

DVD Review: USA Hit Shows ‘Covert Affairs,’ ‘Royal Pains’ Make Perfect Summer Escapism

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on May 20, 2011 - 3:28pm

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CHICAGO – USA has a proven formula for success and they show no sign of slowing down in that department, adding new hits like “Covert Affairs” and “Fairly Legal” to a line-up of proven successes like “Burn Notice” and “Psych.” The first season of the very hit-and-miss “Affairs” and the second season of the more-consistent “Royal Pains” recently hit DVD from Universal and they’re both sets designed for fans of the network.



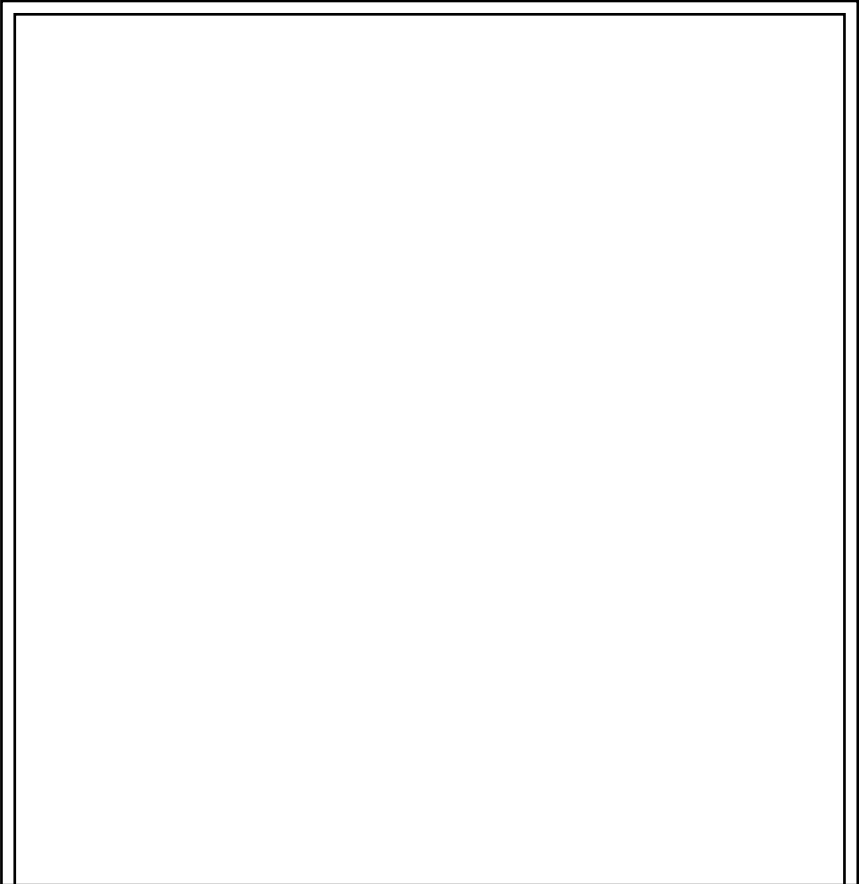
DVD Rating: **4.0/5.0**

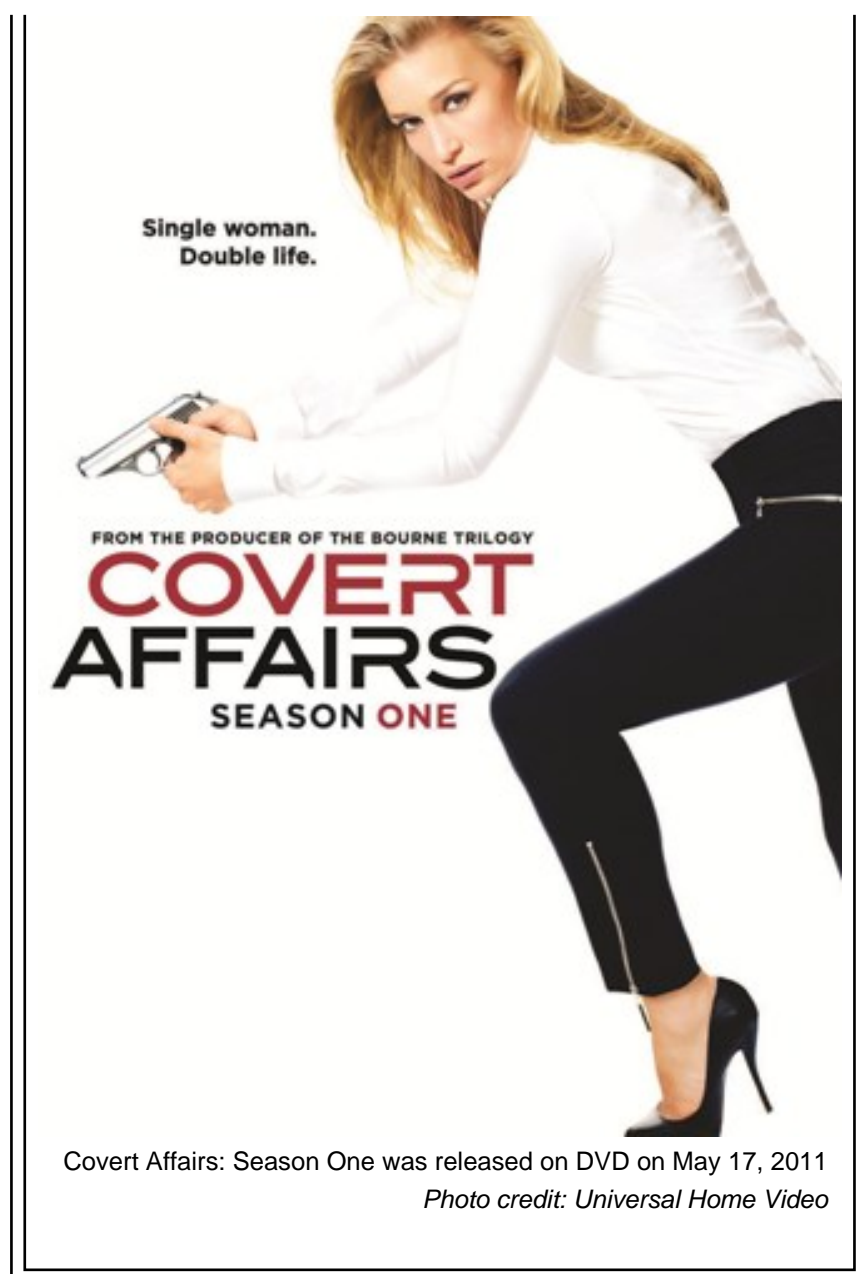
I’m still not sold on “Covert Affairs.” I’m curious to see if the show can develop into something more interesting in its soon-to-debut second season and the cast is certainly strong enough to do so, but the show is too inconsistent and doesn’t stand up to comparisons to the best of USA (“Monk,” “Burn Notice,” “Royal Pains,” “White Collar”). Piper Perabo is not always a convincing lead, but the supporting cast often picks up her slack as Peter Gallagher, Eriq La Salle, Anna Chlumsky, and Christopher Gorham all do strong work.



Royal Pains: Season Two was released on DVD on May 17, 2011
Photo credit: Universal Home Video

The DVD set for the first season of “Covert Affairs” includes all eleven episodes spread out over three standard discs, each with their own slim case. Cast & Crew Commentaries appear on the pilot, 7th episode (“Communication Breakdown”), and season finale (“When the Levee Breaks”). Other interesting supplemental material include deleted scenes, a gag reel, “Welcome to the Farm,” “Blind Insight,” “Set Tour,” and a PSA called “Celebrate the ADA.”





I’m a much bigger fan of “Royal Pains,” one of the most consistently entertaining summer diversions on television. There are episodes of this show that I absolutely adore. Not only does it take place in a beautiful setting, but the writing and acting are much better than they’ve been given credit for being. The core cast, especially Mark Feuerstein and Reshma Shetty, are spectacular. It’s just a fun program and if you haven’t seen both seasons, you’re missing some of the most well-done escapism on television.

Once again, Universal treats fans right with a similar amount of supplemental material to “Covert Affairs.” The second season of “Royal Pains” was split in two, so there’s 18 episodes here, spread out over four discs in two slim cases. Deleted scenes, commentaries, and featurettes called “Guest Starring” and “Location, Location, Location” fill out the set.

“Covert Affairs: Season One”

Synopsis:

Meet Annie Walker (Piper Perabo, Coyote Ugly): smart, stunning and the CIA’s newest field operative in one of their most secretive branches. Suddenly summoned by headquarters for active duty one month before training is over, she’s quickly thrown into a shadowy world full of cons, killers and international crime rings. What she doesn’t know is there’s something - or someone - from her past that her bosses want badly enough to put her in harm’s way. She just has to survive long enough to find out why. From the producer of the Bourne films comes the action-packed first season of the smash-hit espionage series, with co-stars Christopher Gorham (Ugly Betty) and Sendhil Ramamurthy (Heroes), and guest stars Peter Gallagher (The O.C.), Eriq La Salle (ER), Lauren Holly (NCIS), Liane Balaban (Last Chance Harvey) and Anna Chlumsky (My Girl). Critics are praising it as “the best new drama series of the season” (Francine Brokaw, suite101.com).

“Royal Pains: Season Two”

Synopsis:

Spend your summer with Dr. Hank Lawson (Mark Feuerstein): where the tides are high, bank account balances are higher and the patients are just high maintenance. Because of his strong convictions and straight-shooting style, the “concierge doctor’s” practice is growing...and with the return of his estranged father (special guest star Henry Winkler), so is his family. With puzzling cases involving a faithful cop with an STD, a winemaker with a troubled palate and a reality show where all the contestants are stricken ill, Hank needs his own innovative talents and the support of his fast-talking brother Evan (Paulo Costanzo) more than ever.

“Covert Affairs: Season One” stars Piper Perabo, Christopher Gorham, Kari Machett, Peter Gallagher, Anne Dudek, Clarke Peters, and Emmanuelle Vaugier. It was created by Matt Corman and Chris Ord. The DVD was released on May 17th, 2011.

“Royal Pains: Season Two” stars Mark Feuerstein, Paulo Costanzo, Jill Flint, Reshma Shetty, Campbell Scott, and Henry Winkler. The DVD was released on May 17th, 2011.

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