

Ctrl+Alt+Date



Navigating a long-distance date involves a rather fundamental challenge: Finding an inventive way to connect virtually at once memorable and a suitable placeholder for an in-person meetup in the not-too-distant future. And while the classic video call, beverage in hand, is always an option, it can become a little meh over time (thanks to COVID and seemingly endless Zoom sessions.)

Thankfully, a plethora of thrilling virtual date ideas can inject a fresh wave of excitement into your first digital rendezvous. Just as in-person dates offer a variety of experiences, from dining out to catching a movie, long-distance couples can also enjoy diverse activities through screens, each one a novel adventure waiting to be explored.

Whether you're separated by distance, prefer the comfort of virtual interactions before meeting in person, or simply have a hectic schedule that makes an imminent in-person date challenging, having a repertoire of creative virtual date ideas is a relief. An online encounter may be a fantastic way to deepen your connection or get to know someone new in a more relaxed and accommodating setting.

Remember, the goal is to keep the spark alive and nurture your connection, no matter the distance. With a bit of creativity and enthusiasm, your virtual first date has the potential to be the most exciting highlight of your week, a beacon of hope and joy in the midst of your busy schedule.

TAKE AN ONLINE COOKING CLASS—TOGETHER

The kitchen, long considered the heart of the home, is a place where connections are forged over chopping, mixing, simmering, and sharing. For the digitally-astute couple separated by distance, the virtual kitchen can be equally powerful for romance.

The world of online cooking classes, a burgeoning industry that is exploding in popularity, offers couples the chance to try their hand at culinary creations together, even when they happen to be miles apart, and classes range from the rustic charm of Italian pasta-making to the precise art of French patisserie.

A standout option is [Cozymeal](#), the platform that connects food lovers with professional chefs for intimate, interactive cooking experiences. Their online classes cover a vast culinary landscape, from "Elevated Ice Cream" to "Authentic Israeli Comforts," where couples join Chef Roxy, who lives in Tel Aviv, as they craft their challah. The fully interactive format allows participants to ask questions in real time, ensuring no culinary query goes unanswered.

For those seeking more personalized experiences, [The Chef & The Dish](#) offers private, one-on-one classes with chefs from around the globe. Imagine learning the secrets of perfect paella from a chef in Valencia or mastering the art of sushi rolling with guidance from Tokyo.

The value of virtual cooking classes lies not just in the end product—though there's something to be said for simultaneously savoring a meal you've created together—but in the process itself. The shared experience of measuring, stirring, sharing, and occasional singed eyebrow creates a sense of camaraderie and accomplishment. It's an opportunity to laugh over mishaps, celebrate the small victories, perhaps engage in a little playful competition, and, most of all, work together on what may be YOUR story.

Virtual cooking classes offer a window into the other person's world: a glimpse into their kitchen, style, and how they handle stress when a soufflé fails to rise—all these small details combine to create a bigger picture of who they are. It's an intimate experience, for sure, one that goes beyond the kind of surface-level banter that sometimes dominates video calls.



An online cooking class brings new meaning to a 'tasteful' first date.

VIRTUAL GAME NIGHT

When it comes to the virtual date, game night reigns supreme. It's the digital equivalent of a 1950s sock hop—a chance to let loose, show off, and engage in friendly competition. But forget dusty Monopoly boards; virtual game nights are a far cry from the roll-and-move monotony of yesteryear.

[Jackbox Games](#) stands at the forefront of the digital game revolution, offering a smorgasbord of party games designed specifically for remote play. Their Party Packs contain five to six games ranging from the witty wordplay of "Quiplash" to the artistic challenge of "Drawful." The beauty of Jackbox lies in its accessibility – only one person needs to own the game, while others can join via their smartphones.

For couples seeking a more immersive experience, virtual escape rooms offer the thrill of puzzle-solving and the satisfaction of teamwork. [The Escape Game](#), a leader in the physical escape room industry, has successfully translated their experiences to the digital realm. Their remote adventures transport players to exotic locales such as a Panamanian jungle or an art gallery in Paris. With a live host guiding the experience, it's as close as you can get to a real escape room without leaving your living room.

However, the most intriguing option for the adventurous couple is [Among Us](#), the social deduction game that took the world by storm in 2020. Players are placed on a spaceship where they must complete tasks while trying to identify the impostor among them. Among Us is a game of strategy, deception, and occasionally, betrayal—perfect for testing the strength of your relationship.

Games provide a natural icebreaker, filling those awkward silences that sometimes plague video calls. They offer a structured activity that takes the pressure off constant conversation, allowing for more organic interactions to unfold.

THE VIRTUAL CONCERT

In the pre-pandemic world, a concert's first date was a rite of passage—from the queue to enter the venue to the collective anticipation even before the first notes are played. But in our brave new digital world, the concert experience has been reimagined, offering couples a chance to share in the magic of live performance from the comfort of their respective couches.

For classical music aficionados, the [Berlin Philharmonic's Digital Concert Hall](#) offers a treasure trove of performances. With over 600 archived concerts, as well as live streams of current performances, it's a chance to dress up in your finest (at least from the waist up), pour a glass of champagne, and pretend you're in the hallowed halls of the Philharmonie Berlin while listening to one of the world's finest orchestras.

For those after a more interactive experience, [StageIt](#) offers a unique take on the virtual concert format. Artists perform short, live, never-to-be-repeated shows, with viewers able to tip and interact with the performer in real-time. It's a level of intimacy rarely achieved in traditional concerts, offering a chance to see your favorite artists in a whole new light.

The Metropolitan Opera's [The Met: Live at Home](#) lets viewers stream the company's acclaimed series of simulcasts on any device. Imagine settling in for an evening of Puccini with a tablet propped up and a glass of Prosecco. It's all the drama and passion of live opera, without the need to navigate crowded foyers or worry about your neighbor's poorly timed cough. Each performance is available to watch live, capturing the electricity and unpredictability of opening night. For those who prefer their arias at a more civilized hour, or perhaps spread out over a week of evening viewings, the performances remain available on-demand for seven days following the live broadcast. As of this writing, tickets for the 2024–25 season are on sale, offering a tantalizing glimpse into the future of at-home cultural consumption and a chance to plan your social calendar around Verdi and Strauss.



After a virtual concert there's much to chat about with your date.

VIRTUAL MUSEUM TOURS

[Google Arts & Culture](#) stands at the forefront of the digital revolution, offering virtual tours of over 2,000 museums and archives from around the world. Want to stroll through the halls of the Uffizi in Florence? Or perhaps you'd prefer to examine the brushstrokes of Van Gogh's "Starry Night" at the MoMA in New York? With Google Arts & Culture, the world's masterpieces are a click away.

For a more immersive experience, the [Louvre](#) offers its own virtual tours, allowing you to explore the former palace in stunning detail. From the ornate ceilings to the world-famous artworks, every aspect of the museum is rendered in high-resolution glory. You can even visit areas typically closed to the public, like the medieval moat – all without the risk of setting off alarms or incurring the wrath of overzealous security guards.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art's "[Met 360° Project](#)" offers a series of award-winning videos that allow viewers to experience the Met's art and architecture in a whole new way. It's like having a private, after-hours tour of one of the world's greatest museums, minus the need for lockpicking skills or a talent for evading security systems.

But perhaps the most intriguing virtual museum experience comes from the British Museum. Their "[Museum of the World](#)" interactive experience allows users to explore artifacts from across human history and geography. Objects are presented on a timeline that spans continents, with each item linked to others across time and space. It's less a traditional museum tour and more a journey through the interconnectedness of human civilization.

A virtual museum tour can be a surprisingly intimate experience for couples on a first date. It's a chance to share your thoughts and impressions in real-time, to debate the meaning of an abstract sculpture or marvel together at the intricacies of an ancient artifact. The lack of crowds means you can linger as long as you like over a particular piece, or skip ahead if something needs to capture your interest.

THE THEMED MOVIE NIGHT

As far as date night classics go, movie night reigns supreme. It's a time-honored tradition, a chance to cuddle up, share some popcorn, and collectively suspend disbelief for a couple of hours. But in the era of streaming services, the humble movie night has undergone a digital metamorphosis, and one of the more compelling offers comes from [Teleparty](#) (formerly Netflix Party). This browser extension allows users to synchronize their streaming and add group chat to their favorite platforms, transforming solo binge-watching into a shared social experience. It's like having your own private screening room with running commentary from your date.

For those wanting a more curated experience, [Scener](#) offers "virtual movie theaters" where hosts stream content to an audience, complete with live video chat. It's the digital equivalent of renting out a cinema minus sticky floors and overpriced concessions. It must be added that the magic of virtual movie nights lies not just in the technology but in the ability to theme appropriately and time the movie to the time of year and possible events—a chance to elevate the modest movie night into an event!

THE VIRTUAL FIRST DATE

The virtual first date offers the flexibility to explore shared interests, try new experiences, and create meaningful moments together, regardless of physical distance. They can be just as engaging and romantic as traditional dates, with the added benefit of convenience and accessibility.

So, if you're looking to spice up your next video call or FaceTime session, consider exploring some innovative virtual date ideas. These can range from online cooking classes and virtual museum tours to synchronized movie nights or even digital escape rooms. The key is to find activities that allow you to interact, laugh, and create shared experiences, even when miles apart.

WORDS

Henrik J. Klijn

South African-born Henrik J. Klijn has been writing since childhood when his mother handed him a stack of notebooks to fill with his stories. Years later, she admitted it had more to do with keeping him quiet "because everyone needs a break, now and then." After completing studies in musicology at Johannesburg's University of the Witwatersrand and Stellenbosch University, Henrik pivoted back to creative and writing while working in Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany.

As Creative Director (Copy), Henrik delivered concept, strategy, and creative for luxury and lifestyle brands as diverse as Levi's, DKNY, and Emporio Armani while also working on high-profile campaigns for real estate, petroleum, food and beverage, as well as pharma brands. As a writer, he has contributed to various outlets, including Sourced Fact Media, Cosmopolitan, Men's Health, The Big Issue, and considerable Afrikaans—his home language—publications.

Currently, Henrik is pursuing a Master's in Journalism and Sociocultural Anthropology at Harvard. He is authoring a pre-doctoral dissertation on the [xam people of South Africa and the role of storytelling—told in resignation at their imminent extinction at the end of the 19th Century—as oral history and collective memory.

In his spare time, he attends music events, ranging from classical to jazz and electronica. Henrik is an avid cook and a voracious reader who tries never to complain about Chicago winters, a city he has called home since 2017.

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