

# The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept **THE** definitive answer. This week it's *Countryfile* host Anita Rani's turn

**The prized possession you value above all others...** My passport. It's packed with stamps to so many countries, such as Russia and China, and every stamp brings back 100 memories.

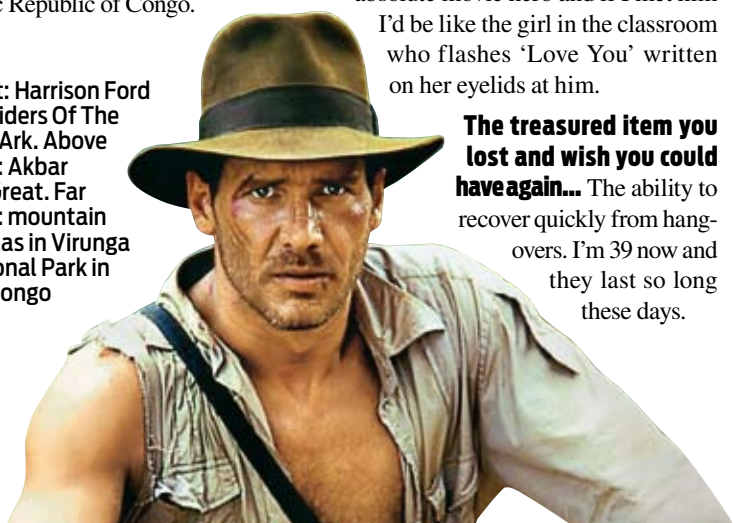
**The biggest regret you wish you could amend...** Giving up languages after my GCSEs. I passed French and Spanish, but I'm so bad at them now that I'm embarrassed to speak them.

**The temptation you wish you could resist...** Crisps, especially salt and vinegar Chipsticks. They're so moreish.

**The book that holds an everlasting resonance...** *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry: a mind-blowing novel about people at the lowest rung of the caste system in India in the 1970s and 80s.

**The priority activity if you were the invisible woman for a day...** I'd hang out with mountain gorillas in the Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Right: Harrison Ford in *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*. Above right: Akbar the Great. Far right: mountain gorillas in Virunga National Park in the Congo



**The pet hate that makes your hackles rise...** Racial intolerance. We should remember we're all the same.

**The person who has influenced you most...** My mother Lucky, who's 63. She's the most positive person I've ever met.

**The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child...** 'The game's not over if the black ball's still on the table!' My dad Bal, who's 60, would say this as he was beating me at pool when I was young. It's stayed with me because the idea also applies to life. Even when you feel beaten, keep going because there's still everything to play for.

**The film you can watch time and time again...** *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*. Harrison Ford as Indiana Jones is my absolute movie hero and if I met him I'd be like the girl in the classroom who flashes 'Love You' written on her eyelids at him.

**The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again...** The ability to recover quickly from hangovers. I'm 39 now and they last so long these days.



**The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint...** Akbar the Great, the 16th-century emperor in India. He brought great culture and arts

to the country and unified diverse sections of society and different faiths.

**The unending quest that drives you on...** I want to make the most of my life. I hope one day to be in a position to make a positive difference in the world.

**The song that means most to you...** Massive Attack's *Unfinished Sympathy*. I got into it in the late 90s and it reminds me of exciting changes in my life.

**The event that altered the course of your life and character...** Doing a six-month placement at the BBC during my broadcasting and politics degree at Leeds University when I was 19. I was an assistant on *The O-Zone* music show and *Top Of The Pops* and realised TV was ideally suited for my mad energy.

**The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it...** I'd rob the Vatican of its art treasures and gold and redistribute the proceeds to the needy.



'I've been mistaken for every other Asian woman you've ever seen on TV. I've always found it funny'

for a party as we sail into the sunset. We'd all then have vodka martinis at a Manhattan rooftop bar, go to Mexico for tacos and margaritas and party and dance all night in Cuba.

**The happiest moment you will cherish forever...** Watching the sunrise over the Namibian desert in 2014 while filming *Seven Wonders Of The Commonwealth* for BBC1. It was an overwhelming feeling of awe and bliss.

**The saddest time that shook your world...** The sudden death of my uncle, the artist Govinder Nazran, on Christmas Eve 2008, when he was 44. He fell during an epileptic fit and suffered terrible head injuries. It was the first time I'd experienced the death of someone close; it was horrendous.

**The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you...** I like to think I have a book in me one day. Maybe a novel, or even a cookbook.

**The philosophy that underpins your life...** Don't sit around talking about it. Get on and do it.

**The order of service at your funeral...** I don't really care, but I'd quite like a song from The Smiths and some electronic music to give everyone a shock.

**The way you want to be remembered...** Billionaire philanthropist whose foundation helped provide education to millions of under-privileged children.

**The Plug...** Anita presents the live grand final of *BBC Young Dancer 2017* tonight at 8pm on BBC2. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

**The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase...** That I'm any other Asian woman you've ever seen on television. I've been mistaken for them all! I've always found it funny, and it doesn't happen as much now.

**The poem that touches your soul...** *He Wishes For The Cloths Of Heaven* by WB Yeats. I came across it at school and I'm always moved by its beauty and vulnerability. It's about entrusting someone you love with your dreams.

**The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions...** I'd begin the day watching the sunrise from the summit of Everest then snowboard down the mountain. I'd meet my husband Bhupi in Delhi for a breakfast of chickpea curry with paratha flatbread. We'd walk around Jerusalem, then head to Florence. Our families would join us there for a pasta lunch with lots of local red wine. We'd go on safari in Botswana, then cruise off the coast of Belize in an old sailing boat. Friends would join us



PS...

*Bradley Cooper voices Rocket in Guardians Of The Galaxy 2 – in cinemas Friday. Humanz, the new album by Gorillaz, is out on the same day. And Romeo And Juliet, the first play in Shakespeare's Globe's summer season, opens on Thursday*



**NEXT WEEK**

- Max Beesley on his racy new historical drama *Jamestown*
- Love your local curry house? Then learn how to re-create your favourite dishes at home
- PLUS Britain's best TV guide