



Take me on a Romany holiday

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ACTOR ROMANY MALCO IS BRINGING SEXY BACK TO COMEDY

DURING OUR PHOTO shoot in the sunny backyard of a house in L.A., I can't help but notice that Romany Malco is all muscle. From his calves to his six-pack to his beautiful biceps, the only thing more distracting than Malco's physique is the jokes he's constantly cracking. Oh, and that smile. Since stealing all his scenes as the womanizing Smart Tech employee in *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, the 39-year-old actor has been stealing hearts as the sensitive drug dealer on Showtime's series *Weeds*. With his recent parts in the Tina Fey flick *Baby Mama* and in June's *The Love Guru* with Mike Myers, he's now officially big-time. But you'd never know it. He's just a guy who works and plays hard, doing both with good-natured ease. By the end of our interview—which we do while driving around in his Subaru and over lunch—he's inspired me to get a dog (I'm covered in his American bulldog Doodle's hair), give up sugar (he hasn't touched it in three years), and move to Brazil (his second home).

"I come from a storytelling culture," says the Brooklyn-born Malco of his Trinidadian heritage. "I don't give a damn if you're lying, tell me a good story!" This penchant for a well-spun yarn brought him to L.A. as a teenager, with his rap group, College Boyz. Following a number-one hit on the Billboard rap chart, he began producing, and while working on the soundtrack for *The Pest*, a little nudge from John Leguizamo got him interested in acting. In 2001 he played MC Hammer in VH1's bio-pic,

but it was his hilarious role in 2005's *The 40-Year-Old Virgin* that caught people's attention and had fans quoting his raunchy one-liners. *Weeds* debuted that same year, and the relationship between his character and Mary-Louise Parker's suburban-mom-turned-pot-pusher is one of the best parts of the show.

These projects paved the way for his starring role in *The Love Guru* and brought on an epiphany about the kind of life he wants to have in Hollywood. "I started realizing there's a lot of imbalance [in the industry]," he says. "I don't want to be the guy who's famous, working year-round but with no family of my own. [The guy] who's got a bunch of chicks knockin' at my door but nothing significant and meaningful and deep." For Malco, *The Love Guru* turned out to be a matchmaker—he met his fiancée, Taryn Dahka, on set while she was doing the stunts for Jessica Alba. They now live in Redondo Beach, CA, but you'll often find him at his little house in Brazil, enjoying the good life, playing soccer on the beach, and kayak fishing. Despite his growing acclaim, however, he's humble about his draw as more than a comedian. "I never try to play sexy, 'cause I know better," he demurs. "You got brothers out there like Matthew McConaughey, I don't know what I'm gonna do. There's too many people out there who do it better." News flash, Mr. Malco: no they don't. [LISA BUTTERWORTH]

STYLIST: BETH BIRKETT; GROOMER: PAUL CASTRO FOR THE CLOUTIER AGENCY; VINTAGE SHIRT: EVERYTHING'S JAKE; SHORTS: MAIDEN NOIR