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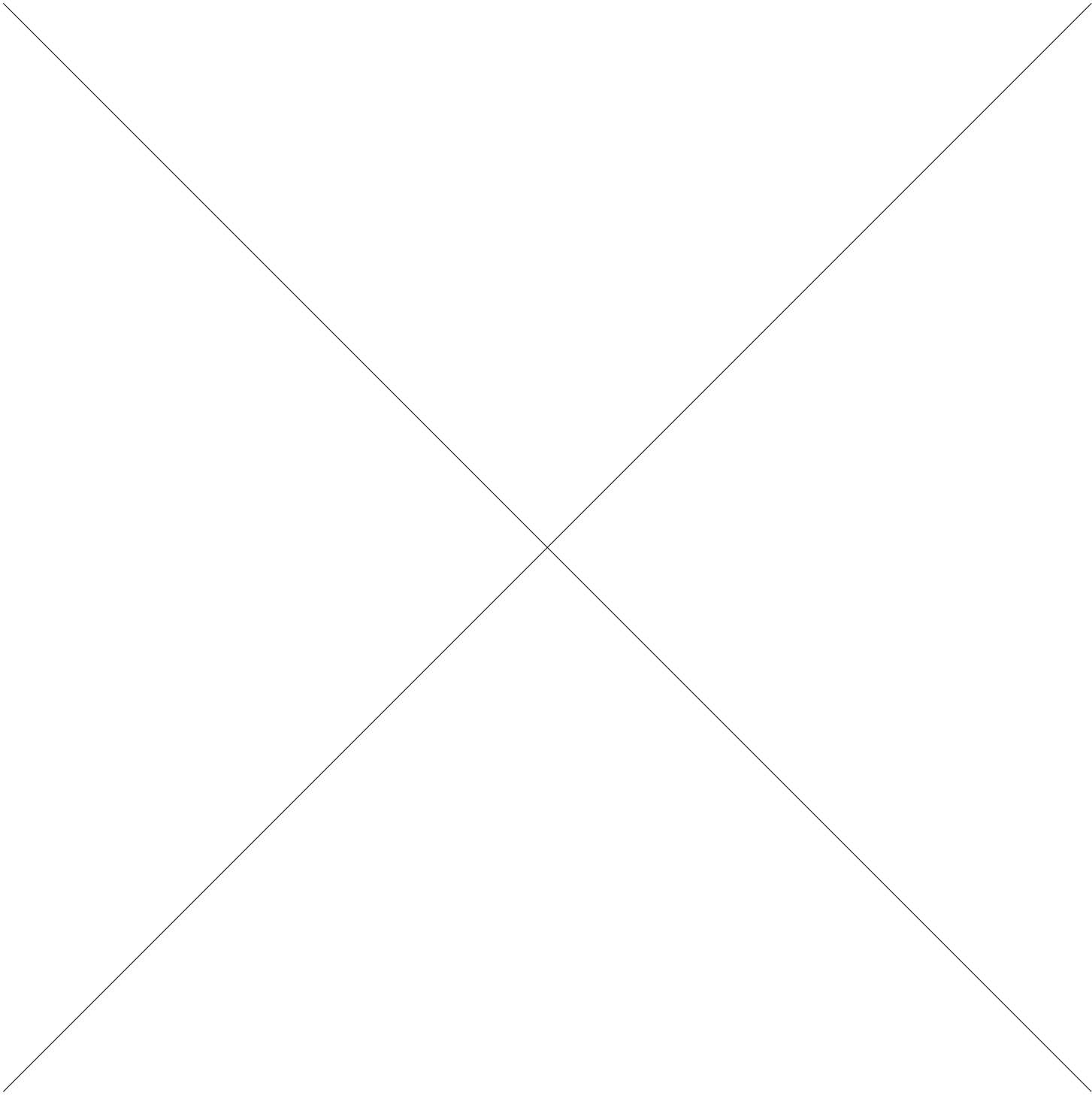
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See Courteney Cox, George Clooney and other stars in early TV guest roles



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TV

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By Rande Dawn

Very few actors break big in their first starring role — but their years of slogging through small TV parts can be a huge boon for fans, who get to enjoy watching them before they were stars!

COZI TV understands this mentality perfectly, and this Thanksgiving is giving us a few dozen reasons to be thankful — with a four-day back-to-back marathon of classic TV episodes showing some of our favorite actors in their earliest roles.



Courteney Cox and George Clooney: So very young! Courtesy COZI TV

Kicking off Thursday, Nov. 22, at 9 a.m. and running through Sunday, Nov. 25, at midnight, the channel's "Unexpected Guests" marathon is one sure way to bring out the holiday spirit. And as a special treat, here are 10 of the faces you can expect to find!

Robert Redford in "The Virginian." Courtesy COZI TV

[Robert Redford](#) ("The Virginian," originally aired Oct. 16, 1963)

The future heartthrob plays a young prisoner in "The Evil That Men Do." He tries to escape while on work duty, but the Virginian asks the warden to give him a second chance.

Harrison Ford, "The Virginian" Courtesy COZI TV

[Harrison Ford](#) ("The Virginian," originally aired Feb. 1, 1966)

As a member of a five-man crew who botch a bank robbery in "The Modoc Kid," Harrison escapes with another member of his gang and takes a family hostage. But who shot first?

Sylvester Stallone, "Kojak." Courtesy COZI TV

[Sylvester Stallone](#) ("Kojak," originally aired Sept. 21, 1975)

Before he was "Rocky," Sylvester Stallone paid the bills in "My Brother, My Enemy" as a young cop who kills a young boy after responding to a crime. Kojak doesn't think Stallone's character is on the up-and-up, though ...

Richard Gere, "Kojak."Courtesy COZI TV

[Richard Gere](#) ("Kojak," originally aired Sept. 26, 1976)

In "Birthday Party," Gere plays a lookout for a liquor store robbery that goes very wrong. (Hey, he should get some notes from Ford.)

Lauren Bacall, "The Rockford Files."Courtesy COZI TV

[Lauren Bacall](#) ("The Rockford Files," originally aired Oct. 12, 1979)

OK, Bacall was already a legend before she signed on to hang out with James Garner, but what a treat! She plays the best friend of a princess in "Lions, Tigers, Monkeys and Dogs: Parts 1 and 2" who believes someone is trying to kill her BFF.

Boy George, "The A-Team."Courtesy COZI TV

[Boy George](#) ("The A-Team," originally aired Feb. 11, 1986)

Boy George was hardly looking to make it big in acting, but he was already a major pop music celebrity when he played himself in "Cowboy George." After a country performer named Cowboy George fails to show for a performance in a honky-tonk, the Culture Club lead singer takes his place — and wins everybody over! (Nevertheless, we're quite sure fisticuffs occurred at some point.)

Bryan Cranston, "Murder, She Wrote."Courtesy COZI TV

[Bryan Cranston](#) ("Murder, She Wrote," originally aired April 6, 1986)

Before he was "Breaking Bad," Cranston appeared in "Menace, Anyone?" as the charming boyfriend of a tennis tournament director. Bonus: "Terminator's" Linda Hamilton also stars!

Courteney Cox, "Murder She Wrote."Courtesy COZI TV

[Courteney Cox](#) ("Murder, She Wrote," originally aired Sept. 28, 1986)

Cox, who would go on to become one of our best "Friends," plays Jessica Fletcher's niece in "Death Stalks the Big Top: Parts 1 and 2." Just before her wedding, Cox receives a gift and letter from her grandfather ... who everyone thought was dead!

George Clooney, "Murder, She Wrote."Courtesy COZI TV

[George Clooney](#) ("Murder, She Wrote," originally aired March 15, 1987)

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As the newly engaged son of a comic in "No Laughing Murder," Clooney enjoys a dinner to celebrate his good fortune ... but shortly thereafter, someone is found dead.

Julia Roberts, "Miami Vice." Courtesy COZI TV

[Julia Roberts](#) ("Miami Vice," originally aired May 6, 1988)

Roberts is an art gallery manager by day and assistant to a drug lord at night (hey, art won't pay those bills) in "Mirror Image." She gets to have a romance with Don Johnson (playing his alter ego, "Sonny Burnett") that we sense won't end well.



[Julia Roberts talks 'Mystic Pizza' on TODAY in 1988](#)

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