

# Cupid hits road for love

## Matchmaker travels to meet clients and set up perfect mate

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RECORD STAFF

### WATERLOO REGION

Cupid lives — and she's travelling by minivan to a city near you.

Nearly every weekend, Linda Miller is on the road, trying to inspire love and forge relationships in places such as London, Ont., Quebec and Waterloo Region.

She lives out of hotel rooms, waking up at the crack of dawn to probe lonely, love-desperate souls and frustrated divorcees who have almost given up on dating.

For \$700, she claims to tirelessly analyse and contemplate who might be "the one" for her clients.

Such is the life of the professional matchmaker.

"I've always had a knack for it," Miller said early Sunday morning, preparing for a day of interviews at a Kitchener Williams Coffee Pub.

Miller — who claims she's responsible for 200 marriages — runs Misty River Introductions, an Ottawa-based dating service that she touts as "traditional matchmaking."

Instead of randomly pairing up two single people and hoping for the best — a practice she says is often employed by get-rich-quick Internet companies — Miller says she personally meets every one of her 8,000 clients.

Based on a 30-minute interview, she sets up her clients with someone who she thinks is perfect for them.

### STUDIED PSYCHOLOGY

The 38-year-old dropped out of the psychology program at the University of Manitoba 10 years ago after her matchmaking resulted in weddings for her twin sister and a few friends.

But it's a difficult art to master, she says — part skill, part luck.

You can't just pair two people who have similar interests, such as golf or jazz, Miller says.

You also have to feel for "the vibe," and that means accounting for unseen chemistry.

"I'm intuitive and a very good observer," she says.

Unfortunately, too many amateurs think they know the secret to detecting the vibe, Miller said.

When friends set up other friends on dates, it's usually a recipe for disaster, she said.

"The problem with that kind of matchmaking is that the whole basis, the only thing the pair have in common, is that they're single," Miller said.

"There's so much more to it than that."



Linda Miller, a dating service matchmaker, interviews an unidentified client at Williams Coffee Pub on Highway 8

"People that are negative are intimidated by the idea because they're intrigued"

**LINDA MILLER**  
PROFESSIONAL MATCHMAKER

But she fully admits that her method isn't a perfect science, and she's responsible for a few dates from hell.

There was the hilarious incident when she accidentally matched up a woman with her ex-husband.

"She said, 'He's quite nice, but he's not for me,'" Miller laughed.

Misty River users are guaranteed a maximum of seven dates, and the company claims that each user meets an average of three different people before finding his or her match.

### CAN'T HELP EVERYONE

Sunday morning was all business for Miller, as she met with new Kitchener clients and got updates on those who hadn't been successfully paired yet.

—Miller says she won't take their money.

Gail Mattes, a 43-year-old claims adjudicator from Kitchener, said

she made the trip to the coffee shop because the service seemed safe.

### NOT INTO BAR SCENE

Mattes is divorced and has been single for about six years.

For someone in her age bracket, dating services are one of the only options left, she said.

"I'm not into the bar scene," Mattes said.

"I don't know where you'd go to meet someone in this city"

Miller's trade is not without its doubters, and she says she tries to persuade the naysayers.

"People that are negative are intimidated by the idea because they're intrigued", said Miller, who is divorced.

"It's an honourable profession."

As for her own personal life, Miller does date, but she has little time for it, she says.

Even though she admits to being attracted to a few male clients, she says she puts business before pleasure.

"It wouldn't a good wife" she laughs.