

People

ROMANCE

LIAISONS AT LUNCH

Two matchmakers say noontime is the right time

THEY'D BEEN IDENTIFIED TO EACH other simply as Lori and David.

When they met for lunch at a Greek restaurant in Chicago in February, they were more curious than nervous. And then, somewhere between *saganaki* and coffee, they clicked. "He was so witty," says Lori Postma, 36, a marketing consultant. "I don't think there was a silent moment between us," marvels David Seglin, 37, an architect. After breaking the ice—and splitting the check—they agreed to take a step toward deeper commitment: dinner.

For that nearly angst-free start, the two give grateful thanks to Andrea McGinty, 31, and Margaret Kunkler, 32, yuppie yentas who have touched

on—and incorporated—a simple dating philosophy: It's *Just Lunch!* To the delight of their 675 clients, their singles service eases the anxiety level of the blind date by scheduling the encounters at high noon. That way, says one client, John Kelly, "you don't have to worry about uncomfortable good-night scenes."

It was their own discomfort with the singles scene that inspired McGinty, a former retailer, and her partner, Kunkler, an ex-marketing researcher, to pool their savings and start *It's Just Lunch!* in January 1992. Clients, who range in age from 25 to 55, each pay \$400 for six months of blind dates or \$600 for 12 months. So far, 58 couples are now going steady and

four of them are talking marriage.

Not all matches, though, go so smoothly. Kunkler recalls setting up a date for a normally gregarious woman. "She called me five minutes afterward and said, 'I choked. He'd ask me questions, and I'd go, 'Yes,' 'No,' 'I don't know.''" Kunkler's advice: Try again.

More promising, perhaps, were the twosome whose one-hour rendezvous extended to four—and two bottles of wine. *Just Lunch!*'s mavens haven't heard from them since.

Ironically, helping other singles connect has left McGinty and Kunkler—who plan to open offices by summer in New York City, L.A. and San Francisco—scant time to socialize. But Kunkler did land a steady beau six months ago while on the job: Mark Miller, 26, a composer who used to place ads for *It's Just Lunch!* Now, if Margaret can just find a lunch date for Andrea . . . ■



▲ "I trust their judgment," says David Seglin (eyeing date Lori Postma) of *Just Lunch!*'s Andrea McGinty (in hat) and Margaret Kunkler.

Photograph by Kimberly Butler