

RELATIONSHIPS

May 11, 2010

KIDS IN THE CITY

DATE NIGHT IN THE CITY

My husband and I recently decided we needed time alone to just be, time to step outside our roles as mother and father, house frau and handyman, disciplinarian and bedtime enforcer. So we handed over our kids and dog to their grandparents for two nights and set out on a couples-only romp.

So here we were, free to indulge our every whim, without having to defer to our kids' needs; 48 luscious hours to reconnect to those primal forces of attraction and shared beliefs that drew us together nearly 13 years ago.

And despite what you may think, it wasn't just about reconnecting in a physical way but sharing quiet intimate moments, whether it was snuggling up on a couch watching the passionate sparring between Bogey and Bacall or laying side by side



MELISSA
CHAPMAN-MUSHNICK

getting a sensuous couples massage, sipping on champagne and feeding each other chocolate truffles.

Having time away from the monotony and sometimes drudgery of parenthood was like an infusion of new breath and perspective into this little family unit we've created and given us a new appreciation for each other and, of course, our kids. But before you think this renewal you wax about could only be achieved via a carefully planned weekend away, here are a few easier-to-organize options for a local date night or even a New York City sleepover.

For more date-night experiences to help you get some of that vavavavoom back into your marriage, check out Melissa Chapman-Mushnick's blog, <http://blog.silive.com/kidsinthecity/>.

'MAD MEN' PACKAGE

Couples can step into the well-heeled footsteps of the entire Sterling Cooper gang with this special package created exclusively for the Carlton Hotel for fans of the AMC TV show "Mad Men".

Address

88 Madison Ave., Manhattan.

Time

Valid through the end of the year.

Cost

\$129 per person and tax per night.

Parent perks

Sleep in a sumptuously decorated room. Get reservations at the exclusive 21 Club, an ideal place for a three-martini dinner, and receive coupons to Blooming-

dale's to pick out a modern version of Pete's "chip 'n' dip" wedding present. You'll also receive tickets to the Museum of Modern Art to check out artists of the '60s, including Mark Rothko, whose artwork was featured in Mr. Cooper's office. And you'll get a recipe book for "Classic Cocktails," so you can whip up the fun drinks featured on the show.

Drawbacks

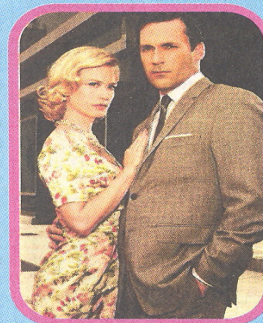
Pricey, but definitely a unique experience.

Overall

Experience a bit of New York City glitz without the kids in tow.

Information

Call 800-601-8500 or visit carltonhotelny.com.



Feel like "Mad Men's" Betty (January Jones) and Don Draper (Jon Hamm) by participating in the Carlton Hotel's special program.

