

FRIENDS FIRST, *AMOR* LATER

WONDERING IF YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR FUN GUY PAL COULD EXTEND INTO *LA CAMA*? READ ON FOR TIPS TO TAKE THINGS TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

BY CELIA SHATZMAN

HE'S CUTE AND FUNNY. HE'S KIND AND SMART.

He's perfect in so many ways. And now you're developing a crush. But how do you know if he feels the same? We asked three savvy Latinos for tips on making your romantic intentions clear.

LOOK FOR CLUES.

When you're hanging out, pay attention to his body language. How he communicates with you nonverbally may hint at deeper feelings, says Dr. Arturo Corrales, a clinical psychologist in New York. His advice: "Look for subtle changes such as proximity, inviting posture, longer eye gazing and increased physical contact. Those may all be physical clues that he is interested in a deeper connection."

INTRODUCE HIM TO THE FAMILY.

"Invitations to family celebrations usually say, 'This is more than just friends,'" says Nestor Baeza, a 31-year-old Mexican who lives in New York City. By bringing him into your inner circle and showing a personal side of yourself, you're indirectly telling him that he's important to you.

MAKE A BOLD MOVE.

Once you're ready to tell him how you feel, Eduardo Diaz, 27, a Mexican American in Tacoma, Wash., suggests setting the scene by putting him in a good mood—do something that you both really enjoy or try something new. At the end of the night, declare yourself sincerely. "Look into his eyes and get him close," says Diaz. "Make him feel good and nervous and scared at the same time—it's a good feeling. Just say, 'I like you and I want to be more than just friends.' That's it. Keep it light and casual." Be patient—he may need time to catch up.

REMEMBER WHAT MATTERS MOST.

Even if he doesn't feel the same way, you can still be pals—and that is something to cherish. "If he says he is not interested, you shouldn't take it personally," says Baeza. "An honest friend is always a good person to have around."



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