

# How to lasso a date

## Single? Tips on what to wear and how to act during Stampede

BY MICHELLE MAGNAN, CALGARY HERALD JULY 1, 2009



Cowgirl

**Photograph by:** Rachel Niebargal, Calgary Herald

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Being single at Stampede is like being hungry at a buffet -- the opportunities are endless.

But you need to be prepared, singleton.

To help you make the most of what's left of Stampede, we spoke with Calgary-based experts to get their top tips.

Lynn Cox and Crystal McKenzie, the stylists behind Closet Surgeons, and Christine Hart, otherwise known as Your Date Coach, shared their advice for all the single people heading into Stampede.

Read up, put it into action and you'll reap the rewards.

### **When it comes to style...**

Don't treat Stampede like it's Halloween.

Too many women think of the 10-day fest as an opportunity to wear "costumes" that show as much skin as possible, say the pros.

"If you're trying to attract attention for more than just one night, there are ways to be sexy, modern and still look Stampede, without putting a costume on," says Cox.

Those ways include taking the pieces you already have in your closet -- things that are flattering and you feel comfortable in -- and re-working them for Stampede, by adding a belt or a vest, says McKenzie.

Another subtle way to attract attention is to wear bright colours, says Cox.

Women should focus on wearing feminine fabrics, like silk, and guys should experiment with their cowboy shirts and try bright-coloured, patterned ones.

Consider alternatives.

Ladies, instead of wearing the typical cowboy boot -- which is a great look, say the pros -- try wearing a wedged gladiator sandal instead.

The look works for Stampede and can be incorporated year-round.

And instead of a cowboy hat, try a trendy feather headband.

"I just got back from New York and everyone was wearing feather headbands," says McKenzie.

She suggests picking one up for Stampede (and beyond), or making your own.

Another tip: instead of wearing the usual plaid cowgirl shirt, try a dress from designer Tiffany Wollman.

She re-works old cowboy shirts and turns them into cute, feminine pieces, like dresses.

The one Cox brought as an example sells for \$80 at [Pink Sugar Boutique](#).

Unless you're a cowboy, guys, don't wear Wranglers.

Seriously. Just don't.

"Wear your hottest, best-fitting jeans," advises McKenzie.

"Men also tend to wear ill-fitting shirts that are a couple of sizes too big, which makes them look boxy," says Cox.

Avoid the too-big shirts and try a cool v-neck t-shirt with your jeans and cowboy boots, say the girls.

If you're feeling particularly brave, top the look with a cool leather cuff and/or a great necklace.

(Jewelry on men is a trend the Closet Surgeons are keen to see in Calgary.)

Finish the look with aviators or Ray-Bans -- sorry, no sporty sunglasses allowed -- and you're set for any outdoor Stampede shindig.

**When it comes to flirting...**

Don't divulge all.

"When women are meeting people in these high-energy environments and they may have had a few drinks, they don't keep an air of mystery to themselves," says Hart.

Don't immediately talk to a guy as though you've known him forever, she says.

Don't list your accomplishments, your past relationships or anything else, for that matter.

Definitely don't offer up every piece of contact info you have -- your daytime number, your cell, your e-mail and a backup e-mail, just in case -- because that seems too eager.

Wait for him to ask, because men like to pursue.

Allow a man to buy you a drink.

"We don't have to be these hard-ball women who say, 'No, I'll get my own drink, thanks.' We need to practice being gracious and receiving well," she says.

Definitely do not counter-offer to buy him a drink.

"He doesn't want you to buy him a drink," says Hart. "He wants to get you a drink and, when he delivers it to you, for you to be gracious."

That being said, pace yourself.

Downing too many tequila shots and gaining the nickname "that drunk girl" won't do you any favours.

Alternate water or soda with drinks, advises Hart.

Really be present at the party.

Too often girls lock themselves into a circle and complain about something or other, says Hart.

That won't attract many guys.

"So make a goal for yourself," she says. "don't leave until you talk to five men. It's just such a great opportunity to meet people outside of your social circle."

To meet those guys, Hart has a simple six-step process:

1. Make eye contact. Then, make a second eye contact within 40 to 45 seconds, "in order to communicate interest." Adding a smile and a small nod works wonders.
2. Move into their area, ideally around two arms' lengths away. "You want to be accessible."
3. Remove your armour. If you're holding your bag and your drink close to your body, loosen up. Your

body language should be open and inviting.

4. Say "hi." "That's it! He can take it from there," says Hart.

5. Keep your conversation to under 10 minutes. Stay too long and he'll lose that animal instinct to pursue you.

6. Be available, but not too available. When you pass him next, tell him you enjoyed chatting earlier and where you're hanging out with your crew. "Guaranteed he'll follow up with you after the party."

Don't get too serious right away.

"We've all done that, where we think we've met our soulmate on the second day of Stampede," says Hart.

"Proceed cautiously, because it's 10 days and you should keep yourself open to meeting lots of different people. Wait until Stampede is over to actually know if this is something you want to pursue."

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