

True Blood's Lauren Bowles Conjures a Healthy Life

by Kim Henderson

Lauren Bowles bubbles over with delight and enthusiasm for life. She's open, approachable, warm and wise. Fans of HBO's *True Blood* know her as the Wiccan Holly Cleary, but some may also recognize her from films such as *Hall Pass* or *The Heartbreak Kid* or any of the numerous hit television shows she has appeared in. The half-sister of Julia Louis-Dreyfus, she first earned her Screen Actors Guild card on *Seinfeld*. But that was many moons ago. Today, married to actor Patrick Fischler, she thoroughly enjoys her newfound success as well as being mom to her three-year-old daughter, Fia. On an unusually humid and overcast Los Angeles summer day, we were fortunate to catch up with Lauren on break from shooting to talk about one of her favorite subjects—health.

NUTRITION

Basic health tenets like physical exercise, good rest and sound nutrition were taught to Lauren by her mother and father, who at ages 79 and 81, respectively, are thriving. However, her understanding of nutrition has evolved dramatically over time. "Of course, in the '80s, our understanding of nutrition was different. We had to drink milk at every meal. Today, with what I've read about the dairy industry and milk consumption, water has become the new milk," Lauren explains. Instead of juice or milk, Lauren gives her daughter water or whole fruit and finds other sources for calcium.

While studying at New York University in New York City in her 20s and even after she moved to California, she says she didn't eat very well. But at 35, she read two significant books that made a major impact—*The China Study* and Alejandro Junger's *Clean*. By doing 21-day cleanses, Lauren discovered how much better she felt when she eliminated certain foods. She has been eating a mostly vegan diet ever since, and buying organic is a priority, both for health and the environment.

Yet Lauren has an ease and imperfection about her health choices. They don't limit her. "My husband and I are big foodies. When we go to a restaurant and I know where the meat is from, I indulge every now and then. I'm not committed 100 percent to any prescribed diet. But most of the time, we follow a vegan diet—maybe 80 per-

cent of the time. As an avid baker, what surprises me most is how delicious you can bake incredibly healthy food," she says gleefully. "I really perfected the sugar-free vegan chocolate chip cookie! Super overripe bananas and date paste provide all the sweetener you need, and they provide a little moisture that works well with no egg. Instead of butter, I use virgin coconut oil. And I use spelt flour. It's very digestible, high in protein and has less gluten than regular flour. Then I add the vegan chocolate chips and sometimes some dried cherries. Pure heaven," she gushes.

BODY AND SPIRIT

Lauren takes her exercise, yoga and meditation pretty seriously. Thankfully, the shooting schedule for *True Blood* allows her some days off, and she's able to work out about five days a week. "I've become gym rat," Lauren admits. She tries to get to yoga a few times a week as well. "When I get five workouts in and three yoga classes a week, my body is humming," she says. The biggest challenge is getting up just a little earlier for her meditation. "When I take the time to be still for a half hour or so before my daughter wakes up, the entire trajectory of my day changes," she explains. Lauren says that meditation teaches her to take a breath and pause before reacting in any given situation. It allows her a moment to choose what's best. With a laugh, she explains, "But I do that like 5 percent of the time. I'm so not perfect!" Slow steady progress is her goal. "I'm hoping that 5 percent will eventually turn to 10 percent. The big joke is that you can meditate anywhere. I could be in a line at a drugstore and close my eyes and take a deep breath and even that would make a difference."

LIVING THE DREAM

In describing what it is like to be a cast member of *True Blood*, Lauren uses words like "delicious," "a dream" and "I'm so lucky." Lauren's outlook is not too different from that of her *True Blood*'s character's Wiccan beliefs. "Funny, on paper we are so different. Holly is a struggling single mom with a different background. But the Wicca religion is very beautiful. It is about honoring and worshiping nature—looking for the divine in everything. And that's how I live my life. There are similarities," she explains. I get the sense that Lauren fully relishes and appreciates the beauty in motherhood, work, married life and healthy living. On a foundation of health, she's living the dream! ■

True Blood airs Sundays on HBO at 9pm.



I love **UAS Labs DDS Plus 3** probiotic formula! You have to understand, I'm a huge probiotic gal and I have tried all the brands on the market. DDS Plus 3 is fantastic. I can get digestive issues and it's important to promote a healthy balance of flora in the body. I take two capsules in the morning on an empty stomach and two at night, and it keeps everything running and humming.



I love Garden of Life products. I'm a huge smoothie-for-breakfast gal and am always on the lookout for great new raw protein products. I just tried **Garden of Life's Chocolate Cacao RAW Protein**, and it is absolutely delicious! I mixed it with unsweetened almond milk and added blueberries and banana. It tasted like a chocolate milk shake!

I am a big believer in omega-3s. I take a fish oil supplement every day. There are several quality brands. I just learned about **PotentSea's Wild Alaskan Sockeye Omegas** made from sustainably harvested wild Alaskan sockeye salmon. It's very pure, which I like and rich in the antioxidant astaxanthin. And we can all use more antioxidants! The company also makes a great supplement from nutrient and antioxidant-rich red, brown and green marine algae called **PotentSea Sea Vegetables**. Some of the longest-lived people in the world have a diet that incorporates sea vegetables. I'm looking forward to trying it.



Lauren's Natural Product Picks!

I use **Sovereign Silver's Nasal Spray, Immune Support Dropper** and **Silver First Aid Gel** and I swear by this stuff! I don't know what kind of magic it has—but I absolutely love it. The immune support is fantastic. At the first hint of a cold, I spray some Sovereign Silver into my daughter's nasal passage or my own and it usually wards it off. Brilliant. Typically, the gel is great for cuts and burns.



I'm such a believer in garlic! It's a magic cure-all. Anything garlic related—I'll take it, thank you. **Kyolic Aged Garlic Extract (AGE)** is concentrated for maximum health benefits and it is odorless too! I just started taking the **Kyolic Stress & Fatigue Relief** formula. You have the AGE for immune support and then gamma-amino butyric acid (GABA) for relaxation and energizing B vitamins. I love that it is all natural.



For any dish that I used to flavor with soy sauce, I have completely turned to **Bragg Liquid Aminos**. Bragg Liquid Aminos has that delicious savory flavor, and you get all the health benefits of the aminos. It's just a fantastic flavor enhancer. It's great on veggies and rice and especially stir fries. But you can use Bragg Liquid Aminos on anything to enhance the flavor whether it be eggs or soups. Anything that calls for savory flavor.



Barlean's Organic Extra Virgin Coconut Oil is a revelation. It's so healthy for you. It's a great butter replacer. I love to bake with it. It's a healthy all-natural alternative to butter and margarine and it just makes everything scrumptious!



Aubrey's Natural Sun SPF 30+ is fantastic. I'm a very fair, fair girl. My skin tone is either white or red. There's no in between. I know when a sunscreen works because I turn bright pink and Aubrey's Natural Sun SPF 30+ works. It goes on smooth and absorbs nicely. I love that it is completely natural and chemical free.



When I first heard about tooth powder, I must confess, I was a little skeptical. But oh my goodness, I tell you, **Eco-Dent DailyCare Toothpowder** makes my teeth sparkle! You only need a little and it effervesces into this lovely foam quickly that feels great. I absolutely love it. It's the perfect travel size too. My husband and I also like the **Eco-Dent GentleFloss** as it is not made with any creepy chemicals like some of the conventional brands.

I am a huge fan of **Bragg Organic Raw Apple Cider Vinegar**. It will keep us all living until we are 100. I love it! I use it in salad dressings. I make a health tonic tea out of it. I mix it with lemon, water and a cayenne tincture. Sometimes I sweeten it with stevia or raw natural honey. It's great if you heat it up and drink it for a sore throat. Or if you drink it with just lemon and water, it makes a great mocktail. I add the cayenne tincture to it if I am fighting something off. Apple cider vinegar is the best in the world and particularly Bragg's—that's my brand!



I love **Garden of Life's RAW Probiotics Kids** in the powdered form. It's fantastic! I've been giving it to my daughter forever and she rarely gets sick.

Beauty Without Cruelty's Rosemary Mint Tea Tree Shampoo & Conditioner are phenomenal! First, they are completely vegan and smell like a luxurious spa. I have very fine hair and most shampoos leave my hair dry and tangled, but Beauty Without Cruelty's shampoo and conditioner leave my hair smooth and silky.



I love **Garden of Life's Raw One for Women** because it is a whole food raw multivitamin, and there are no fillers or isolates that you get in a conventional multivitamin. It feels like it's so much more absorbable for the body.



I'm a huge fan of **Earth Friendly Products**. I use **Dishmate Liquid Dishwashing Cleaner** and **Wave Auto Dishwasher Gel**. We only use green products in our home. Our last hold out was the dishwasher detergent. My husband didn't believe that any natural detergent would work as well as the conventional brands. But then we kept reading about the phosphates and it occurred to me that whatever we use leaves a residue on our plates. We tried Wave Auto Dishwasher Gel and we found that it works just as well as any chemical cleaner—it gets everything clean! Also, I love that Earth Friendly Products smell fantastic without all of those chemicals. I love the pear-scented Dishmate. And the surface cleaner **Parsley Plus** works just as well as any chemical counterpart, but with a lovely fresh natural smell.

