



Amber Kelleher, one of the founders.

## The matchmaker of the famous charges 150,000 dollars

- Kelleher International is a dating agency for the wealthy
- Their clients include Hollywood celebrities and rock stars
- Next month they will gather a select group of singles on a private island

By NOELIA SASTRE | December 10, 2013

Their clients are rich and famous. **Their last names include Rockefeller. They are members of the British royal family, rock stars, Forbes list millionaires, Hollywood celebrities, basketball and American football players, and the president of the Red Sox,** Oprah Winfrey's producer or owners of large companies. They all pay \$150,000 to find their match through Kelleher International, the Mecca for millionaires, with 21 offices in the United States, Canada, England and Sweden.

The founders, **Jill and Amber Kelleher, mother and daughter, predict many happy endings. "We have been doing this for such a long time, that we have a very well-oiled machine. We love our clients.** They are the best and the brightest. We represent actors, writers, supermodels, athletes, politicians, and members of the oldest American families including the Du Pont, Rockefeller or Getty families. Last year, as my mother and I watched the Golden Globes and the Oscars, we kept pinching ourselves because we had at least five clients on the red carpet", Amber tells Vanity Fair.

**At Kelleher they receive requests from well-known American TV figures, like The Today Show's host, Hoda Kotb. "It's like being in high school, but so much better", announced Kotb on her NBC show,** confessing that she had a good time trying to find her soul mate through this dating agency. Paula Abdul also asked them to "find me a wonderful man who will love me forever".

Their greatest challenge is working with well-known actresses that have had bad luck in love and are looking to be happy in a relationship. And without giving away any names, **Amber always gives them this first piece of advice: go out and meet other men instead of trying people in your line of work. "It's easy to fall in love with Vince Vaughn or Gerard Butler, but you have to look farther.** Successful businessmen often get along well with actresses because they don't feel intimidated", assures this modern Matchmaker who receives 1,000 requests per month (700 are women), and only accepts 10 as new clients.

With an international database and dates all around the world, **Kelleher says she has received various requests from Spain, mostly from women, which she keeps on file.** "We had a client from Barcelona a while back. We set up his first date in London. They went out twice and then he flew to Los Angeles to meet me. We had lunch and he gave me his reasons for not liking that woman and I thought of a girl in Beverly Hills with which he could make a great couple", Amber recalls. **The mysterious Spanish millionaire stayed an extra day to meet her and ended up canceling his return trip to Spain.** They flew back to Barcelona together two weeks later, and were married after six months.



Amber Kelleher and Eva Longoria.

Amber, who hosts a CBS radio show about matters of the heart, worked on a reality show produced by Eva Longoria this spring called 'Ready for Love'. **She also has some history with fame: she was an actress on series like Melrose Place and Baywatch.** Her father, Jeremy Lent, was the face of Winston cigarettes in the 70's. Her mother, Jill Kelleher, was a model for the Ford agency, a photographer and used to work as Linda Evans' double on Dynasty. Her stepfather, Billy Hale, has directed television projects such as 'Liberace' or 'Kojak'.

Although the daughter opened Kelleher International's second office where it should be, in Beverly Hills, it was mother Jill who started the business in San Francisco in 1986. **"Thirty years ago, my mother was taking pictures for one of the first dating services that existed in the U.S. She saw the potential and realized that no one was catering to that 1% of the population that has a lot of success and money, but neglects their love life", she points out.**

"To them, the world of dating is very complicated because they need discretion and privacy. The last thing they want to see is a picture of their romantic dinner in a tabloid". That is how this company, which promises confidentiality and personalized service above all else, was born. The employees are forbidden, by contract, to reveal clients' identities. "We meet with each client; we study their request and never set up dates unless we are sure they will work".

The rich and famous have many doubts when they try to find a match. **"It's funny how successful people take risks at work, but not for love. They are afraid to be too demanding. I find that amusing: We are in this business precisely because we know how to tailor to the most demanding",** insists Amber. Their bank accounts may have many zeros, but when it comes to trying to find the right person, they are just like the rest of us mortals. "The only difference is negotiating the conditions of the marriage, but the chemistry works the same way".

**Kelleher helps more men than women,** ages 30 to 50, well-travelled and successful at business. "They are so demanding that they still haven't found the right person. They refuse to give up and that is where we come in. We put the right women in front of them. **Our clients are looking for a well-mannered couple, good-looking enough to have been an actress or model, but who can instead run a company," stresses the businesswoman.** They also work with women ages 25 to 45.

**Their next project will start in January: "2014 will be the year to unite philanthropists and dates.** Many good things can come from putting 30 people with similar tastes on that island. Be it for business or pleasure, as has been the case at the TED Conference or Sundance Festival", concludes Amber. Words from the Matchmaker...