

PROGRAM GUIDE
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TV WEEK

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EXCLUSIVE



A signed
X-Files
script



Friends *in* love

Courtney & Co settle down...

More great pics inside!





FROM the moment the hit sitcom began airing on September 22, 1994, the six friends from *Friends* (above) were the hippest pals in the world.

Psychologists even identified a *Friends* syndrome in which twentysomethings are limiting their social contact to smaller groups of very close friends, mirroring the way the fab but fictional Joey (Matt LeBlanc),



Friends & lovers

Monica (Courteney Cox), Rachel (Jennifer Aniston), Ross (David Schwimmer), Phoebe (Lisa Kudrow) and Chandler (Matthew Perry) have little contact with others outside their small social circles.

And why not! In real-life, the Fab Six are finding success on the big and small screens, buying luxurious, multi-million dollar properties and, in some cases, are even getting married and starting families.

Money is not an issue, either. The *Friends* are negotiating to double their salary to \$US300,000 per episode. In return for the pay-rise, which will see each member taking home about \$US7.5 million a year, the US NBC network will get the cast committed to another two seasons of the show which has seen a ratings rush in the US and Australia, where it currently sits in the top five most watched programs each week.

the girls

Jennifer Aniston

Plays: Shopaholic Rachel Green, who spent three seasons getting together with Ross, breaking up with him and then trying to get him back before deciding it was actually better to go it alone. However, while visiting Las Vegas it looks like she may have opted for a quickie wedding to Ross.

In Real Life: Courteney isn't the only friend to be sitting pretty in the romance stakes. Jennifer, 30, is tipped to soon be following in Courteney's altar-bound footsteps, with screen hunk Brad Pitt.

Friends have hinted that Jennifer has

picked out the wedding dress and the pair's recent incognito holiday to Spain was actually a trial honeymoon.

Whatever the plan, one thing's for sure: The relationship has certainly helped Brad get over his failed romance with Gwyneth Paltrow while Jennifer can now leave behind the painful memories of her very public breakup with Tate Donovan.

"Brad's taught me to love again," confesses Jennifer (right, with Brad) in a rare insight into her love-life.

But don't expect to learn too much more, because after sharing too much about

The friends from *Friends* have finally got it all — fame, fortune and, for at least a few, the kind of love for which they have been searching

Courtney Cox

Plays: Neurotic Monica Geller, the chef who, after always falling for the wrong guy, has been in a year-long relationship with Chandler since the pair hooked up at her brother Ross's ill-fated London wedding last season. Based on the roll of a dice in a Las Vegas casino, the pair looked altar-bound when the series recently finished up this year.

In Real Life: The horror movie parody *Scream* was a hit and was also where her on-screen relationship with co-star David Arquette turned into an off-screen love affair. The pair (left) married recently in a ceremony in San Francisco (below, left) and then dashed off for a honeymoon in the exotic West Indies before returning to LA where they finished work on their latest teaming, *The Shrink Is In*, and started work on *Scream 3*.

All too aware of the fact that the *Friends* cast was often referred to as "unlucky in love" Courtney, 35, and David—who credits his bride with saving him from drug addiction and a self-destructive streak—put in months of work at marriage guidance counseling before the big day.

"It's important to resolve issues in advance," Courtney says. "I'm in love in a way I've never experienced before."

While Courtney and David, 27, look for a place to call their home, the blissfully happy couple will settle in her \$US3.1 million pad. For Courtney, who is also capitalising on a series of television ads for the shampoo *Head & Shoulders*, to let anyone add their touches to her picture perfect home is yet another sign that the formerly highly strung neat-freak is settling down and becoming a good deal calmer.



Lisa Kudrow

Plays: Phoebe Buffay, the massage therapist who last season agreed to act as a surrogate mother to her brother's triplets, got into a relationship with a cop this year, co-habited and then moved out when she discovered his police issue firearm was being used to silence wildlife.

In Real Life: In the real world, Lisa, 35, is the most down-to-earth of the cast. She has been married to advertising exec Michel Stern and the happy couple (above) have a son, Julian.

Rumor has it the couple are considering having another child to help fill their \$US2.6 million Beverly Hills home with the pitter-patter of tiny feet.

"There are some things in life more important than money and fame," Lisa reveals. "Julian [above, with Lisa] is one of them—and he's going to need a playmate pretty soon."

Like Courtney, she's also managed to break the big-screen curse with critically and commercially praised roles in *Romy And Michele's High School Reunion*, *The Opposite Of Sex* and *Analyze This*.

"She has it all now—love, brains, beauty," says one of Lisa's many admirers on the *Friends* set. And it seems her role, as well as her bank balance, may in future be plumped up even more.

"The Chandler-Monica relationship has reinvigorated the show," *Friends* executive producer Kevin S Bright says. "But next year we'll be turning more to Lisa."

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affairs of the heart last time around the romance roundabout, both Jennifer and Brad have decided not to talk publicly about their affair.

"The recognition thing can be difficult," she says. "It's hard with relationships when they start, when they end—those sort of things—

which most people like to keep personal."

She does admit, however, that when things are going really well, it's hard not to gush and brag.

"When wonderful things are happening in your life, your instinct is to scream it to the world," she says. "But there's a price you pay for that... I remember with Tate they had us married before we'd even decided if we wanted to go on another date."





Matthew Perry

(who celebrates his 30th birthday on August 19)

Plays: Chandler Bing, the one who never, ever had any luck with women ... until late last season that was, when, in London for the doomed wedding of Ross and Emily, a one-night-stand with Monica turned into a year-long comic romance. One of the questions to be answered when *Friends* resumes next year is: Did Monica and Chandler go through with their Las Vegas wedding or not? We're not telling!

In Real Life: While Matthew's romance with US television executive Jamie Tarses is rockier than a gravel driveway, Matthew (right, with Jamie), whom co-stars call a comic genius and who recently bought a \$US6.5 million home in Beverly Hills (above), says he's not taking anything too seriously.

When it comes to work away from his friends, Matthew – who starred in five television series before finding fame in *Friends* – is working on his own script called *Imagining Emily* and is having another stab at big-screen success with a role in the Bruce Willis film *The Whole Nine Yards*.



David Schwimmer

Plays: Ross Geller who, despite marrying Emily at the end of last year, getting divorced this year and embarrassing himself with Rachel almost every week, still manages to be a true romantic at heart. And maybe – just maybe – considering the shock finale of this season, he was right to keep his hopes up all along.

In Real Life: David, 32, went from a high-profile romance with chart-topping Aussie Natalie Imbruglia to a very private relationship with lookalike actress Mil Avital (below, with David) and is following good mate Jennifer's lead and keeping to himself as much as possible.



Matt LeBlanc **Plays:** Joey Tribbiani, the extremely likeable but extremely hopeless actor who just can't seem to get a break, hasn't a girlfriend – or a clue.

In Real Life: Matt, who has just turned 32, found love with former model and mother of two Melissa McKnight, but is taking his time turning their passionate affair into something more permanent. The pair



(below left) were rumored to be planning a wedding just a few months ago, but a matured Matt agreed to postpone the nuptials while the pair sorted out one or two lingering doubts.

"Those poor kids have already been through one shattered family [Melissa was formerly married to heavy metal musician Anthony Esposito from the band Lynch Mob] and Matt says he's not going to marry their mother until he's absolutely positive that it will last forever," Matt's buddy Al Shea revealed when word of the cancelled celebrations leaked out. ■

WIN

Buy next week's issue of TV WEEK to enter a fantastic competition to win *Friends* videos and merchandise, and the chance to win tickets to the *Head & Shoulders Star Party*