

# The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept **THE** definitive answer. This week it's TV presenter **Gloria Hunniford**

**The prized possession you value above all others...** My 12 albums and drawers full of old family photos. They're the keys to my precious memories and are irreplaceable.

**The biggest regret you wish you could amend...** Never learning to play the piano. I'd love to be able to play at parties with everyone singing along.

**The temptation you wish you could resist...** Spoiling my Cavalier King Charles spaniels, Gemma and Roxy. I make a fuss of them and give them titbits from the table, which I shouldn't.

**The book that holds an everlasting resonance...** The Power Of Now by Eckhart Tolle, which was so special to my daughter Caron during her seven-year fight against breast cancer [Caron tragically died aged 41 in April 2004]. It helped her to live in the moment.



**The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day...** I'd reset the computers that regulate London's traffic lights. So many are timed badly and cause unnecessary hold-ups.

**The pet hate that makes your hackles rise...** People wearing rucksacks who turn around and smack you in the face. They don't seem to be aware what they have on their backs.

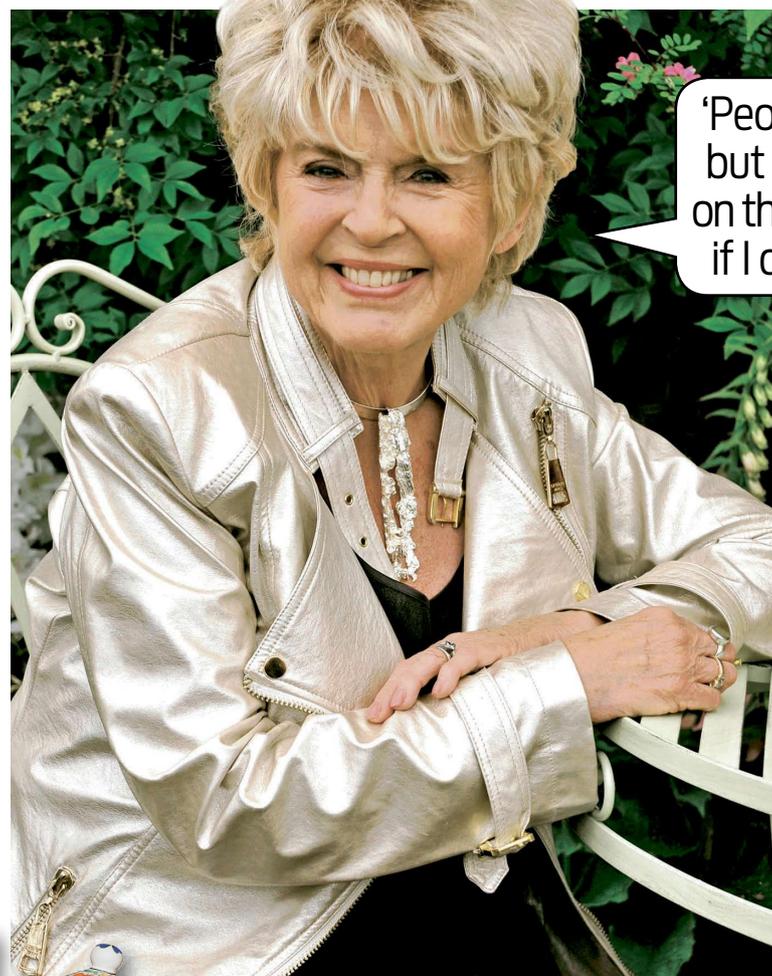
**The film you can watch time and time again...** Breakfast At Tiffany's from 1961. I first saw it in Belfast when I was in my early 20s and I wanted to be Audrey Hepburn.

**The person who has influenced you most...** My father, Charles, who was talented at so many things. He taught me you can do anything if you want it badly enough. He died in 1979 aged 70, but I still hear him inside my head.

**The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint...** Oscar Wilde – he was such a marvellous, flamboyant character, who fought convention. He'd be such witty company.

**The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child...** If something bad happens, do your best to fix it, but if it's beyond your control, let it go and move on.

Left: Oscar Wilde. Above: an assortment of teapots. Far right: Mullins Beach in Barbados



'People think I'm laid-back but I'm impatient. I'd drive on the hard shoulder in a jam if I could get away with it'

**The happiest moment you will cherish forever...** Being at the births of Caron's boys Charlie and Gabriel, and Paul's son Jake.

**The saddest time that shook your world...** Without question, Caron's death. To lose your child is the worst thing that can happen to a parent. I think about her hundreds of times a day.

**The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you...** To become super-fit. There's always an excuse not to.

**The philosophy that underpins your life...** Helping is part of my healing and I do this through the Caron Keating Foundation, which supports people suffering from all forms of cancer.

**The order of service at your funeral...** I want a big send-off with everyone welcome at St Peter's Church in Hever, Kent. I'd like Cliff Richard to say a few words – I've known him for 45 years and he has such strength in his beliefs. Then I want to be buried next to Caron in the church's graveyard.

**The way you want to be remembered...** I talk a lot, so maybe the best epitaph is: 'There are no more words. Phew!'

**The Plug...** Gloria presents Rip Off Britain on Monday at 9.15am on BBC1. Visit the Caron Keating Foundation at caronkeating.org. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

**The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity...** Teapots. I have about 30 that I've collected over the years.

**The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again...** A handbag that was stolen from my car in London in 1987. It contained some of my mother's jewellery, the wedding and engagement rings from my first marriage and a special fountain pen.

**The unending quest that drives you on...** Keeping busy with work. I have a saying – 'If I don't move, I'll rust'.

**The poem that touches your soul...** Sometimes by Frank Brown sums up the pain you feel when you lose someone, but it also makes you feel positive. I put it in a frame after Caron died to help me through the darkest days.

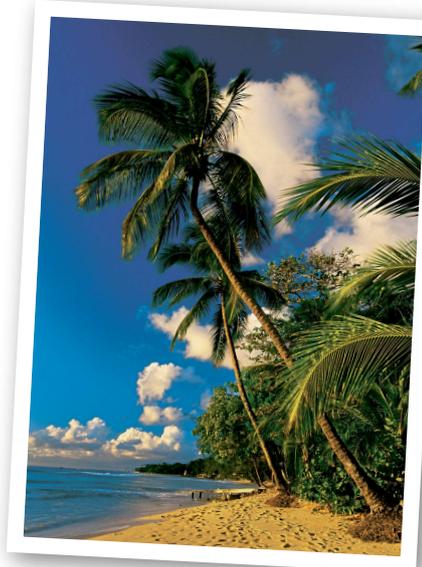
**The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase...** That I'm laid-back. I'm actually very impatient.

**The event that altered the course of your life and character...** The day Caron, who was only in her 30s, was diagnosed with cancer. I couldn't believe it could happen to my vibrant daughter.

**The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it...** I'd drive down bus lanes and on the hard shoulder on motorways when there's a jam.

**The song that means most to you...** Have I Told You Lately by Van Morrison is a special song for our family. We've had it played at parties, weddings and funerals.

**The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions...** I'd spend all day with my husband, Stephen, and we'd start by flying all the family – including my sons Paul, 51, and Michael, 45, and our 10 grandchildren – to New York for some shopping therapy on Fifth Avenue. After that we'd all go and have lunch on Mullins Beach in Barbados. I'd have lobster and a rum punch. After that I'd visit Portadown in Northern Ireland, where I was brought up. I had a glorious childhood, so I'd wander around all the old places. All the family would then fly to our holiday home in Saint-Paul de Vence in the South of France. I'd wander around the wonderful local markets. We'd finish the day with dinner at nearby La Colombe d'Or, which is my favourite restaurant. I'd have some pink champagne followed by lamb and then soufflé for dessert.



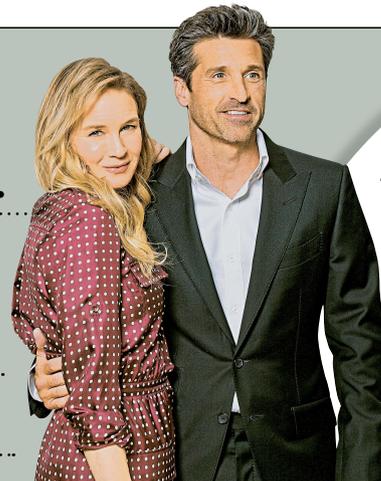
PS...

See Renée Zellweger in *Bridget Jones's Baby* from Friday.

Led Zeppelin's *Complete BBC Sessions* album is out

the same day. And Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist* has its

opening night at London's Barbican Theatre on Wednesday



**NEXT WEEK**

- Mouthwatering recipes from the new series of *The Great British Bake-Off*
- Robbie Coltrane on his new role as a national treasure accused of sex crimes
- PLUS Britain's biggest and best TV listings guide