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11 Things You Were Afraid to Ask About Boudoir Photo Shoots

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Image via **DNA Premium Photography**
<http://www.dnapremiumphotography.com> .

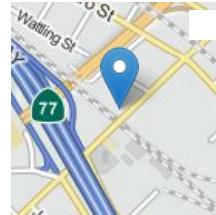
As you scramble to buy the **perfect Valentine's Day gift** for your sweetie, you might find yourself considering something on the saucy side, like a **boudoir photo**. But then you realize, **"Valentine's Day is Friday! There's no time!"** So you settle for a teddy bear holding an "I love you" heart, and hope that your S.O. mistakes your lack of planning for irony. Still, the photo idea lingers in the back of your mind, along with a nagging concern that the reality of a boudoir shoot might mirror the fiction of a Lifetime Original Movie.

In the fine Racked tradition
<http://sf.racked.com/archives/2014/01/03/drybar-founder-alli-webb-explains-why-blowouts-are-magic.php> of asking experts dumb questions that normal people have too much dignity to ask, we quizzed **Dwayne Adams** of **DNA Premium Photography** <http://www.dnapremiumphotography.com> in Oakland about what really happens behind the scenes of a boudoir shoot.

Explain boudoir photography. Does that mean that women have to get naked?

"While some may know the term 'boudoir' to be a derivative of the French word 'boudeur,' meaning sulky, more people will relate to the word boudoir as a lady's private bedroom or dressing room... We strive to capture the sensuality and mystique of the boudoir vibe while maintaining our clients' dignity, privacy and above all, their boundaries. **Our clients are our top priority, so if getting completely naked is NOT on their priority list, this is a non-issue for us.** Being naked is absolutely not synonymous with the word 'boudoir.' Not in our book."

Stripping down to your skivvies in front of a crew of strangers (even professionals) is intimidating. How do you make clients comfortable



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with the experience? Is alcohol involved?

"Indeed it can be! Our staff is very warm and welcoming and we do provide a social and comfortable atmosphere for everyone to enjoy. **We offer wine or champagne along with a variety of other drinks and light fare.** Once the ladies have some conversation, a drink, a bite to eat, ... they get into hair and make-up, and their best jams are playing, they've forgotten about any anxieties they've had and they're just plain having the time of their lives."

Most of the boudoir photos that we've seen show women in sexy lingerie and corsets and stockings. Do clients have to bring their own outfits or do you provide them?

"This is the fun part! We do have a really fantastic collection of clothes for women to choose from, including corsets, dresses, shorts, and accessories (necklaces/earrings/hair flowers, etc). Anything from a sensual-sophisticated look, to something a little more down-and-dirty/come-and-get-me is available. I mean, who are we fooling? What man doesn't wanna see his honey in a shredded pair of black stockings and nothing else? But seriously, we have something for everyone, and we do encourage ladies to bring a few items from their own closets, to make the photos more personal. This also helps to increase their comfort level if it's their first photo shoot."

So...are these outfits dry-cleaned?

"Yes! Absolutely! Who wants someone else's 'stuff' for their photo shoot? We wash all worn clothing after each and every photo shoot. This is obviously for hygiene purposes, but also to remove the inevitable make-up smudges and smears or stains... Girls can be so messy!"

How much, um, "grooming" are most women doing before these photo shoots?

"Okay, bear with us here. Unless you, personally, are still into the 70s look and like things a little more, how shall we say, 'au naturale,' **we recommend shaving or waxing any area that will not be covered in a photo session.** It's always best to do this a little bit before the shoot, if you have sensitive skin, to avoid razor burn or skin rash. Skin rash can be unsightly and uncomfortable. We want our clients to feel as beautiful, sexy and unconquerable as possible! Women who feel sexy, will behave sexier. It's science. Of course, anything that comes out looking 'unsightly' to our clients, once they see their photos, can be Photoshopped, if necessary."

You have an in-house glam squad for hair and makeup. How glam are we talking? In five years, is this going to remind us of Glamour Shots?

"Ha ha... NO! Not Glamour Shots! Please, no. We take our time to ask our clients what look they are trying to achieve. (Business sexy, school girl sexy, country girl sexy, sporty/sexy, girl-next-door, dominatrix, just washin' the clothes and doin' the laundry sexy, 4-wheel drivin' sexy, etc... you get the gist.) With photography, makeup does need to go on a little heavier than everyday wear. That's just the biz, so it'll show up in the photos. Some women do prefer a more natural look though. There are those who like the pin-up look or a smokey-eye look. Whatever it is, our talented make-up artists are very skilled and take the time to achieve the look our clients desire."

What percentage of your clients are giving their photos to someone else? What percentage are just hot singletons who want to document their hotness?

"First off, this question brings to mind that **Planet Fitness commercial** http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQfmpXsLV_4 where those 'totally hot' girls are in the locker room, talking about how 'totally hot' they are... But in all seriousness, we often ask this very question. **It honestly seems to be about 50/50, with a lot of ladies answering 'both.'** I'm willing to bet that even if

they are giving them to their significant others, they're also making copies and creating a 'totally hot' photo album and secretly stashing it under their mattresses, just to look at every now and then!"

Once the photo shoot actually begins, what happens? You have a posing coach and props. Is that it? Do you coach people like Austin Powers, saying things like, "You're a tiger"?

"Yeah. 'Say Cheese' just doesn't cut the mustard for this kind of photo shoot! The posing coach may first show her a pose and walk her through a few different variations of that pose while the photographer snaps away. We'll encourage her to find her comfort zone in front of the lens, if she's a natural. (Some are.) Some need more coaching. It's a very individual thing for every woman and our coach is patient and awesome and has a lot of fun with the ladies. After that particular set is done, the client is given her robe to return to her boudoir (wink, wink) to change outfits, touch up her makeup and return to her new set! This may happen two or three times, depending on the package she has purchased."

Have you ever had a client cry during a boudoir shoot?

"Never during a shoot, unless you count laughing so hard they cry. We have definitely had some tears during the viewing sessions though. **We love that complete feeling of awe that is so palpable in them when they come back to view their photos for the first time!** It's just so damn cool."

Do men ever do boudoir shoots?

"I imagine there are some men that have done 'duo**eoir**' types of shots, but we haven't done any yet. Our market generally consist of that woman looking for the perfect gift to provide their loved one with."

Every woman has a "problem" area that she feels self-conscious about. How do you work around that? Will you Photoshop flaws at a client's request?

"Truer words have never been spoken. **Every single woman. Even the women the other women are jealous of are insecure about some part of their bodies. They are all their own biggest critics.** We take time to talk to each lady and find out what that area may be. We may not see something as a flaw in the same way they do about themselves, so it's very important to have that conversation ahead of time. We first work around these things with posing and lighting. We can also strategically place scarves, boas and things like that to camouflage problem areas. Finally, we can edit almost anything in post production. How much we do is up to her. Cellulite, stretch marks, scars, blemishes, freckles and the like, are all removable. But who'd want to remove a freckle? They're so cute!"

· [DNA Premium Photography](http://www.dnapremiumphotography.com) <<http://www.dnapremiumphotography.com>>

[Official Site]

· [8 Pretty Pieces of Lingerie for Valentine's \(or Any\) Night](http://sf.racked.com/archives/2014/01/30/8-pieces-of-lingerie-to-spice-up-valentines-night.php)

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