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**Gina
Rodriguez**

Isn't Sorry for What
She Says on Page 113

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Before
You're 30

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MAKE-OUT
TEST**

a huge time-saver

sex Q+A

HONEST ANSWERS TO YOUR MOST PRIVATE QUESTIONS

BY JULIE VADNAL



Does having a landing strip lead to better orgasms?

A Yep, at least for some lucky peeps. Leaving a skinny patch of hair on your pubic bone and vulva—and shaving or waxing the rest—isn't just about aesthetics. When you expose sensitive areas like your clitoris, labia, and anal opening, you're also uncovering lots of ultra-responsive nerve endings. Meaning: Contact can feel more intense than it does when you rock a full bush, says sexologist Susan Block, PhD. But really, the way you wear your pubic hair is totally up to you and your razor.

How can I make standing sex less awkward?

A Press your palms against a mirror that's secured to a wall, bend over, and watch each other's reflections while you soak in the good feels, says sex therapist Rachel Needle, PsyD, codirector of the Modern Sex Therapy Institutes in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Why is it so much easier for me to get off by myself than during sex with someone else?

A “When you masturbate, you do exactly what your body likes best with no guesswork involved,” explains clinical psychologist Marianne Brandon, PhD. And if your solo sessions involve a vibrator, you’re likely giving your lady bits more intense stimulation than a partner ever could. Finally, you may be less distracted on your own, which means you have more brain space available to process pleasure. Take note of your mind-set and hand moves during self-play, then re-create those when you’re with your mate. (You can always bring a vibe to the party too.)

Can you rec an aphrodisiac to incorporate into a Valentine’s Day dinner?

A Mix up two paloma cocktails, but swap out your regular tequila for Gem & Bolt Mezcal Artesanal. The smoky liquor includes a seriously sexy ingredient called damiana. It’s a super herb that comes from a flowering bush native to Mexico, and it’s believed to help you feel happy, relaxed, and—at least according to the ancient Mayans—aroused. Hey, it can’t hurt to try it!



How many licks can you go for tonight?

Gem & Bolt Mezcal Artesanal, \$37, oldtowntequila.com



Email your sex questions to SexQandA@Cosmopolitan.com.

Is there a way to make foreplay last longer?

A Start *way* early—like while you’re getting ready for a date, suggests Needle. Fantasizing about all the sexy things you’d like to do primes your brain and body for the hotness to come. Then when you’re in the moment, stick to over-the-clothes action for the first 10 minutes (the average time it takes for women to build arousal). Run your fingertips along the sides of your partner’s torso, feed each other treats, and take your sweet-ass time. “Slowing down to enjoy erotic exploring can lead to heightened pleasure and more satisfaction,” says Needle.

My partner wants to do butt stuff, and I’m intrigued...but how do I decide if I’m ready?

A Anal play is a new frontier for a lot of people, so it’s best to go into it making sure you have

the three Cs on lock: curiosity, comfort, and consent. Talk to your S.O. about your expectations beforehand—preferably not when you’re already in bed—so you can have a zero-pressure convo. Then take baby steps. “Start with a full-body massage that has a special focus on your bottom,” says Brandon. “If you enjoy that, ask your partner to try playing with just the outer edge of your anus. See if you can relax, then let your body tell you whether or not to proceed.” Remember: You’re totally free to shut the (back) door at any time.

Any hot new podcasts I should be listening to?

A You’ll love the hilarious besties (one is a sex coach, the other is VP of a sex-toy company) behind *Shameless Sex*. They give solid and candid advice on everything from blow jobs to bondage. There’s also *Sluts and Scholars*—in which a sexologist and an actress get down and dirty about the latest sex news—and *Inner Hoe Uprising*, where four 20something feminists dish real talk about love and dating in 2019. Try *Dipsea* for 5- to 20-minute installments of spicy original erotica or *How Cum* for insight into the female orgasm (and how other women get off). ■

Should You Try...
A Cuddle Party?

If you’re down for a big, intimate group hug with no sexual touching involved, then sure. “The purpose is to create a safe space where adults can learn to set boundaries while satisfying their need for affection,” says sexologist Emily Morse, host of *Sex With Emily* on SiriusXM. Usually, these shindigs go like this: After a few icebreakers and laying down the rules, partygoers pick out a buddy (or buddies) to snuggle with, then everyone waits for a warm rush of oxytocin, the bonding hormone that’s released with touch. “It’s a way of getting some intimacy without having to go on a date or sleep with someone,” adds Morse.