

It Happened One Night (1934), Frank Capra's classic, award-winning romantic cross-country trip and emerging mismatched romance between a street-smart reporter (Clark Gable) and spoiled heiress (Claudette Colbert)

* **My Man Godfrey (1936)** with William Powell as a down-and-out bum hired as a suave, redemptive butler for the well-heeled but wacky Bullock family in Manhattan, including the scatter-brained and zany heiress-daughter Irene (Carol Lombard)

* **Mr. Deeds Goes to Town (1936)**, Frank Capra's tale of a developing romance between a newly-rich hick (Gary Cooper) and a tabloid journalist (Jean Arthur)

* **The Awful Truth (1937)**, with Cary Grant and Irene Dunne as a separated high-society couple - who after lots of squabbling, romantic sabotage, and a custody battle (for their dog) ultimately realized their true love for each other

* **Nothing Sacred (1937)**, in which Vermont woman Hazel Flagg (Carole Lombard) believed to be dying from fatal radium exposure - a sensational hoax of her own doing - was interviewed, entertained, and wined/dined by a slick tabloid city reporter (Fredric March)

* **Stage Door (1937)**, featuring the female camaraderie of a group of aspiring actresses living together, including Katharine Hepburn and Ginger Rogers

* **Bringing Up Baby (1938)**, Howard Hawks' frantic, slapstick tale of the courtship between a straight-laced museum paleontologist (Cary Grant) and a zany heiress (Katharine Hepburn), with complications due to a pet leopard named 'Baby'

* **Holiday (1938)**, George Cukor's comedy about an anti-materialistic Cary Grant with plans to marry socialite Doris Nolan, but when rejected by her conservative father, falls in love with her black-sheep younger sister (Katharine Hepburn)

* **Made for Each Other (1939)**, a comedic romantic drama of the real-life marital travails (financial and interfering in-laws) of a recently-married couple (James Stewart and Carol Lombard)

* **Midnight (1939)**, a witty and sophisticated romantic comedy about marital conflicts, in a story about a penniless and struggling young showgirl (Claudette Colbert) in Paris who was paid to impersonate and masquerade as a Hungarian countess

* **Ninotchka (1939)**, Ernst Lubitsch's wonderful film in which "Garbo Laughs"; the frothy tale of how a stern and unsmiling Russian agent (Garbo) was softened for love by a playboy Count (Melvyn Douglas) in the City of Lights

* **His Girl Friday (1940)**, Howard Hawks' rewritten version of **The Front Page (1931)**, with lightning-paced dialogue and a love-hate

relationship between a divorced and estranged couple (newsman Cary Grant and star reporter Rosalind Russell)

* **My Favorite Wife (1940)**, a marital farce in which widower Cary Grant's recent marriage to Gail Patrick was jolted when his presumed dead wife (Irene Dunne) appeared after spending seven shipwrecked years on a desert island with a handsome and virile scientist (Randolph Scott)

* **The Philadelphia Story (1940)**, from George Cukor, the witty romantic entanglements between suitors Cary Grant, James Stewart, and spoiled socialite Katharine Hepburn

* **The Shop Around the Corner (1940)**, Ernst Lubitsch's sentimental film of the anonymous, pen-pal romantic relationship between bickering, lonely-hearts shop-clerks James Stewart and Margaret Sullavan in old Budapest

* **Ball of Fire (1941)**, Howard Hawks' film about a group of seven stuffy professors (one of whom is a gawky Gary Cooper) who were tutored in slang by a fast-talking dame/moll (Barbara Stanwyck) on the run - a twist on the *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* story

* **The Lady Eve (1941)**, Preston Sturges' intelligent, farcical romantic tale of how a gold-digging, conniving con-artist (Barbara Stanwyck) fell in love with her target - a snake-loving, hapless, gullible brewery heir (Henry Fonda)

* **The Palm Beach Story (1942)**, another ludicrous Preston Sturges classic about the war between the sexes, this time between an idealistic inventor/architect (Joel McCrea) and his pragmatic beautiful wife (Claudette Colbert) during a soul-searching trip to get a divorce in Florida

* **The Talk of the Town (1942)**, George Stevens' comedy about a man (Cary Grant) falsely accused of murder and hiding out in the country home of a Harvard law professor (Ronald Colman) and his landlady (Jean Arthur)

* **The Farmer's Daughter (1947)**, with Loretta Young as a Swedish farm girl who challenged her servant/boss (Joseph Cotten) for his seat in Congress

Rock Hudson and Doris Day: 50s/60s Romantic Comedies

And then squeaky-clean, formulaic, courtship romantic comedies populated the 50s, exemplified by the innocent Rock Hudson/Doris Day bedroom farces:

* **Pillow Talk (1959)**

* **Lover Come Back (1961)**

* **Send Me No Flowers (1964)**

Their best classic, witty and light-hearted 50's sex comedy was **Pillow Talk (1959)**, a highly successful box-office hit that starred Rock Hudson as a womanizing, playboy/songwriter who attempts to woo prissy interior designer/career girl Doris Day. She positively loathed him, especially after over-hearing his conversations on their shared party line.

The squeaky-clean but sexy Doris Day also starred with other leading men of the time in further romantic comedies, including James Cagney (in **Love Me or Leave Me (1955)**), Richard Widmark (in **The Tunnel of Love (1958)**), Clark Gable (in **Teacher's Pet (1958)**), David Niven (in **Please Don't Eat the Daisies (1960)**), Cary Grant (in **That Touch of Mink (1962)**), and James Garner (in **The Thrill of It All! (1963)** and **Move Over, Darling (1963)**).

Roman Holiday (1953), director William Wyler's bittersweet film brought together smitten newspaper reporter Gregory Peck and royal princess-on-the-run Audrey Hepburn in Rome for a brief time; in their classically-romantic, first sad goodbye scene, Hepburn cautions Peck before returning to her entourage: "Promise not to watch me go beyond the corner. Just drive away and leave me as I leave you...I don't know how to say goodbye. I can't think of any words."