

SINGLE IN THE CITY



Star of *Namastey London* and *Cash and Curry* **Shaana Diya** tells us of the disappointments and delights of dating in some of the world's most cosmopolitan cities

It always comes as a shock to me when I go back home to London and all my girlfriends tell me with a big exasperated sigh how lucky I was to have lived in New York City! "There must have been so many hot guys. London is so boring! Tell me more stories!" I look at them, remembering my life in London, and yes, NYC did seem uber glamorous and I wanted to live the life that Carrie and Samantha lived in *Sex And The City*. But after four years there, I realise that the difference was I could sit at home on a Sunday afternoon watching Carrie go from being single, to being blissfully happy with Big, to being suicidal after the break up and then finding love again with Ayden, Berger, the Russian and finally Big again. It all seemed like one big fabulous adventure, especially as Manolo Blahniks would protect my feet and the latest Fendi would be the hand I held. Unfortunately, in real time a.k.a. "life", the break-ups weren't over in one episode and Mr. Right or Mr. Right Now was not at your nearest Starbucks!

I think of what my life was like in London; I certainly did not have the thrill of going on as many dates as I have done in NYC, however, back home I had the opportunity of being in a secure, loving relationship for one year with someone who would actually introduce me to people by saying, "This is my girlfriend,

Shaana," and not like in NY where I was, "Um, oh, yeah, this is a... friend of mine. Sharon, um, Shaana." So, I can understand why some Londoners may envy New Yorkers, as it is easy to desire dating in the fast lane when all you're stuck with is the same old guy – but at the end of the day you have someone to call before going to bed; single people are left "speaking" to good ol' Mr. Teddy.

My job is to give you a taste of what it was really like; the unadulterated version, the highs and lows... and to make you realise however many dates you end up going on, you will always remember the one that told you they loved you. Dating has definitely become easier as the years have passed. I have learnt not to expect a phone call after three days of meeting an eligible bachelor – actually my motto is don't expect and you will be pleasantly surprised (mind you this is much harder to put into practice!). Now I live in Mumbai, but before I left the Big Apple for Mumbai masala, there was a plethora of disappointments and experiences...

Todd: The All-American investment banker, training for the marathon that tried to kiss me, missed and burnt my hair in the process!

Javier: The hot Latino volleyball player... 'Player' being the operative word!

Ben: Wooed me in the elevator then stalked

me in the laundry room, lived six floors above me... Way too close to home! NYC dating rule 101 – never date a man who you'd be forced to see if he proves not to be 'the one'!

Karan: Resident surgeon who I found was trained to skilfully cut me out of his life when I got too close.

Marko: Model/actor, hot, fun, sexy and a heavy drinker. Note to self: If they drink and can't remember parts of the night, they most likely won't remember you!

Rahul: The rock music lover: "You have great hair, you should head bang with me!"

Sebastian: French waiter with an accent to die for. He "moved" to Miami. I recently bumped into him working at a bar in NYC!

Finally...

My Mr. Big: Genetically interesting owner of NYC's finest restaurant. A sentence won't do him justice. But yes, he is out there.

FACTS:

Zodiac: Aquarius

Pet peeves: Being kept waiting!

Favorite books: *Shantaram*, *The Fountain Head*, *The Namesake*...

Life Mentors: My mum aka mummy

Favorite Foods: Desi ghar ka khana (home cooked Indian food) and there is nothing like a good cup of chai!

Favorite Designer: Dolce and Gabbana, Alessandro Dell Acqua, Roberto Cavalli, Prada shoes, Bottega handbags, Vintage Chanel.

We all have to kiss a few frogs before we find a Prince but that's half the fun, right? Right?

Shaana is currently shooting for her next movie *Bhootnath*, also starring Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan and Juhi Chawla.

If you want to read more about Shaana's dating woes and share some of your own email editorial3@asianwomanmag.com.