



As well as a lot of learning in that first season, David also received a few presents...like the car above!

David Cassidy is, and, just to prove it, consider his birthday celebration for a minute.

To begin with, David invited a few of his friends over to his house in the afternoon. Most of them were musicians and actors as well, or at least somehow involved in show business, so they were especially grateful, both for the chance to see each other and the holiday!

One thing which was especially significant about David's twenty-first birthday is hard, I think, for us to understand. You see, in some of the states in America, it's against the law to take even a single drink before your twenty-first birthday.

Well, those days were over! "Everybody kept making corny jokes about me being 'legal', and everyone brought something to drink when they came around.

"I wouldn't exactly say that we overdid it, but I think we were all feeling pretty good. But it's hard to say whether or not it was the drink or the companionship."

The afternoon passed on with lots of laughter and a few snacks, as well as a quick dip in the pool, but as evening began to fall, everyone was feeling a bit hungry. So Sam came up with a brainstorm why not go out to dinner? All the group agreed, and they only agreed on one condition—David was not to pay for a single thing!

SURROUNDED

Everyone knew that David was keen on seafood, and someone suggested a small, intimate seafood restaurant in Venice, California. That's a small, pleasant town on the coast, about 45 miles from where David was living at the time.

So it was settled. "How could I argue on my birthday," laughed David at the memory. "There I was, twenty-one, surrounded by my best friends, and starving!"

Off they drove, sharing cars and relishing a quiet meal, well, not too quiet, perhaps, but pleasant all the same! David ordered an enormous bucket of one of his favourite foods—steamed clams.

And, of course, there was something else on the menu that gave David a great deal of pleasure to order—a bottle of wine! "Of course," as he told me, "it gave me a kick to order my first bottle of drink. I had had wine

before, of course, but it was really something to order that first bottle.

"And the group were really funny, they made the poor waitress check my identification before they would let her serve the wine."

But his birthday, the first after his phenomenal rise to public stardom in the first season, brought another surprise. This one wasn't so private, but it was every bit as gratifying, and it made David feel a tremendous rush of pleasure.

"When I got home and rang my answering service, I found that the Partridge Family Fan Club had rung, and left a message. That was n unusual, and David popped in the next evening to see what they wanted. And that was the biggest, bulkiest, most astonishing surprise of all!

"There was an entire room, with presents and parcels and packages, not to mention the letters full of birthday greetings," David told me. "I just couldn't believe it—it was the most amazing sight I had ever seen!"

And David didn't want to miss a thing, either. So he rang up half a dozen friends to come down and help him. He wanted to see everything as it was opened.

"I would be unwrapping something," he told me, "and then someone would shout 'Hey, look at this!', and I'd go over to have a look. But by the time I had seen it, someone else would give me a shout, and I'd run over to see what else I had received.

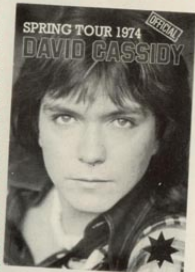
"Eventually, I think I saw everything, and I managed to read the letters and cards as well, although that took just a bit longer."

"I guess it just never dawned on me that anyone I'd never met could care anything about me. But I learned pretty quickly." And that caring became mutual. David, who was really dragging sometimes, would now know that it wasn't in vain.

"Sure," he said, "I knew that the show's ratings were good, and that we were popular. But somehow, reading all those cards and letters on a day that I thought was only important to me, it just all of a sudden registered."



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