



Above: Katherine and ex-boyfriend, "Roswell" castmate Jason Behr. Right: Posing with "Grey's Anatomy" costar Patrick Dempsey.



'I'm living a dream'

Katherine Heigl has a hit show—and has longtime crush Patrick as a costar!

Life is good for *Grey's Anatomy* beauty Katherine Heigl. Not only is she starring on one of the hottest shows of the year, but she's also getting to work with one of her all-time favorite actors, Patrick Dempsey (Dr. Derek "McDreamy" Shepherd).

"I used to have such a crush on him!" Katherine, 26, tells *INSIDE TV*. "It's really weird to work with someone you've had a crush on for, like, 10 years." Adds the Connecticut native: "I remember when I was 15 years old and shooting a film in L.A. and Colorado. I was really bored because I was barely working, so I rented all these old '80s movies. I watched *Can't Buy Me Love*, and I was like, 'I want to marry him!' And I totally loved Patrick in *Sweet Home Alabama*. I was like, how could [Reese Witherspoon's character] not choose him? Now I know his wife and he has a daughter; and we talk about his home life; so you can't crush on somebody like that anymore. You know them too well. Now he's just one of my good friends!"

Katherine—who plays Izzie, a model-turned-surgical resident with a heart—is taking her time finding her own Mr. Right.

She reveals: "I was in a relationship for four years; it was really intense and felt like the real thing, and then it ended. So, I've gotten a tiny bit cynical. I really am intent on taking it slow right now." She adds: "I'm dating and having a good time meeting people and going out. I just want to keep it casual for a little while because I tend to rush into things, and then I sort of lose sight of what I was looking for in the first place."

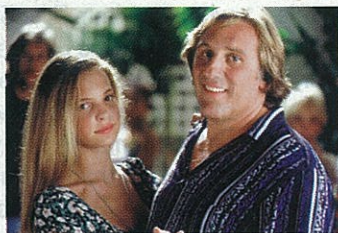
But when the time is right, Katherine already has an idea of what her soul mate should be like. "I think it's hard to be with somebody when they don't know who they are," she says. "So I think when I embark on that next serious relationship, I hope it will be with somebody who is confident in the deci-

sions they make and what they want from life. And have character, integrity and passion."

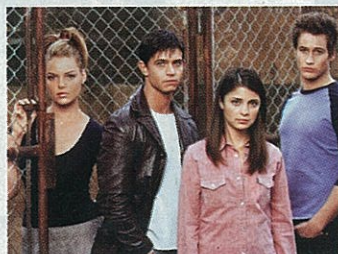
Katherine, a former child model, first tasted fame with the 1994 flick *My Father the Hero* and on the WB series *Roswell* (1999-2002). But she's never had as much fun acting as on her current gig. "Not only is this an amazing career opportunity, but it's an amazingly good time," she says. "We are all close. We go out for a drink or dinner together. I never thought it could be that way. I always thought that work was work, and you couldn't be personal, as well."

In fact, Katherine's "absolute best friend" is T.R. Knight, who plays struggling resident George. "He's somebody I connected with immediately," she says. "We just got back from a little vacation together in Cabo San Lucas. He's just a guaranteed good time."

● By Lauren Brown



Above: With Gerard Depardieu in "My Father the Hero." Below: As Isabel (left) in "Roswell."



On "Grey's Anatomy," Katherine (with Sandra Oh and Chandra Wilson) plays model-turned-surgeon Isabel "Izzie" Stevens.