

# H<sub>ome</sub> Town Safari

You're in the mood for something fresh and new, and your sweetie is game for exploration, and your calendar has a tiny bald spot. The stars are aligned for an adventure, but you're leaving your passport at home. For this excursion, no planes or trains required! The only hitch: you have to act like you are on vacation, and let your PDA remain MIA for a few hours. Leave the kids in good hands, and trust you'll have a ball without digital intervention.

## THINGS YOU'LL NEED:

A day to be a tourist in your own hometown

Transportation: a car, bike or walking shoes

A tourist attitude and attire

A special interest

A theme

## Start by dreaming up a theme:

**Culinary** go beyond restaurant row and seek out more unique experiences. Try a farmers market, a brewery, a bakery, a candy factory, a coffee-roasting shop or a chef's/cooking supply store. Then make a meal together using the gear/ingredients you picked up. Set the scene like a restaurant table for two: white napkins, rose in a bud vase, nice music in the background and you dressed to the 8's (you want to be cute but comfy).

**Romance** every town has a spot where the kids go to make-out. Create several of your own Inspiration Point destinations around town to inspire a kiss or two. Basically, this is a flirt fest! Under a funky motel sign, in an off-the-beaten-track part of a local park (hello, secret garden!) or in the corner of a dark restaurant you've just discovered.

**Sports** the key is to not overdo it, mix fun with physical - a bike ride then miniature golf and a cocktails at the 19th hole, or one-on-one basketball then sharing a milkshake with two straws.



## Be the tourist in your own town:

**Explore the usual no-fly zones** places you avoid because of the tourists and the tourist traps. Live in San Francisco? Okay, go to Fisherman's Wharf and take a ferry out on the bay. Live in Custer, South Dakota? When's the last time you drove up to Mount Rushmore

**Look the part, people!** Wear your dressy, comfortable clothes and sensible footwear, and have camera in hand. Or up the fun factor by pulling out the shorts, black socks and retro sunglasses.

**What about the attractions off the beaten path?** Do a little research. Ask friends and neighbors where they take their out-of-town guests. Many amusement parks, museums and concert venues offer fantastic deals to locals. Going as adults is a totally different experience than going with your kids.

**Check with the  
chamber of commerce  
They Often  
Have Coupons And List Specials  
That Locals Never Even Know About.**

**THE KEY TO GOING  
ON A HOMETOWN SAFARI  
IS BEING AWARE.**

Check out your surroundings during your daily loop (flyers, local newspaper ads, et al) then take action. Dare to do something worthy of safari status!

## Explore a special interest:

**Go green.** Visit local retailers and experts who are specializing in futuristic and ecologically harmonious technologies. Some homes and buildings are available to tour to advertise their ideas in action.

**Theater.** Just because you don't live in Manhattan doesn't mean there aren't thriving acting troupes and theatre groups in your area.

**Gardening.** You don't have to start big. A small herb and vegetable garden is a simple and rewarding start. Map out a trek to visit local growers and nurseries ... maybe they'll inspire you to start a kitchen garden!

