

## 'True Blood,' 'Chopped,' 'Glee' stars in Palm Springs

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*(Photo: Elizabeth Duggins/The Workshop Collective)*

On HBO's "True Blood," Ryan Kwanten played the dopey, but hunky womanizer Jason Stackhouse who was about the only main character without a special power.

In real life though — after getting a chance to meet him at the Splash House after party on June 13 — I found out he was down-to-earth and enamored with his girlfriend Ashley Sisino of a couple of years.

The two were spotted at Splash House last year and returned this year for the pool party's third incarnation.

About 3,000 people were expected to attend the two-day event that had some 51 DJ and live acts spread across three stages at the Saguaro Palm Springs hotel, Hacienda Cantina & Beach Club and Hilton Palm Springs.

The EDM-heavy two-day event focuses on house beats and dance music. And new this year was the Splash House afterparty on Friday and Saturday night at Snapshot Palm Springs in the industrial park on Camino Parocela.

## **From 'Glee' to 'Guest Room'**

Actress Lauren Potter who played sassy Becky Jackson on "Glee" attended the Wednesday screening of her film "Guest Room," part of the Palm Springs International ShortFest's Same Planet, Different Worlds program.

The 13-minute short is about a young woman with Down syndrome, played by Potter, who struggles with an unplanned pregnancy with her boyfriend.

The film was written and directed by Joshua Tate and was a SXSW Jury Award nominee this year. He has a cousin with Down syndrome and a passion for projects that empower and include people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In the movie, Potter's character comes to terms on various issues in the film, said Tate: "Am I fit for motherhood? Am I fit for parenthood? Am I an adult? Am I a child?" and she winds up coming to an interesting conclusion."

Potter, who also served as a producer on the film, described the experience as "amazing."

"And we have really good memories too," she added.

"You had a couple of intense scenes but you got through it," Tate said to Potter, sitting by her side Wednesday, prior to the screening.

More information on the film is available at its official website: [guestroommovie.com](http://guestroommovie.com)

## **'Chopped' Chef at Colony Palms**

Luke Reyes, the executive chef at Hollywood eatery Butchers & Barbers and winner of an episode of "Chopped" on the Food Network, was in Palm Springs Wednesday serving as the guest chef at Purple Palm restaurant at Colony Palms for its rotating Chef's Table series.

Unlike his "Chopped" episode from 2013 where viewers got to select the ingredients — such as crunchy cheese curls, chicken in a can and fruit cocktail — Reyes got to select his ingredients and had much more control over how his dinner service turned out.

"We did a 5 course menu reflecting what we do at Butchers and Beer which is casual but refined in the way we prepare things (with) a lot of seasonal ingredients. We shopped everything from the market. We are actually the only ones that had baby artichokes today — 50 pounds," he said.

Each course was paired with a craft cocktail created by Butchers and Beer bar manager Avery Underhill who accompanied Reyes to Palm Springs.

For example, the first course of thyme and roasted garlic oil popcorn with Parker House rolls and smoked trout roe butter, was paired with an Aviation Gin and Prosecco based drink called Honeymoon Hideout.

And the third course chicken liver mousse and King Salmon crudo was paired with the Pin High cocktail made of rhubarb infused gin and balsamic foam.

"I try to keep it fun and relaxed," Reyes said of his dinners.

He said doing "Chopped" helped provide exposure and would love to do another episode.

"That was definitely a very interesting experience. You are not really aware of what you'll be getting. They wanted to wreak havoc on the people who were competing on the show," he said of the fans who selected the cooking ingredients.

As winner of his episode, Reyes won \$10,000 of which he used to buy a motorcycle and go to a Celtics/Lakers game.

He is now working on other Food Network projects, but didn't reveal details.

### **Like daughter like mother**

Fashion designer Michael Costello has famously dressed Beyonce for concerts and award shows and now has added her mother Tina Knowles-Lawson to his list of clients.

The Project Runway alum who used to have a dress shop in downtown Palm Springs, posted this week a couple of photos of Momma Bey in his dresses. She is on the cover of the July Ebony Magazine.

"It was so amazing working on the set with @ebonymagazine with #tinaknowles ...," he posted.

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