



Pocket Protectors

The Gateway begins its three-part series on saving money. This week, resident penny-pinchers CONAL PIERSE and PAUL OWEN take you inside the world of cheap dating.

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With more than two months gone since the money-making bliss of a full-time summer job, chances are your bank account is shrinking, regardless of how many hours you work each week or how often your mom brings you grilled cheese sandwiches while you play Xbox in her basement.

Of course, with more than two months of university under your belt, you've probably met some attractive fellow students with whom you want to spend a little extra-curricular time.

It may seem like reconciling these two occurrences is more difficult than teaching an ostrich to do backflips while wearing a life jacket and your underwear, but it's actually quite possible to complete a courtship without breaking the bank.

The most important thing is the choice of location. Fancy or expensive restaurants should be saved only for the most special of occasions, so if you aren't bringing a ring with you, take them to a lesser-known and less costly spot that they may never have visited. Happy Garden (6525 111 Street) is a relatively inexpensive Chinese restaurant with delicious moo shu pork; Dadeo's (10548a Whyte Avenue) has great sweet potato fries and po'boys for about twelve bucks, so you can get your Louisiana cuisine without having to stumble through a sea of vomit and old-lady boobs.

Breakfast at the High Level Diner (10912 88 Avenue) is another eclectic choice, and you can offset the notion of being tight-fisted by pointing out that they mean enough to you that you got out of bed before 10am. Later evening dining can see you at Pub 1905 (10525 Jasper Avenue), home of some of the best nachos in town. And if one of you isn't a carnivore, Café Mosaic (10844 Whyte Avenue) has some terrific vegetarian and vegan alternatives—and serves pancakes at any time of day. It benefits from a good location in Old Strathcona, as well.

Of course, the cheapest dining option for any type of food is to cook it yourself at home. But it can be more difficult to get someone to agree to come over for a home-cooked meal, especially considering odd

eating habits and allergies, and saying "Bam" while you add spices isn't adorable enough to excuse burnt peas and still-frozen steaks.

Staying at home is also easier on the wallet when you get into after-dinner entertainment. Find a common interest between the two of you—games, a favourite TV show, Cary Grant movies, screaming "shoooooot" during an Oilers power play—and focus your evening around that. But sometimes—especially when your asshole roommate decides to practice his *Canadian Idol* audition in his confederate flag boxer shorts in your living room—you just need to get out of the house.

Renting a movie is almost always a cheaper option than going to the theatre, and if you don't frequent

show. They also offer midnight showings on weekends. And while they may not play the blockbusters, the Garneau (8712 109 Street) and Princess (10337 Whyte Avenue) offer \$7 student tickets and critically acclaimed cinema.

If the movies aren't your thing, there are also plenty of inexpensive live theatre options in the city. The Timms Centre (87 Avenue and 112 Street) generally has "pay what you can" admission for their student theatre nights, and the Varscona (10329 83 Avenue) hosts Rapidfire Theatre's improv for \$10 every Friday night. But improv is not for everyone, and the quality of the show, while generally good, can fluctuate from week to week—especially if the performers are drunk.

If you're looking for something a little more active to do, bowling, mini-golf, pool, and other pseudo-sporting activities are a good chance for some mild physical contact, and letting someone else win can pay off in the long run. Most places offering these services cost relatively the same amount, and none of them are very close to campus—except Cue, the SU-run poolhall in the basement of SUB—so the key to choosing here is to find the deal.

Most of these places will have two-for-one coupons somewhere—the trick is to find them. If a relative or family friend lives in the Edmonton area, chances are they've purchased an Entertainment Guide book to support some neighbourhood kid's trip to space camp. Find these people. They'll

never use 90 per cent of the coupons in there, and two-for-one shoe rental at Callingwood Lanes can be doubled up with the "Buy one game, get one free" offer on the next page for big savings.

Finally, if you're both hockey fans, ignore the temptation of pricey Oilers tickets and chill at an Oil Kings or Golden Bears game. The hockey isn't quite as good—most years, anyways—but the drop isn't significant enough to be worth the extra cash. The Oil Kings cost \$20 for a student ticket, while Bears games are just \$4 (as are the beers). Just make sure you don't get too liquored and start abrasively heckling within earshot of children.

At this point, you might be figuring that your bank account's safe; however, just because you picked somewhere cheap doesn't guarantee you won't go home broke. Practically any retailer you visit is bound



the multiplexes, you'll never have that overlap of stuff you've already seen. If you must go out to catch a flick, there are a few cheaper options: SUB movie night shows an eclectic mix of films fitting a specific theme each week, and offers free popcorn. Choosing this route comes with a few caveats, however: the sound and lighting is shit, you can't choose the shows, and you look unavoidably cheap because of the first two. It's a good way to cap off a study date if you're already on campus, but don't go out of your way to get there.

Movie vouchers for Cineplex shows are available at all Info Link desks for \$8—that's \$2–\$3 less than the theatres sell them for. If you don't mind seeing something that's been out for a while, Cinema City 12 (3633 99 Street) and Movies 12 (5074 130 Avenue) cost \$2–\$3.50, depending on when you go to see a