

Even though we're busier than ever, many couples are still making time for each other. *So Bella asks...*

## Are 'date nights' sad?



### No

'They keep the spark alive'

Sophia Ledingham, 42, psychologist and author

My husband and I try to have a date night at least once a week. I love nothing more than putting on a nice frock and going to a fancy restaurant. And I'll often take a photo of our food and upload it to Twitter or Instagram with the hashtag #DateNight.

Date nights aren't forced fun or cringeworthy. They're a time-efficient investment in your relationship.

Many couples find they're increasingly busy with work, children or other commitments, so a regular night out together ensures they stay connected, have fun and keep the spark of romance alive.

It's a special night for just the two of you.

It can be difficult with children and the idea of going out in the evening might seem exhausting but my advice is to

book your babysitter earlier than when you need to leave the house to allow yourself time to relax and get 'date night ready'.

Sometimes when you've been in a relationship for a while it's easy to fall into habits and patterns of interaction that are domestic, administrative or predictable. So we need to be reminded to engage differently, to channel our inner-Romeo and nurture a more intimate connection.

Date nights show you value your relationship, spouse and partner, and don't want to take each other for granted. Just remember - don't talk about the housework.



### Yes

'It screams of forced fun'

Amy Rowland, 29, Bella's Assistant Features Editor

Obviously, going on dates with your partner is not a new phenomenon but over the past few years a very nauseating term has reared its ugly head - 'date night'. The very words make me want to vomit.

As soon as 7pm hits on a Friday, the cringe photos of 'happy' couples start to appear on Facebook and Twitter. There they are, a bottle of vino between them, and the caption: 'Me and hubby #DateNight.'

I desperately wish there was a 'dislike' button - or preferably a 'hate' one.

Some may say they're cute but, to me, they scream of forced fun and simply say: 'We need to show the world that we're happy and still madly in love,' when the reality is they probably sleep in different beds and

hate each other's guts.

I've been with my bloke for a fair few years now.

And most weekends we go out for

dinner together. Recently, a friend asked me what I was up to one Saturday night.

'Dinner with Matt,' I said. 'Ooh, a date night!' she replied excitedly.

No, just bloody dinner!

Why do people need a term for it? Go out for dinner and enjoy! Just don't call it that sick-inducing term...



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