

Zagats for Men

An essay by Chava Hudson
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As I bushwhack my way through the dating jungle, I have often wished that men would come with ratings, kind of like restaurants, or that they be required to wear warning labels like prescription drugs. These labels would be color coded for quick identification of today's single man; green for a commit-phobe, red for problems with anger, yellow for too much drinking. You get the idea. But unfortunately, like today's herbal remedies, they are totally unregulated, so a single woman must do her best to assess men for herself. Like restaurant reviews that can help us find the best places to dine, I would like to share my rating system to help women in their quest to find a man.

Let's start at the top. In my opinion, a four-star man has arrived at middle age and no longer whines about his divorce. Through prior training, he knows that if I cook, he cleans up. He knows when to arrive with flowers and even better, how to make reservations. More importantly, he has a generous and open heart and the only thing he would ever hit is a golf ball, or maybe the jackpot in Las Vegas.

The typical three-star man is similar to the four-star, but he is subject to lapses of belching and gas. The two-star man has not found himself yet, and is probably fifty years old, never been married, and looking for the lucky young women to bear his children. It's easy to spot the one-star man. He's about forty-five, lives with his mother, and can't afford to take you out for coffee. I have laid it out ladies, and the choice is yours.

So how are you supposed to tell what a man's rating is when you meet him? Unfortunately, many men will try to appear like they have higher rating. For instance, the dapper fifty-two year old guy who picks you up in his shiny BMW might appear like a four-star, but you then learn that he has never been married and is leaving soon to find a twenty-five year old wife in Columbia, and is about to go bankrupt. (If we had the mandatory labels, his would be green and there would be no problem.) Or someone who you think is a solid three-star may get demerits for spending your entire dinner telling you about his villainous ex-wife.

As you can see, this is all very unclear and ambiguous. What is a woman to do? As far as restaurants go, even though I do read reviews, I am always seeking those yet to be discovered little places with good food, good service, and reasonable prices that have modeled themselves on four-star restaurants. When it comes to men, it's not all that different. The best ones may not come in a BMW or have all the answers, but if the guy is like those restaurants, maybe an undiscovered place with "good food" and "good service" and if the emotional "price" is reasonable, then *bon appetite!*