

Most Eligible Phoenicians 2018

Written by Melissa Larsen

Thursday, 01 February 2018 00:00 - Last Updated Wednesday, 07 February 2018 16:03



Looking for a love match in the new year? Meet 21 Valley singles—and learn a few fun facts about each of them—who might just be Mr. or Mrs. Right. Valentine's Day is right around the corner, after all.

Photography by Shannon Gilpin/Shot on location at Mountain Shadows/Jewelry provided by Tal Barkel Jewelry



Becca Bogdanský

Age: 28

Communications & Media Manager, Southwest, for CBRE

@Beccabog

I lived in Denver for 10 years, but I've never been skiing or snowboarding.

My guilty pleasures are sour candies of any kind (blue raspberry is my favorite!) and McNugget kid's meals from McDonald's.

Since joining Valley of the Sun Active 20-30 in August, I've raised more than \$7,000 in in-kind and monetary donations benefiting various local children's charities.

Alexander Young

Age: 26

Medical Student and US Navy officer

@xandr_young

I'm currently a second-year medical student and officer in the Navy. When I graduate, I'll be serving as a physician in the military.

Before medical school, I was a resident DJ at three nightclubs in downtown Portland, Ore. I still enjoy DJ-ing and producing music when school isn't keeping me busy.

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I love to travel when I can. I've been to 12 countries, with my favorites being Switzerland and Vietnam.

McKenna Wesley

Age: 31

Influencer at TheBubblyBlonde.Life

@thebubblyblonde

I was only 6 weeks old when I was booked on my first modeling job, leading to a wonderful career as a child and teen model. I traveled the country non-stop [as a teen], walking the runway for top designers like Oscar De La Renta, Carolina Herrera, Valentino, Armani and Nordstrom, to name a few.

In 2008, my mother visited me in Malibu, and we saw the movie "Julia and Julia," which was about a food blogger. The next morning over coffee, my mom said I should be a fashion/beauty blogger, a suggestion (as a full-time model) I completely ignored. Fast forward a few years, I was working at Rose Law Group in Scottsdale. One day, someone emphatically told me I should be a fashion blogger. I don't know why, but at that moment something clicked! The next day, I literally started The Bubbly Blonde (@thebubblyblonde) during my lunch break. I knew nothing about blogging, but I did know fashion.

My favorite travel destination (so far) has been St. Barts, a truly magical place.



Angelica Negri

Age: 29

Executive Assistant at MVMT Studios

@angelica__negri

I love chocolate and I like mint, but I hate the two of them together.

In the eighth grade, I fell 20 feet out of a chairlift. I was pulled down the slopes on a ski toboggan, rode down the mountain in an ambulance to the nearby hospital, where I was diagnosed with zero injuries! I fell and landed perfectly. I still get nervous riding on lifts to this day.

I believe in chivalry, and I'm a sucker for a cheesy romance.

Ashley Ford

Age: 27

Community Outreach and Events Manager, Kendra Scott

@ash.ford

I moved to the Valley from Austin a little over three years ago. People usually don't think I have an accent until they hear the "y'all"—or until I start to drink.

For my job, I go to a ton of galas and charity events around town. The best silent auction/raffle prize I've won so far was a little three-legged cat. His name is Butters.

I use all five fingertips when I hold a pen. Most people are freaked out by it, but I think it's a smarter way to write—no calluses.

Caitlin Smith

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Age: 27

Holistic Wellness Advisor and Founder of Exhale Wellness Studio

@CaitlinCuriosity

I used to be a farmer! My journey to wellness and entrepreneurship began when I co-owned an organic farm out of Tempe when I was 21.

My wishes for a final meal would be copious amounts of pizza and craft beer. Hands down.

I cry uncontrollably when I laugh really, really hard. If you can get a deep belly laugh out of me, you might even hear a little snort or two.

Joshua J. Amonson

Age: 46

Executive Chef of Bourbon & Bones

@JJAmsonson

I met President Clinton at the APEC meeting in November of 1993.

I was in the U.S. Coast Guard.

In 1990, I graduated from boot camp in New Jersey and was stationed in New York City during Desert Storm before I went to cooking school in California. I was then stationed in Seattle for high endurance which led to places all around the world. I even received my first humanitarian service medal helping Haitian migrants. I cooked for secret service, all officers on the oldest wooden vessels--the US FIGI BARQUE EAGLE in Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Bermuda and Madeira.

Nicole Myden

Age: 38

Founder, The PR Concierge

@nicolemyden, @theprconcierge

A favorite quote: "The greatest project you'll ever work on is you!"

I believe a person's energy introduces them when they enter a room.

Lover of life, love, adventure, grace, gratitude, spirituality, reading, giving back, great food, good company, my family, my friends and authenticity.



David Reinfeld

Age: 30

Pursuing a Master's Degree in Business Administration

@davereinfeld

I am an Ironman. No, I don't think I'm a superhero, but I do compete in Ironman triathlons.

I once lost to my older brother in a middle school spelling bee on the word "thorny." I'll never put an "e" in that word again.

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I usually eat very healthy but can give you a pretty convincing dissertation on why I believe I could actually sustain life off of chicken wings, carrots, celery and ranch dressing for the rest of my life.

Brandon Rock

Age: 30

Senior Account Manager at DoubleDutch

@brandonrock

In college, I once convinced the manager of a bar that I was the tour manager for Good Charlotte and a friend of mine was the drummer. They created a "private" area for us with security and free drinks.

My favorite pizza is cheese which I take a lot of flak for, but if it was good enough for Kevin McCallister ("Home Alone"), it's good enough for me.

If I could live outside the United States, I would without a doubt choose Amsterdam. I lived there for about six weeks this past summer for work and loved the fact that I could walk or ride a bike anywhere I went.

Justin Vanderpoel

Age: 25

Realtor and Manager of Pure Barre Scottsdale and North Scottsdale

@iamjvanderpoel

I grew up in a small town in Michigan with a population of less than 500. I lived there up until 2014, when I moved to the Valley to broaden my real estate career. As you can imagine, there isn't much opportunity in such a small town.

Fitness is a huge part of my life. I manage two Pure Barre Studios in the Valley. I take barre classes and yoga two to three times a week and try to hit my universal gym as much as possible. Exercising keeps me grounded.

I live alone with my sweet cat Parker, who I found as a young malnourished kitten at The Farm at South Mountain.



Tatyana Rock

Age: 29

Project Manager, THE LifeStyled COMPANY

@tatyana-rock

I was born in Mariupol, Ukraine, and am fluent in Russian.

I am the oldest of 13 kids, all from the same two parents. Ages range from 29 to 9 with 10 girls and three boys.

I have a slight obsession with Korean dramas and have seen so many, I can now understand most of it and watch shows without having to look at the screen.

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Michael Wong

Age: 32

Real Estate Analyst

@thewongreport

I'm trilingual.

I lived in Hong Kong and Beijing after college

I am nicknamed "Superman" for my ability to fly over the handlebar when downhill mountain biking.



Cale Glover

Age: 27

Master Club Builder

@cale.glover

I speak Spanish. (I was lucky enough to study in Spain.)

I like to take pride in having good grammar.

I have been a certified scuba diver since I was 13 years old.

Sydney Stempfley

Age: 26

Receptionist and Hair Stylist

@sydneystempfley

I'm a self-proclaimed wine connoisseur.

I make one hell of a Pop-Tart.

My go-to karaoke song is "Always Be My Baby" by Mariah Carey.

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Dr. Meisje Burton, M.D.

Age: 30

M.D., M.B.A. and Resident Obstetrics & Gynecology Physician

@meesha_meisje

I'm equal parts jock and nerd. I was a fully scholarshiped collegiate volleyball player, and during that time, I majored in biology with a double minor in chemistry and Spanish. (I also have my MBA.)

The ocean is my happy place. I learned to surf while studying abroad in Australia, I've been bodyboarding in a hurricane, and I love to scuba dive! My pet jellyfish (Jellius Caesar, Sting and Squishy) bring the perfect touch of the ocean to the desert. I love to travel. I've been to more than 30 countries and will be adding at least two more to the list next year.

Mark Cunningham

Age: 47

Principal/Vice President of Environ, Inc.

@markcunningham0327

Out of all my awards and accolades, I am most proud of my title as dad [of four children ages 20, 18, 16 and 14]. I tend to think one's character can be summed up by the successful launching of their kids to live out their own dreams and desires.

While I have a Mechanical Engineering degree from Arizona State University, I do not wear pocket protectors or hiked-up pants. As a working owner, I am in sales and marketing which brings out the extrovert in me and pulls the introverted engineer out of his shell.

I consider myself old school but not so rigid that I can't be taught new tricks. While chivalry is not dead, it does seem to be on its last legs, and I am doing my part to keep it around for the next generation.

Yasmin Tajik

Age: 45

Photographer

@ytajik

I'm a professional photographer who travels to document humanitarian and social cause stories.

I've played the same piano since I was 4 years old.

I'm still scared of the dark.

Daniel Fitzpatrick

Age: 42

Attorney and Fashion Model with Ford/Robert Black Agency

@beardedfitz

My nickname when I was a baby was "Lumpy" because of the way I wrapped myself up in the blanket. My mom thought I looked like a "lump."

I have been rock climbing and canyoneering for over a decade. Some trips have included Badger Canyon in the South Rim, Bear Canyon in

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West Clear Creek and Weavers Needle.

I've been painting with oil paints lately. Inspiration comes from my late mother, Betsy Lou, which motivated me to finish my Fitzpatrick Coat of Arms painting done with oil, acrylic and permanent marker.



Chris Rassam

Age: 34

Entrepreneur

@chris.rassam

I own three times more firearms than neck ties.

I will sweep you off your feet dancing at local country bars.

I began my first business venture at the age of 24 and have been growing my successful team of amazing people since.

Bethany Grzeskowiak

Age: 26

Field Brand Manager

@thequeen_b

I can make anyone look fabulous in 15 minutes or less.

I'm on a mission to visit all 50 states—17 more to go!

I'm an awful cook but can give Betty Crocker a run for her money.