

Maya Gabeira used to go to the beach just to tan. She was 14, living in Rio de Janeiro and dating a surfer dude. She would watch from the shore as he carved up the ocean. "I'd see him coming in with that big smile, all soaked, and I'd feel like I was missing out on something," she says. "So with his support, I started surf school."

Within about 3 years, Gabeira had moved to Hawaii to pursue surfing professionally. Now 24, she holds the women's world record for the largest wave ever surfed, a 45-footer in South Africa. So you'd be forgiven if you saw her on the beach, moving with such grace and confidence, and were too intimidated to walk right up and say hello.

And if you did work up the nerve, she just might intimidate you further. Perhaps it would be the alluring, exotic way she elongates her words, or the subtle lift in her voice at the ends of her sentences, as if she's always asking a question. Her Brazilian accent laces everything—Brazil is *Braw-zeel* and sexy is *say-xy*, as in "I feel *say-xy* exposing my body. Maybe it has to do with being *Braw-zeelian*: I feel comfortable with little clothes."

Even when she talks about shattering her nose in 12 places—her board walloped her in the face during a tow-surfing outing—she sounds oddly sensuous. "I don't think I really give the impression of being fragile," she admits, laughing. "I'm told I have quite a hard skin on me."

But here's some reassuring news: This surfing goddess doesn't need a surfer god, just as any woman who has mastered her own world isn't looking for an exact equal. Instead, a woman like Gabeira wants a man who can show her something entirely new, a man with the confidence to introduce her to *his* world, just as Gabeira's teenage boyfriend did. "I like to take days off and not be all wet and salty the whole day," she says. "I need somebody to motivate me to do something different. If I do something by myself, it will just be what I'm comfortable with."

So speed up your game. No more hesitation. "He needs to ask and talk and pursue, be confident enough to try until he gets me," she says. "Men in America are a little slower in their approach. In Brazil it's not really like that. They just go for it."

You can, too. Just walk over and introduce yourself, and show her you're up for anything.

Perhaps because of these expectations, Gabeira doesn't date too often—but if you can embody what she's looking for, *any* woman is sure to take notice.

That's what happened a while back when Gabeira was traveling in the Mentawai Islands, an archipelago off the coast of Sumatra, where she met a sailboat captain.

"We were surfing, just before I was going back to his boat for a ride to the next island. We were in the water by ourselves, and he asked me if I wanted to stay. We made out, and I ended up staying for 4 months," she says. How's that for being direct? "I learned about the boats and steering and winds. We shared really good times in a very beautiful place—it was a kind of paradise."

She eventually left, and the relationship ended. But that's fine, she says. If you take a chance and it doesn't work out, it was still worth the risk. And at minimum, you learned something. "You fall down, have big wipeouts," she says, "and you just stand back up and go again."

The sexiest beach cocktails

Sex on the Beach is so cliché. Woo her by mixing one of these drinks instead, courtesy of the nation's hottest beach bars.



THE HAMPTONS GIRL
SUNSET SPRITZ

From Sunset Beach, Shelter Island, NY

- 1 oz gin
- ½ oz Campari
- ½ oz grapefruit juice
- Splash of lemon juice
- Splash of simple syrup
(a 1:1 mix of sugar and water, boiled until clear, and cooled)
- Prosecco
- Orange slice

Pour the gin, Campari, and grapefruit juice into a glass. Add lemon juice and simple syrup, and top off the drink with Prosecco. Garnish with orange.



THE SUNBATHER
KEY WEST LEMONADE

From Sloppy Joe's, Key West, FL

- 2 oz sour mix
- 2 oz cranberry juice
- 1½ oz Absolut Citron vodka
- Splash of 7Up
- Lemon slice

In a cocktail shaker, combine the sour mix, cranberry juice, and vodka. Shake the mix and then pour it into an ice-filled 12- to 14-ounce glass. Splash with 7Up and garnish with a lemon slice.



THE SURFER CHICK
DUKE'S MAI TAI

From Duke's Malibu, Malibu, CA

- ½ oz 151-proof light rum
- ¼ oz Curaçao orange liqueur (optional)
- 3 oz tropical juice blend
e.g., pineapple/orange/guava
- ¼ oz dark rum
- Pineapple wedge
- Lime peel

Pour the light rum and Curaçao into an ice-filled glass. Then add the juice mix and float the dark rum on top. Garnish with a pineapple wedge and some lime peel.

Pick up (almost) any woman at the beach

It may seem like an impossible task, but it's simpler than you think. All you need is a little charm and a few extra drinks.

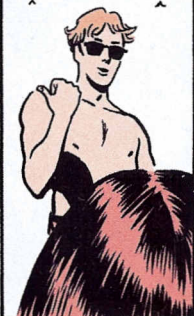
1 Zero in

Choose a group of at least three women. That way the one you're interested in won't feel bad leaving her friend to sunbathe solo.



2 Break the ice

HEY, WE'VE GOT SOME COLD DRINKS. CARE TO JOIN US?



3 Make her comfortable

Show her to the cooler (without touching her), and casually ask her about herself.

4 Cozy up

Socialize with her friends, and introduce them to yours. Invite them all to something you'd planned on doing that night. Now you have an excuse to reconnect later. You're in!



Source: Audrey Nelson, Ph.D., author of *You Don't Say: Navigating Nonverbal Communication between the Sexes*