

Design a Date

It's a Candlelight Picnic Date!

There's something about candlelight that slows us down and gives the feeling of timelessness. Believe it or not, using candlelight also has the ability to increase eye contact.

Then there are picnics. Picnics change things up. Instead of the everyday routine of meals, a picnic lets us break our routines and do something different. There's a sense of spontaneity that also comes with a picnic.

This date blends the use of candlelight and a picnic to connect.

Set a date on the calendar. If you don't have kids, you can do this during a regular dinner time. If you do have kids, you can have a late dinner or dessert picnic after they go to bed, or you can arrange for the kids to go to grandma's or a friend's home for a few hours.

In an effort to keep both of you invested, have one spouse be in charge of the environment and one in charge of the food. The person in charge of the environment needs to provide the picnic blanket, the candles, the plates, cups, napkins, and silverware. The person in charge of the food can prepare it or do take-out.

Put away phones, turn off the television, turn on some instrumental or jazz music, and spread your blanket on the floor (in front of a fireplace if you have one!). Light your candles and enjoy a leisurely candlelight picnic date night.

Try to steer clear of discussing anything difficult or frustrating, but rather connect like you did when you were dating. Here are some possible conversation starters:

- When you think back in your life what "picnic" memories do you have from childhood/teen years?
- What about candlelight? Did your family ever use candles at mealtime or other times?
- What's your favorite picnic food?
- If we were to picnic in the park sometime, what park would be your first choice? Why?

You can also throw a game into your picnic if you'd like. Something like Yahtzee or Scrabble or even double solitaire (with a couple decks of cards) can easily be played sitting on a picnic blanket. Enjoy the dim lighting, the change in routine, the slower pace, the relaxed conversation and some competitive fun on this design-a-date!