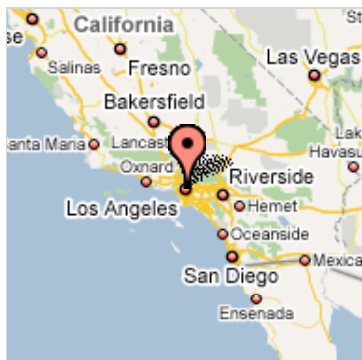


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# Celebs gear up for Emmy Awards with freebies, food

By SANDY COHEN – 3 hours ago

LOS ANGELES (AP) — With the 60th Primetime Emmy Awards just days away, Hollywood is swimming with stars. They're beckoned by gift suites and parties around town, while round-the-clock preparations are under way at the Nokia Theatre, where the awards will be presented Sunday.

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**SEAL WILL BE THERE:** Heidi Klum isn't nervous about co-hosting the Emmys. Just ask her husband.

"You know Heidi. I don't think she really gets nervous," he said on the red carpet Thursday during a Hollywood event at Paramount Studios honoring film producer Arnon Milchan and celebrating the 60th anniversary of Israel. "She's really excited. She's working hard."

Klum was so busy, she was unable to join Seal at the last minute at the glitzy event. The R&B singer, who attended last year's ceremony alongside Klum, said he would again be in the audience to support his supermodel wife.

However, Jason Alexander, who has been nominated for several Emmys but never won, is planning to steer clear of the show.

"Unless they're nominating me just because they like me, I can walk right by it and wave at it and not have to care, although I do have some friends that are nominated that I'll be rooting for at home," Alexander said before the event.

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**CHAMPAGNE DINNER AND EMMY DREAMS:** While the city bustled below, six Emmy-nominated actresses gathered high in Beverly Hills to drink, dish and celebrate their success at a special women's dinner to toast this year's nominees.

"It's so sweet to get the female performers together, sit down, no pressure and have some cute food and some champagne or wine that you never tried," said Chandra Wilson, nominated three consecutive years for her work on "Grey's Anatomy." "You come away feeling educated and tipsy."

Alfre Woodard, Sandra Oh, Holland Taylor, Kathryn Joosten, Debbie Allen and Phylicia Rashad gathered poolside on the patio of a private home in the hills with sparkling views of the city for a four-course meal, put on by champagne maker Perrier-Jouet.

"This is very special," said Rashad, who was last nominated for an Emmy in 1986. "It's ladies night — the ladies getting together just being the ladies. It's very, very nice."

The no-pressure event stands in stark contrast to Emmy night, when all will be competing for awards and navigating the hoopla that comes with them.

"The Emmys, it's crazy," said Oh, who brought her mother to the dinner. "You're in your own world, you're stressed out about a lot of things. It's very exciting and it's difficult to have more than maybe 10 seconds to actually connect with someone. I love that this is only the women in a very camaraderie kind of feeling and getting to know women. I just really appreciate it."

Woodard echoed that sentiment.

"These are your homies," she said. "We are the people who work together. We are the people who've walked the same walk and we're the lucky ones who get to work. Once you're thrown into something like the Emmys ... you never see any of your people that night. It's you walking amongst the jugglers and the fire eaters and you're cast in a different role. So it's really great to be together because these are our people."

**GIFTS GALORE:** Nearly a dozen gift suites scattered throughout the city drew celebs in search of free jeans, handbags and other luxury goodies.

Rachel Leigh Cook, "Dancing With the Stars" contestant Maurice Greene and stars from "High School Musical" were among those collecting gifts at Melanie Segal's Celebrity Emmy House in West Hollywood, a multistory private home with views of the storied Sunset Strip. Stars perused products including blow dryers, blue-tooth headsets, shoes and sunglasses.

Gift suites "are a big deal," said actress Monique Coleman, who grabbed candles, bath products and a Rock the Vote T-shirt. "They shouldn't be taken for granted."

Her "High School Musical" co-star Kaycee Stroh called the freebies "a huge blessing," adding that she was most interested in finding hats and jewelry.

Greene was after DVDs — and anything else that caught his eye.

"Everybody loves free stuff," he said. "It's good to mingle with the people providing the stuff because other things could come from this."

The Olympian was captivated by the rock 'n' roll inspired pieces by Dussault, which gave away \$700 leather totes and \$400 hoodies. But Greene just grabbed a cap. Other celebs relaxed on the house's three patios, where they enjoyed manicures, tarot readings and live piano music.

Down the street at the Secret Room suite, stars such as Deborah Gibson and Zorianna Kit stocked up on vegan cosmetics and electromagnetic-charged water. Some had eyelash extensions applied, while others indulged in psychic readings, manicures and chair massages.

Actress Phoebe Price hit both suites with her mother.

"I always like seeing the latest stuff," she said as her mother kept an eye on her bulging bags of gifts. "I get inspired to see what different designers have to offer."

Price said she plans to attend Sunday's Emmy ceremony in a "very provocative" dress: "I'll cause quite a stir."

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**RED CARPET ROLLOUT:** The Emmy red carpet doesn't resemble a long, elegant hallway. It's more like a living room.

The awards ceremony is being held at the Nokia Theatre for the first time, and instead of a stretch of red carpet, the entire plaza across from the Staples Center will be a carpeted canvas for celebrity interviews and photos.

Preparations began a week ago, with bleachers and platforms constructed outside the new theater. The parking garage is also part of the show: The roof will serve as a pressroom, while the bottom floor is where winners will claim their Emmy trophies.

The Emmy Awards will air live Sunday on ABC.

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AP Entertainment Writer Derrik J. Lang contributed to this report.

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