



Good Food Bad Date



single & hungry

Georgia Leigh

I first saw him in the fruit aisle of the Beverly Hills Whole Foods market... six feet of male perfection: sandy blond hair, a chiseled jaw and the perfectly sculpted muscles of an Equinox multi-club member. Our eyes locked over the cantaloupes he was holding as I caressed the organic bananas that were on special. Taking a long draft of my cold pressed juice to steady my trembling hands I silently thanked the gods I hadn't shopped at Gelson's and, tried to think of something clever to say. "Umm, those cantaloupes would be fantastic with these bananas!" He laughed as I blushed to my ears, and we made our way to the checkout together while he mesmerized me with his lilting British accent.

He invited me to dinner at Plant Food + Wine, a romantic Vegan restaurant on the popular Abbot Kinney Road in Venice. I wrinkled my nose — I'm not typically a fan of strictly Vegan cuisine, but Mr English assured me this was no ordinary Vegan restaurant and I decided to take a chance. We agreed to meet at the restaurant that evening and I raced home to choose the perfect dress.

The patio at Plant Food + Wine is something out of a fairy tale, and I could only hope my Englishman would be too. A wooden deck unfolds beneath gnarled olive trees festooned with fairy lights, and rustic wooden tables are lit by candles and perfumed by the surrounding raised herb gardens. When our server presented us with the wine list, Mr. English proudly announced that he does not drink alcohol and my heart sank. The server looked at me sympathetically, and suggested the house Kombucha. My date accepted enthusiastically and I ordered a bottle of the Giornata Nebiola by Luna Matta Vineyards. If my English hottie wasn't going to imbibe, I would have to drink enough for the both of us. I guzzled my wine and perused the menu while Mr. English droned on about his workout regime, and the virtues of his alcohol free life style — more wine for me! Luckily the food was as heavenly as Mr. English was dull. At least one of my appetites would be satisfied tonight.

We were presented first with the Chlorella Blue Cheese with Kumquat Jam and Toast Points. Spreading the deliciously creamy 'Cheese' and Jam on the toast points gave me something safe to do with my hands while I entertained an equally delicious fantasy of stuffing a napkin down this guy's throat.

Next our server presented the Kimchi Dumplings with Sesame and Ginger Foam: three delicately crafted dumplings in paper thin spring green wrappers, accented by squiggles of orange and white "foam." I was impressed by the utter lack of doughiness in the gluten free wrappers, and did not need convincing to polish off the third dumpling myself as English nibbled on the delicate micro-greens garnishing the dish. As I licked the last of the ginger foam off my fingers, I glanced longingly at the party of 20 drinking and laughing behind us and wondered if English would even notice if I ditched him to join their fun. But, then I'd have to share my wine. I soldiered on.



As Mr. English moved on to a lengthy discourse of the merits of Hemp vs. Soy protein powders our server came

over and presented us with a perfectly dressed, peppery salad of Mesclun, Asian pears, avocado with sesame brittle, which I devoured — apparently one

dumpling and a few micro-greens were plenty enough to satisfy this man's

appetite. Well, that's good

because he certainly wasn't having ME for dessert.

I had a longing to try the gluten free Kabocha Tart with Meyer lemon Creme Fraiche and

Pepita Sage Crumble, or the Gianduja Cake with Hazelnut gelato, but

I couldn't take five more minutes of personal training tips, so I gulped the last of my wine and made a mental note to return as soon as possible with better company.

Plant Food + Wine
1009 Abbot Kinney Blvd.,
Venice, CA 90291
310.450.1009

matthewkenneycuisine.com

Lunch and dinner 7 days a week

Sunday brunch menu from 11:00AM—4:00PM

They accept reservations and can accommodate parties of any size with advance notice.

About Georgia Leigh: 47 going on 21, Single and Hungry has a culinary degree; she worked for the Peninsula Hotel Beverly Hills, and for Wolfgang Puck before becoming a mother and wife. She now resides in Los Angeles and spends her time dating, and eating things other people have cooked. There is life after divorce.

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