

NBC's 'Ready for Love' Contestant Ben Patton Says, "When You've Fallen in Love, You Can't Deny That It Exists"



By [Whitney](#)

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It's no secret that dating-based reality shows like [The Bachelor](#) and *The Bachelorette* are a huge hit among fans – even if they very rarely end with a match made in heaven (or on some Caribbean island, as is often the case). In twenty-four seasons of the ABC shows, only two couples, both from *The Bachelorette*, have made it to the altar: Trista Rehn and Ryan Sutter and Ashley Hebert and J.P. Rosenbaum. For those of us who can't give up the hope that someone *can* find their soul

mate on television, NBC introduces [*Ready for Love*](#), a show that enlists three talented matchmakers to help three eligible men find the one thing missing in their lives: true love. Adding credibility to the show, which premieres tonight, are three big names: Eva Longoria is an executive producer, while Bill and Giuliana Rancic are the hosts.

One of those lucky bachelors is Ben Patton, a 30-year-old international financier from Dallas. Patton moved back to Texas from Dubai in 2011 because, even though business was great overseas, he was missing balance in his life. “I didn’t have a personal life that was really growing, and I wanted to move back to the states so that I could establish my roots a little more,” he shares. “Truth be told, I wanted to start dating again and hopefully meet someone special.”

Related Link: [‘Ready for Love’ Host Giuliana Rancic Says, “Having a Strong Marriage is the Greatest Example You Can Set for Your Child”](#)

As for why *now* was the time to look for love, Patton says it was mostly social awareness. Attending wedding after wedding without a date – “I’ve attended more weddings as a single guy than anyone else I know!” – he realized that a part of his life was missing. “Everyone I know is getting married, and all of the sudden, it started moving up on my priority list. Everything was great, but I wanted to fill that gap – and really, that gap, at the end of the day, is the most important thing.”

Of course, even fans of similar shows would be skeptical of actually finding love on television. And Patton was no different. As he explains, “I wasn’t home but eight months before I got a call from NBC. Eva got on the phone, and she’s pretty good at selling you on an idea. She convinced me that the format was completely different than other dating shows.”

Unlike *The Bachelor*, *Ready for Love* shows the process of

picking the girls who will be the best fit for the three guys. Matchmakers Amber Kelleher-Andrews, Tracy McMillan and Matthew Hussey each select four compatible girls to introduce to each bachelor. "It's not about finding a bunch of cute, little girls who are going to be dramatic for the cameras," Patton says. "It's about introducing you to the other guys first; then, when women apply for the show and the matchmakers see real compatibility, that's when they decide who they want to put on the show."

He adds, "If there's any sort of competition, it's among the matchmakers to prove that they know what it takes to find a match for us – not among the guys or the girls."

During the first week, the guys talk to their twelve matches and get to know each of the ladies without ever meeting them face-to-face. Based on the chemistry that they feel, they eliminate three girls and then start the dating process with the nine remaining contestants.

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Like many people, Patton had never worked with a matchmaker prior to the show. In fact, he never felt like he needed help from a professional when it came to his love life. He describes *Ready for Love* as a "learning experience" and says it definitely changed his mind. "I started to realize that it's really okay to go to someone for help and admit that you're obviously doing something wrong. At the end of the day, 90 percent of what matchmakers tell people is pretty much common sense, but it's easier to hear it from a professional than to hear it from your best friend, your girlfriend or your parents."

Even with professional help, Patton still had to believe that true love exists. It's easy to become jaded after a few failed relationships, but this bachelor didn't let a broken heart

deter him. "When you've fallen in love – and I've been in love before – you can't deny that it's there, that it exists," he says with conviction. "When you are really, absolutely in love with someone, everything takes a sideline to that relationship. You just want to make sure that person is okay because she means so much to you."

So did Patton find that all-consuming, lasts-for-a-lifetime love? While he can't reveal too much about the show's ending, he does say that he's very happy. Of course, it's been a struggle to keep his relationship under wraps for so many months. "We're always having to see each other in secret," he shares. "It's like, 'Hey, I'll meet you in Arkansas for the weekend.' We're going to towns where people won't recognize us so that we can go out to dinner together."

Filming the show last summer, he's had a lot of time to reflect on his journey, and given the outcome, he encourages people to never give up. "It's really easy to get frustrated in relationships and just throw in the towel. For a long time, that's what I did," he explains. "But you should just hang on because there's somebody out there who probably feels the same way. You guys will run into each other one day and be like, 'Where the hell have you been my whole life?'"

In other words, always be *Ready for Love*.

Don't miss the two-hour series premiere of '[Ready for Love](#)' on Tuesday, April 9th at 9/8c NBC. For more information about Ben, follow him on Twitter @Ben_Patton.