

THE BACHELOR CANADA

The race for the rose begins

The sting of Valentine's Day still fresh in their unattached hearts, the would-be bachelorettes cued up Sunday in high heels and makeup, outside a Vancouver boutique hotel, undeterred by the chill in the West Coast air – or the stiff competition.

It was the first casting call for *The Bachelor Canada*, which will ultimately see 25 women compete for the hand of an as-yet unnamed bachelor. Upstairs in the penthouse Halo Suite, a single red rose bloomed in a bud vase, and casting producer Heather Muir outlined the ideal bachelorette.

"I'm looking for the ones who can be genuine on camera and are genuinely looking for love."

Offering a different take was a producer who worked with the *Bachelor* franchise in the U.S.:

"They're looking for crazy," said the producer, who asked not to be named. "They're looking for just crazy enough for good TV. They don't want axe murderer crazy but they want ... trappy crazy, insecure crazy, bossy crazy. Father issue/mother issue crazy. Fame crazy."

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Hayley Jesson

Shivering in her sleeveless pink ruffled plaid blouse, black micro skirt and Jessica Simpson booties, Jesson, 22, flew over from Nanaimo Sunday morning, after about three hours of prep time. "5:30 a.m. the alarm went off and I started getting beautiful," she says.

A marketing executive for a gardening magazine, Jesson says she has a lot to offer a potential soulmate. "I'm really giving. I truly believe that a relationship should be equal, but I'm such a lover. I just want to give, give, give."



Megan Shakespeare

Shakespeare, 23, who works in pharmaceutical sales, is a real romantic. Her fantasy first date? An outing on a yacht, followed by a candlelight dinner on the beach, with roses and chocolate. (Someone's been watching *The Bachelor*.)

She is also, she confesses, "addicted to shopping on Victoria's Secret" (online). Her favourite work by her namesake playwright? You guessed it: *Romeo and Juliet*.

So what did they think of her romance obsession in the casting interview? "I don't think that came up."



Brittany Vazzaz

You might think Brittany Vazzaz has the ultimate job when it comes to meeting men, working as an administrative manager at a Vancouver yacht club. Not so, she says. "They're all older and married. And I'm not a home wrecker."

Vazzaz, 26, has tried online dating, has met people through friends, and has also met potential dates walking her Shiba Inu, Sadie Mae Miso. But it's been about two years since her last serious relationship.



Katie Steele

The educational assistant was first in line at casting call Sunday, arriving two-and-a-half hours before the designated start time.

"I'm here to find love and try something new," says Steele, 25, who works with special needs children in kindergarten.

Steele knows she'll have to be careful about her behaviour, should she win one of the coveted *Bachelor* spots. "I'm definitely going to have to keep it classy."



Tracy De Medeiros

Tracy De Medeiros took the ferry over from Victoria, where she is doing her Master's in counselling psychology.

Something on the 28-year-old's dates always goes wrong.

One guy seemed to have real potential: good looking, well-established, made her muffins, massaged her feet. Then they kissed. "It was like a baby bird was pecking at me."



Kristen Maclean

When Kristen Maclean, 29, told her mother that she wanted to audition for *The Bachelor Canada*, her mom balked. "She told me I needed to get my brain checked."

But mom came around. On Sunday morning, she was ironing her daughter's shirt, helping her pick out boots, and asking her mock interview questions.

"Ideally, I would like to be the runner-up, and be on *The Bachelorette*, so I'd have 25 men," says the labour and delivery nurse from Kelowna. "Better odds, that way."