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On the eve of her 31st birthday, after yet another painful breakup, Tamara Duricka Johnson decides it's time to overhaul her dating habits. When a friend jokingly suggests that she embark on a "dating project," inspiration strikes: in honor of turning 31, she'll go on 31 dates in 31 days — and resist the urge to turn each date into her next relationship. Instead, she'll have to wait until the 31st date to pick one of the 30 men to go out with a second time. Some dates are awful, while others are amazing—but all of them help change her attitude about dating and men in general. She opens up to the world around her and develops a handful of crushes, making it difficult to decide who will be the lucky final date. In the end, though, she realizes there's only one man of the entire thirty that she can see herself marrying — and one year later, she does. Chatty, fun, and confessional, *31 Dates in 31 Days* is an entertaining journey that offers astute insights into the modern dating scene.

31 Dates in 31 Days Details

Date : Published September 27th 2011 by Seal Press (CA)

ISBN : 9781580053662

Author : Tamara Duricka Johnson

Format : Paperback 323 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Biography, Biography Memoir

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Elyse Bradley says

I really enjoyed this book. If you go into it expecting an over-the top fictional romance story, you'll be disappointed. However, after hearing Tamara speak, I was excited to read about her experience. Everything she describes is SO real and relatable. I loved the lessons she learned along the way of coming to love and accept herself as well as looking for the positive in these men she dated. If you want to get a fresh perspective on dating, this is a great read.

Laura says

This book surprised me. I was initially weary of a book about a woman who decides to take on a daring new project of going out on 31 first dates with 31 different guys. But as I began reading, I found myself really enjoying Tamara's journey of self-exploration. This is not only a fun and well-written book, but it's insightful and my mind saw it for what it really was: a psychological experiment into relationships and dating.

Tamara Duricka Johnson is a New York City network television news writer who suffers a series of failed relationships. After a broken heart, she decides on the eve of her thirty-first birthday to make some changes in her view of dating. In her words, she wants to "throw out her old dating habits and criticisms." She no longer wants to "see every date as a future husband and judge him instantly to whether he lives up to that standard". Instead she makes a commitment to be positive and open-minded and to learn more about men and herself. What's more, she shares her insights by blogging about her dates (with the men's permission, of course).

This book could have been tacky but instead it was refreshing because Tamara truly was positive and wrote about what each man contributed to the date. She was honest throughout about her feelings, her observations and how hard it was to keep up the dating momentum, and she never slandered or bad-mouthed any of her dates. She took the opportunity to learn from each man she dated. Keep in mind that she set certain rules to this project: dates would take place in a public setting, no drugs or alcohol, no married men and no physical contact. And Date #31 would be a second date.

Although I don't have much experience in dating and I have been married for twenty years now, I still could relate to Tamara and her feelings. I understood her as a romantic, with insecurities, a good heart and a fun side. I liked her! After turning thirty many women start to feel the old adage of "the biological clock is ticking" and hope to find the right man to share their lives, dreams, and start a family. I know how hard this is because I have a gorgeous sister who is in this situation.

As I read, I couldn't help thinking that this would make a great romantic comedy movie. I even envisioned Cameron Diaz playing the role of Tamara. Best of all, this was a clean read that was fun to read and that led to a wonderful ending. Tamara did find her prince charming, and I couldn't help but be thrilled for her!

Melissa says

I picked up this book because of the title. Sitting there on the shelf at work jammed between a book about beekeeping and another popular fiction title, it seemed to call out to me. Can someone truly go on thirty-one dates in thirty-one days and not go crazy? I had to find out.

What surprised me was how much I ended up liking this book and I could relate to author's doubts about dating. Some of her fears and reactions to dating were some of my own fears and reactions. I read the first fifty pages pretty quickly, and I was hooked.

A couple of paragraphs grabbed my attention right from the start:

"What if I stopped looking at relationships as a means to an end? What if I stopped worrying about finding someone to end up with and instead just focused on what I was learning and who I was becoming along the way? What if I could just date?"

"I would stop wondering if every guy I saw on the street was The One. I would throw out the net and be open to dating guys I never would have thought to date before. I would be open-minded and positive. And I would hope to learn something from every date. I would give men a chance. And I would give myself a chance, too."

I would recommend this book to anyone who is looking to improve their dating skills. Through the author's experiences, readers can find great bits of advice that can help anyone in dating. It's a fast read with plenty of entertainment and advice. I give kudos to the author for being bold enough to do this project and kind enough to show that one of the best ways to find love is to give love away.

Lauren Cook says

I loved this book! It flew by. Tamara's positivity gave me a new perspective and the importance of not only seeing, but searching for the best in others. Not to mention, I love that this book takes place in New York--now I know where to go when I visit Columbia again! Of course the ending is truly wonderful but her openness and vulnerability to a new adventure is something we should all attempt to cultivate in our own lives...single, dating or married.

Azure says

Loved it! A fresh look at dating, and after years in the "dating pool," I needed it. Inspired me to do my own dating challenge. <http://20firstdates.blogspot.com/>

Kate says

Tamara Duricka Johnson's 31 Dates in 31 Days is wonderful! This is the story about her dating experiment, which turned into an amazing learning experience (and eventually led to her marriage).

The memoir starts out with Tamara's boyfriend dumping her (on the subway!), followed by her realization that she needs to completely overhaul her dating style. It's easy to start dreaming about the potential future

with someone after a single date. Tamara's goal is to get control of that impulse. So she embarks on a one-month dating challenge to help her learn about herself and how she approaches dating. With the help of friends, Tamara sets up her project: she will go on 30 dates with 30 guys in 30 days. Date 31 will be a second date with one of the men she went out with in the previous 30 days. The rules are that the dates must be in public places, be alcohol free, be with single men, and be G-rated. In 31 Dates in 31 Days, Tamara shares her experience. She describes each date and each man. More to the point, she describes what she learns from each date and each man. Not just what she learns about dating, but what she learns about herself. Among the lessons that Tamara learns is that there are lots of good men out there, and not every date has to be the start of a relationship.

31 Dates in 31 Days was a lot of fun to read. Tamara is an excellent writer, and her story is thought-provoking and inspiring. She shares her thoughts and feelings, and the story comes across as honest and genuine. Plus, there are some great ideas for things to do on dates! If you want a book that is both fun and worthwhile, read this. It may not change your whole life, but it might help you look at your approach to relationships more clearly.

I'm glad that Tamara wrote this, and I'm glad that I read it.

Anna says

I heard about this and had to read it. As a person who has had 2 dates in 19 years, how did one person get 30 dates in one month? It turns out the answer is she begged friends, acquaintances, anyone who could hook her up. It was an interesting and hopeful read. She dates a lot of great sounding guys, and learns a lot about herself.

Mary Ann says

This was a fun read in 24 hours. When I read the back I thought it was fiction, but it really is Tamara's personal experiment going out with a different guy every night for a month on all G-rated dates. I want my teenagers to read it so they can get a good perspective on dating. I enjoyed reading about her experiences, too.

Sharon says

I picked this book up in my local bookstore where Tamara had recently spoken and was intrigued by the premise and awesome ratings for this book.

Sadly, I think I was totally let down.

Tamara's experience is really... real haha. I wanted to be thrown through some adventure! Perhaps for those who haven't lived in NYC it might read differently... heck, if I hadn't lived in NYC and attended her alma mater then maybe I would be more impressed with the sights of the city from Mudd rooftop, not knowing how okay it is.

Her blog (or what's left of it (sadly dreamy Jonathan is no more)), is awesome. Fun, with lots of pictures and really lighthearted! But I'd hoped for a book like this to really tell the backstory, whereas this felt like a more drawn out version of her blog, except without any pictures :(

She's undoubtedly a great girl, and her blog and is a fun read, but I guess I prefer to live more in a fantasy.

HeavyReader says

I thought this book might be a funny, slightly raunchy story of a young woman's trials and tribulations with dating.

It's not

First of all, there's nothing raunchy about this book. It's totally rated G. One could share this book with one's granny's Christian reading group and not blush once. When the author started her dating project, she made some rules, including a "little secret boundary for [her]self: No kissing." As hot as it gets is when a date takes her to his tango club and sneaks in a kiss while teaching her how to dance.

There's nothing really funny in the book either. I didn't laugh aloud once. I don't think I even giggled. I thought that in a month of dates something at least mildly amusing would happen, but not really. Some of the guys the author went out with were a little strange, slightly quirky, but none of them did anything truly cringe provoking or laughter inducing.

My mind was blown that the author was able to go out with so many smart, handsome, creative, athletic, financially secure men. Sure her dating pool was NYC and surrounding East Coast cities, and she did have friends scouting for her, but how can a gal go on that many dates and not encounter even one guy who was rude or boring or just plain nuts? The author was actively trying to find the positive in ever man she went out with, and while I applaud her for that attitude, it didn't make for very exciting reading.

The other thing that made for lackluster reading? The author's lackluster writing. It wasn't bad so much as just not very exciting.

Johnson's writing was also downright awkward at times. Consider the following sentence: "I could feel my cheeks blush as my finger tucked my hair behind my ear." Why not just say, "I blushed as I tucked my hair behind my ear"? Was her finger acting on its own, not under her control? Was it whipping around tucking hair whether Johnson wanted it to or not? And I've never before encountered anyone who specified it was her cheeks blushing. When I read "blush," I assume cheeks unless someone mentions "rose."

The other annoying thing Johnson did was equate whatever thing she encountered on dates to dating in general. The Statue of Liberty was like dating. The Rubic's cube solved by the guy she was with at FAO Schwarz was like dating. The digital pipe organ at a church was like dating. Dancing the tango was like dating. At least Johnson was focused on her chosen topic.

I will concede that I found some of the things Johnson learned good things for all dating people to keep in mind. Expecting the best from the people one is dating is important. Being open to receiving goodness is important. Feeling that one's life is full and complete without a significant other is important.

But all told, reading this book was like reading for a school assignment. It brought me no joy.

Shalee says

Couldn't put this book down and I even knew how it ended! I went to High School with Tami and followed her 31 dates as they occurred. Date #5 was with an Elder I served with in Italy. I thoroughly enjoyed reading about each date...I thought it might get redundant but it didn't. She made me laugh and I liked hearing about the lessons she learned along the way (especially finding the good in everyone.) It was a great journey and she captured it with great writing. You should read it for valentine's day...it's a great romantic comedy.

Michelle Llewellyn says

The reveal halfway through the book that the author was a Mormon was a pleasant surprise. It also made me wish I lived in a metropolis like NYC. Lots of fun things to do in Salt Lake City, Utah, too, if you can get the boys to put down the video game controllers long enough to take an interest in dating. Or maybe Tamara was just very lucky to have so many connections like working in television and being blessed with such a large network of girlfriends to give her project so much success and exposure. No way could I find that many educated men in here Utah who weren't already married since all the 30+ single men left in the dating pool are either gay, divorced or still single for a reason. For most women, a man with a bachelor's degree is a big plus and I would be very interested to know just how many of these men the author went out with didn't leave the girlfriend they were currently living with at home that night. Tamara made them all sound a little TOO good to be true.

Nevertheless, I salute her for her venture and I hope her marriage was an eternal one. Perhaps there's hope for the rest of us singletons.

Ansley says

Can't wait to read this!

Alli says

I loved it! I loved it! Who doesn't love a good 1st date story. At some point, we have all sat with friends, laughing and cringing, about our own 1st dates. In 31 Dates in 31 Days, Tamara takes us on the ultimate dating adventure; 30 first or blind dates, in a row (without a second date until day 31)!

There is something terrifying and thrilling about going out with a complete or near stranger for the first time. You never quite know what you are going to get. Will it be boring or uncomfortable? Will we have anything to talk about? Will we have any common interests? Will I feel self-conscious, or will he put me at ease. Will something happen where I make a fool of myself or will I make a good first impression? Will he be someone I don't even want to spend the evening with, or will I want to spend the rest of my life with him? Will he like me? Do I want him to like me?

As Tamara embarks on this dating project, she hopes that she can figure out what she has been doing wrong.

Now she has 31 opportunities to relearn how to date. The task is both physically and emotionally difficult, but as she takes the time open up, reserve judgment, and look for the best in each man, she learns to respect, appreciate, and many times, really connect with them. She mostly learns about herself, and how to have hope for the future.

I couldn't wait to start each chapter to read about her next dating adventure in New York City. Would it be terrible or thrilling?

I'd So Rather Be Reading {Nat} says

I am a tough sell with nonfiction. I tend to have a very short attention span when it comes to nonfiction. I should have considered this issue of mine when I agreed to review 31 Dates in 31 Days, but I thought that the premise sounded so interesting that I would be able to overcome my nonfiction qualms.

And, in large part, I did enjoy 31 Dates in 31 Days. I really admired Tamara for undergoing the challenge to date a new guy every day for a month. I would never have that kind of nerve! I always found dating to be so difficult, and am so glad to be happily married.

Admiration for the author aside, I did have one problem with the book. The book is set up with each chapter describing one of the 31 dates. The date is described, followed by some introspection as to what Tamara has learned from the experience. That was great for the first few dates, but the "lessons learned" parts started to feel repetitive. And heavily written. It kept the book from feeling light and fun for me. I appreciated Tamara's growth and experience, but I was looking for a light-hearted read. I enjoyed reading about the dates, and the guys, and guessing as to who would be date 31. I could have done without the deep thinking at the end of each chapter.

With that said, I would still recommend 31 Dates in 31 Days. Just be aware that it is not a "fluffy" read. It makes you think and reflect on your own personal choices---which is great, it was just not what I was expecting. If I were a single girl, I probably would have liked this book even more than I did. But, being a happily married new mom, it probably wasn't the most appropriate choice for my current situation.
