

PACIFIC Life's cool.

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LOVE | BLIND DATE

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GETTING THEIR AXE TOGETHER

Blind daters hurl hatchets in Mission Valley before dinner at P.B.'s newest beach club

Lethal weapons and blind dates are not often mentioned in the same story, unless that is, a sharp object results in someone actually losing an eye on date night. But let's hope that doesn't happen tonight, as we send two of San Diego's most adventurous singles on an axe-throwing adventure in Mission Valley.

Meet Carli, a sales specialist and lifelong local with an insatiable sweet tooth. She has been paired with Tom, a hospitality hotshot who's opted to wear hot pink sneakers on tonight's outing. It's a balmy Sunday in July, and the two first meet inside an Epic Limo that picks them up from their homes.

Before the couple arrives at their first destination, let's review their pre-date interviews.

Where are you from, and where do you live now?

CARLI: I was born and raised in San Diego, and I currently live here. This place is hard to leave!

TOM: Ohio. I moved to San Diego in September of 2011. I currently live in Crown Point.

What do you do for a living?

CARLI: Outside sales representative for a flooring company.

TOM: By title, director of public relations.

Why are you going on a blind date in PACIFIC?

CARLI: Because, why not?!

TOM: Wait, she's blind?

What do you do for fun?

CARLI: Travel when I can. But



when I can't, I like to explore San Diego. Farmers markets, concerts, food and drink festivals, trying new restaurants — anything that involves getting out of the house and being around good energy.

TOM: Vacation, music, cook, frolic, golf, restaurants, SparkCycle, stand-up comedy, memes, tequila. The most cliché of activities. I spend so much of my time working in bars that I like to try branching out when I can.

What are you best at?

CARLI: Socializing and being optimistic. I also make great smoothies.

TOM: Witty banter, drinking water, wearing pink, laughing, manners and being happy.

What do you suck at?

CARLI: Saying no to sweets or anything with peanut butter. Or tequila.

TOM: Sucking. But, honestly, controlling my facial expressions has always been an issue for me. 🙄

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What are you looking for in a date, physically and/or otherwise?

CARLI: Quality conversation, tall, athletic, outgoing, polite, nice to other people. A traditional gentleman.

TOM: Smart is sexy to me. Physical attraction is a must, though. Everyone (well, most everyone) in San Diego is attractive, so I feel substance and depth are what make someone stand out and be genuine.

Describe your special brand of sex appeal in five words or less.

CARLI: Can you rephrase that?

TOM: A more handsome Prince Harry. #makegingersgreatagain

What do you like least about yourself?

CARLI: Let's just say I'm in desperate need of some cooking classes.

TOM: My passion for perfection.

Rate yourself on a scale from one to 10 for looks.

CARLI: Can someone answer this one for me?

TOM: My mom always used to say, "God broke the mold when he created you." So if I broke God's mold, I'm thinking that's a 10. Or is God mad I broke his mold, and I'm

a 1? F**k, now I'm confused.

Rate yourself on a scale from one to 10 for personality.

CARLI: On a Monday: 6.5 to 7.

On a Friday: 8 to 9 range.

TOM: Well, I think I'm a real treat, but maybe my date should answer this one.

What's your biggest fear?

CARLI: Getting stuck in an elevator by myself. Also, very random, but driving in a car completely full of balloons really freaks me out.

TOM: That the ginger emoji never launches and monotony.

What traits might your date exhibit that would be complete deal-breakers?

CARLI: If he's constantly on his phone, or if he's self-absorbed and only talks about himself.

TOM: I'm a relaxed, laid-back guy, so I would hope she's comfortable in her own skin and keeps it real.

How many people have you slept with?

CARLI: Absolutely not.

TOM: I only love my bed and my mama, I'm sorry.



Fill in the blanks: I want my blind date to be "blank" and "blank."

CARLI: Handsome and intriguing.

TOM: Intelligent and funny/sarcastic.

Will the night end with a kiss, something more or something less?

CARLI: If it goes really well, I could see it ending with a phone number exchange or a second date.

TOM: A gentleman never kisses and tells.

What's the most important thing in the world?

CARLI: Top three: Family,

relationships and love. Cliché, I know, but true.

TOM: Integrity. I think if more people tried harder to do good things and set an example as leaders with their actions, the world would be a far better place. It's cool to be a good person, or it should be.

The Epic Limo pulls up at the newly opened Battle Axe San Diego, near SDCCU Stadium in Mission Valley. Carli and Tom, who've had a bit of time to chat during the ride, are quickly whisked away by the venue's staff and escorted to an area where they'll learn how to let axes fly. ➡

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LOOKING SHARP

Carli and Tom enjoy an axe-perience they'll never forget

...

Before the real fun can begin, seasoned "axe-perts" show the daters how to safely handle their hatchets, demonstrating both single- and dual-handed throwing methods so Carli and Tom could choose whichever technique works best for them. Then, it's time for the daters to put what they've just learned into practice.

The concept of the axe-throwing is similar to the game of darts, except the axes weigh a helluva lot more — up to 1.75 pounds apiece. Carli and Tom take turns throwing five axes each, competing to see who can consistently hit closer to the bull's-eyes at the opposite ends of their lanes. The antics continue, and the axe-perts keep score, allowing the daters to concentrate on their throws.

The better part of an hour passes

by, and as both daters' arms reach exhaustion, it's apparent that it's time to move onto tonight's next stop: Mavericks Beach Club in Pacific Beach. Carli and Tom get back into the Epic limo, and enjoy a drink during the drive toward the setting sun above the Pacific.

Minutes later, the limo pulls up to Mavericks, and Carli and Tom are escorted to the best seats in the house. The 15,000-square-foot multi-level venue boasts five bars, Baja-inspired fare and live entertainment every day of the week mere steps from the sands of P.B.

Carli and Tom order up a couple tequila shots, and after tossing the drinks back, we split the daters up for mid-date debriefings.

How's it going so far?

CARLI: It's going good. He likes



tequila, and I like tequila, so that's a plus.

TOM: It's going great. She's way cooler than I thought she was going to be.

What were your first impressions of your date?

CARLI: To be honest, not my type, as far as looks. But the second I started talking to him, I was like, "He's so cool." It's a little bit out of my normal dating type.

TOM: She's definitely attractive. She has a great smile. She's funny

and not shy, which is awesome.

Is this the type of person you'd normally date?

CARLI: No, but I like that I was put with someone that I wouldn't because it's putting me out of my comfort zone.

TOM: Yeah.

What do you think of the way your date is dressed?

CARLI: I love his shoes. I think his style says a lot about his personality.

TOM: She looks great. ♡



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How was your experience at Battle Axe SD?

CARLI: It was so fun. The two men that were helping us, they were awesome.

TOM: It was cool. It was way more challenging than I thought. I would like to go back and do it again because you feel like you're just getting the hang of it and it's time to go.

How is your experience at Mavericks so far?

CARLI: Service is great, tequila is great, drinks are great, the music is great. It's Sunday Funday, so it's a good vibe. Perfect place for a first date because it's comfortable and it has a cool vibe.

TOM: It's going great. Tequila, we both like tequila. I love Mavericks. We were both here last night, which is funny — we just figured that out on our ride here.

What's the most attractive thing your date has done so far?

CARLI: Tell me that I had good form. He was rooting me on, very good at rooting me on, giving me support through learning how to throw an axe. I thought I sucked, and he thought I was good and I thought that was attractive.

TOM: Smile. She has a really good smile and nice teeth.

What's the least attractive thing

your date has done so far?

CARLI: Nothing. I haven't paid attention to anything bad and he hasn't showed anything bad.

TOM: I don't think there is one. Honestly, like I said, she far surpassed my expectations.

Rate your date on a scale from one to 10 for looks

CARLI: His style makes him a 10.

His pink shoes make him a 10.

TOM: She's a 10.

And for personality?

CARLI: 10.

TOM: 10.

What's your date's most attractive physical quality?

CARLI: He's tall. That's nice. The way he carries himself, you can tell he's confident. His personality really shows through the way he comes off physically. He holds himself very confident.

TOM: She has a great body.

What's your date's least attractive quality?

CARLI: Nothing.

TOM: I haven't found one yet.

Do you want to kiss your date right now?

CARLI: No comment.

TOM: Yeah.

Does your date want to kiss you?

CARLI: Ask him.

TOM: I hope so.

How and when will the date end?

CARLI: I could see us staying in P.B. for a while and having fun. It seems like we like the same places. I'm surprised I haven't met him before, to be honest. With the pink shoes, I would have gone up to him for sure. I could see us staying here, hanging out for a while.

TOM: I think it will end well. I don't know how or when, but I think it's going to end well. If I have my way, there will be a second date. 💙

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SUNDAY FUNDAY

Daters go from hitting bull's-eyes to hopping bars

■■■



FROM TOP: Carli and Thomas ordered a variety of tacos and tostadas at Mavericks; the Shrimp Truck, which consists of cilantro lime rice, five spice shrimp, pineapple salsa and shaved jalapeños; the Mahi Mahi Tostadas come with mahi mahi, chipotle aioli, avocado, crispy leeks, pico de gallo, lime crema, cotija cheese and chives.

Carli and Tom order entrees at Mavericks, and after their servers drop off their dishes, we leave for the night and follow up the next morning to find out what we missed.

How was your experience and dinner at Mavericks?

CARLI: We had a great time. It was really fun. We got there at peak Sunday Funday time, right in time for the sunset. It was a really comfortable environment. The food was good, the drinks were good, music was good, service was good. I really had no complaints. I love that place.

TOM: It was awesome. I know a lot of people at Mavericks, so that was funny for me. But it was awesome. I had a great time. It was nice to actually sit down and eat there. That was something I haven't done before.

What did you eat and drink there?

CARLI: The question is, what didn't we eat, to be honest. We ate so much food. I'm pretty sure he ordered one of everything. We drank 1942 tequila, since we both like tequila, so that was perfect.

TOM: Shrimp tacos, a lot of tacos. A gigantic quesadilla thing. We drank some tequila, some water. The cheese sauce was really good.

Where did you go and what did you do for the rest of the evening after dinner?

CARLI: After dinner, we, as Tom would say, we "frolicked" around P.B. That was his word of the night. We stayed at Mavericks for a bit, had some more drinks. After that, we went to Backyard. And then we went down to Avenue and then we went to Tavern. We were really on the move. It was really cool because he really is Mr. Popular. Everywhere we went, he knew at least five people. I just let him lead the way. We ended up staying out until the bars closed.

TOM: We went all around P.B. We went to Backyard. We went to Avenue. And we ended our night at Tavern.

When did you get home?

CARLI: I got home at 1:45, 2. Probably around 2.

TOM: I got home at a little after 2.

Was there a kiss or romantic exchange?

CARLI: No, there was not a kiss. The closest thing to a kiss was, we took all these pictures in the photo booth. We probably spent like \$40 in this photo booth over at Avenue. We did kiss on the cheek for the pictures and stuff like

that. But other than that, just a friendly goodnight hug.

TOM: There was a kiss on the cheek.

How and when did the date end exactly?

CARLI: We stayed there until the bar closed and we were forced to leave. If they didn't close at 2 a.m., we would have stayed there longer.

TOM: Honestly, we were at Tavern, which is like my house, so we can stay there later than most people are allowed to. The employees were actually leaving, so it was time for us to go.

What's the funniest thing that happened during the date?

CARLI: He almost chopped off his toe with the axe. It was pretty close. The axe ricocheted. He dodged it really well. I was impressed. That was probably the funniest thing, only because it didn't actually chop off his toe. If it had chopped off his toe, that would not be so funny. He has all his toes and fingers, so that's good.

TOM: We laughed a lot. I think it was just funny overall, us trying to throw axes. The photo booth was also hilarious. She's very down-to-earth and very cool and normal, and I didn't think she was going to be as cool as she was.

What was the best part of the date and why?

CARLI: I really liked Battle Axe. It was something really different. I've never done anything like that, so I thought that was a really cool experience. And after dinner, the best part was bar-hopping.

We were really having fun, taking shots, taking pictures. That was probably my favorite part.

TOM: I would have to say Carli herself. She was a super fun, beautiful, intelligent woman. It was nice to meet someone new that I didn't know or wasn't a friend of a friend. I am honestly super excited to see where this goes.

What was the worst part of the date and why?

CARLI: The worst part of the date is the aftermath. So, today. And my headache, right now. Other than that, I have no complaints about the date at all.

TOM: It wasn't necessarily the worst part of the date or the date's fault, but we were trying to accommodate the photographer, so we went outside to take pictures and this group of guys swarmed to our food that we weren't done eating. So we had to have the security guard watch the food. ➡

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Will there be a second date? Why or why not?

CARLI: We did not talk about a second date. I don't think there's going to be one. But my birthday is next week and I'm doing a little birthday celebration downtown, so I invited him to that. And then we're both going to Opening Day at Del Mar, so we realize after talking that we like going to the same places, the same bars. So I'm sure we'll hang out at some point, or I'll see him out. We don't have a second date planned, but I'm sure that I'll hang out with him in the future.

TOM: Yeah, there will definitely be a second date. We get along well and had a lot of fun together. And it was nice for her to be comfortable and see me in my element. I'm super excited to spend more time together and continue genuinely laughing and having fun. I had zero expectations, and I'm shocked, but I'm happy that it was cool and fun and an awesome experience.

What's one thing your date really should know before going on another date?

CARLI: I would say for him to keep being himself. He was himself the whole time and I have no complaints. I think you pretty much nailed it. He has a great personality. I would just say to be himself and to wear his pink shoes.

TOM: Just continue to be confident in herself and who she is. That was my biggest fear, that somebody wasn't going to be themselves, and she really was herself.

What could have made this date better?

CARLI: If it was not on a Sunday and I didn't have work the next day. It would have been better if I didn't have work today.

TOM: More time in the day?

Anything else you'd like to add?

CARLI: I would definitely say Jessica is a great matchmaker. She knows personalities well, and who would get along with who. If anyone ever gets an opportunity to go on a blind date, I think they should definitely do it, because I'm super happy I did it and I feel like

you have nothing to lose by going on a blind date.

TOM: I think it was a super cool date, the idea of the axes and dinner. I think anyone should be willing to try new things and step outside their comfort zone. You never know what you're going to find. You might learn something new about yourself. Shout out to Mavericks and Battle Axe. Everyone was super nice and super polite. It was nice to be able to do something cool and different.

AFTERMATCH: A "friendly goodnight hug" at 2 a.m.? Who

knew that was even possible after bar-hopping in P.B.? So although Carli thinks this redhead is pretty in pink, it apparently takes more than a pair of killer kicks to win over this woman's heart. Maybe you'll have better luck on that second date, Tom!

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Daters' answers may have been edited for length and clarity.

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