visit www.greatdatenow.com or call (201) 735-0005.

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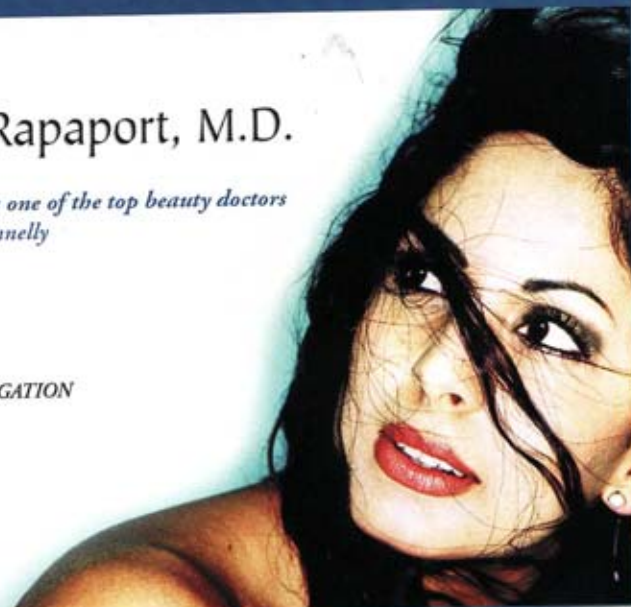
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