Halloween at Bates Motel

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Max Thieriot, one of the stars of TV's creepy Bates Motel is also an up-and-coming winemaker from a family of grape-growers. F&W casts him in a wine-centric Halloween dinner.

At first glance, Max Thieriot is the picture of a young actor headed toward stardom.

Currently playing the role of Dylan Massett (Norman Bates's long-lost half brother) on *Bates Motel,* A&E's prequel to the classic Hitchcock movie *Psycho,* he also co-starred in the creepy thriller *House at the End of the Street* alongside Jennifer Lawrence. He's good-looking enough that he got his start as a model for Gap.

In real life, Thieriot is a vintner as well as an actor. His parents' eponymous vineyard grows some of the best Pinot Noir in California, most famously for Ted Lemon, the winemaker and owner of Littorai. "I used to play in the vineyard when I was a kid," Thieriot says, but his recent ambitions are more serious. In 2011, with close friends Christopher Strieter and Myles Lawrence-Briggs, he started Senses Wines. They make about 2,000 cases a year and will soon augment their regular lineup (a Sonoma Coast Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and rosé) with several single-vineyard bottlings.

Working harvest while shooting a TV series in Canada isn't easy. "I've had times where we've finished filming in the afternoon, then I've flown home, worked harvest all night and the next morning been driving 14,000 pounds of fruit to Calistoga," Thieriot says. But the effort has paid off in wines like the complex 2013 Senses Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir ($40). Despite being only their third release, it can compete with wines from producers with far more experience.

Max's double life inspired us at F&W to imagine a Bates Motel Halloween wine dinner. For the recipes, we enlisted Sonoma County chef Duskie Estes, of Zazu Kitchen + Farm in Sebastopol, a family friend of the Thieriots. Combining delicious with spooky can be a challenge, but Estes

managed it in dishes like a whole roasted sumac-dusted cauliflower that's sliced with an alarmingly hatchet-like cleaver, and dark-chocolate s'mores puddings served with a blood-red Pinot Noir syrup.

A&E will start shooting season four of *Bates Motel* in the next month or two (to air spring 2016), and, considering that, Thieriot has an idea: What if Halloween were to play a role *in* the show? "How creepy would that be?" he says. "If Norman Bates were just sitting there outside the motel, being nice to the kids and handing out candy? That's sick and twisted enough that I'm going to have to tell the producers about it."