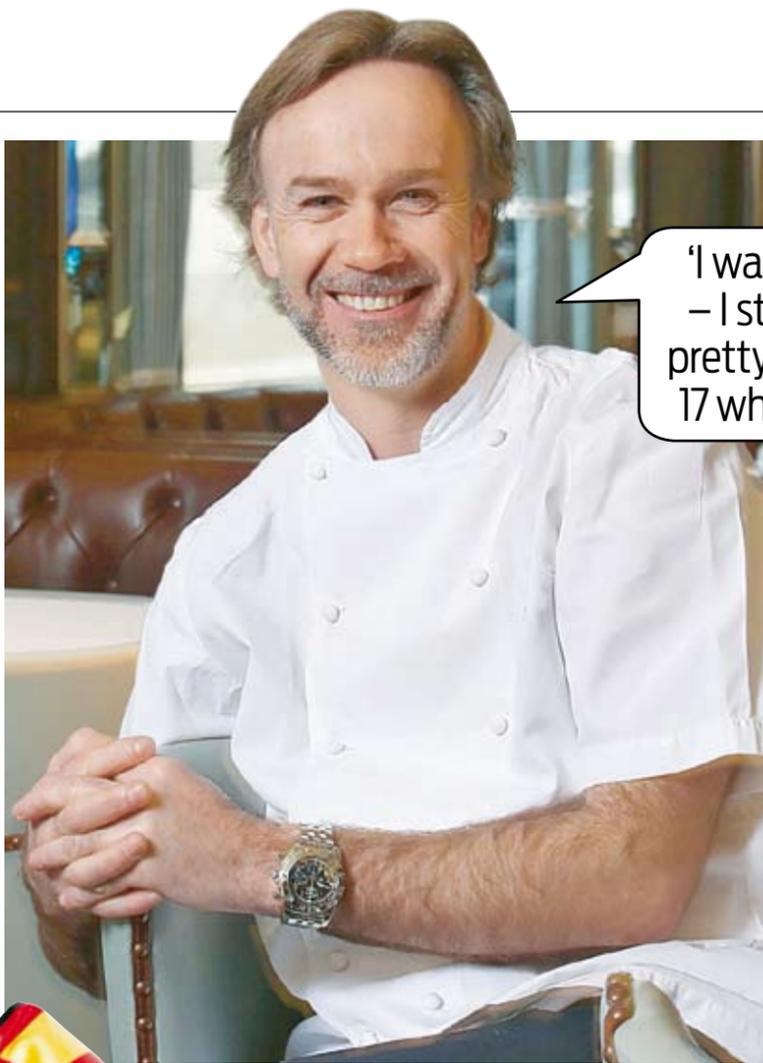


The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's the turn of chef Marcus Wareing



'I wanted to be a top boxer – I started at nine and was pretty good, but gave it up at 17 when I moved to London'

ter ride over Paris. We'd walk around the city before going to New York for lunch at Eleven Madison Park where I'd have the Tasting Menu and some wine. In the afternoon, we'd go skiing at Courmayeur in Italy. I'd stop for hot chocolate on the slopes. Later, I'd like a sail on a boat near St Tropez at sundown and some rosé wine before heading to Las Vegas. I love boxing, so I'd have ringside seats with my dad and brother Brian to watch Floyd Mayweather Jr fight Manny Pacquiao. I'd end the day with the family at the One & Only Reethi Rah hotel in the Maldives with a seafood barbecue and some decent wine.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... The births of my three children and, professionally, taking over the lease of my restaurant Marcus in 2008.

The saddest time that shook your world... The attacks on New York on 9/11. It was the beginning of war on the West and it was devastating to see.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Work hard. Then work harder.

The order of service at your funeral... A simple church service followed by a cremation and I'd leave plans for a party with a fantastic meal. I want my ashes scattered in the South of France, so I'll always be in the sunshine.

The way you want to be remembered... As a great father.

The Plug... Marcus owns three restaurants – Marcus At The Berkeley Hotel, The Gilbert Scott Bar and Tredwell's. Visit marcus-wareing.com. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



PHOTOGRAPHS: MARTIN POPE/TELEGRAPH, GETTY

The prized possession you value above all others... My two-Michelin-starred restaurant Marcus At The Berkeley Hotel in London. I created it from scratch. It's my life's work and I love it.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... Not studying hard enough. I worked at my dad Raymond's fruit and potatoes business when I was 11 and left school at 16 without qualifications to go to catering college, so I've had to catch up.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Not switching off my iPhone or iPad long after work. I do 16-hour days and I'm always thinking about business.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... A Kestrel For A Knave by Barry Hines. It's about a troubled boy who bonds with a kestrel – Ken Loach based his film Kes on it. I read it when I was 12 and identified with the boy being a loner.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd spend the day in Google's HQ in California to see what ideas they have in development. I'm fascinated by technology.

Right: Leonardo DiCaprio in *The Wolf Of Wall Street*. Above right: Boxing. Far right: The Shard



The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Mess and untidiness. I go to someone's house and see the state of their kitchen and think, 'Jesus Christ, why?!'

The film you can watch time and time again... *The Wolf Of Wall Street* with Leonardo DiCaprio. I love the way he motivates his staff to make money. The environment was similar when I was training to be a chef and I enjoy that competitive spirit.

The person who has influenced you most... The chef David Nicholls, whose son Dan broke his neck in 2003. He's doing so much with his charity [Nicholls Spinal Injury Foundation]. David helped me when I was having a tough time. He's special.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Maggie Thatcher at her peak in the 80s. I'd like to know how she remained so strong when she was fighting so many battles, like with the miners. She was unique.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Take advantage of your schooling – it will be the bedrock of your life.



The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you...

To have been a top boxer. I started at nine and I was good, but I gave up at 17 when I moved from Southport to London.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Politics. I love the battle of it and the complexity of the issues. I see the country as a company, and it should be run like one.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... My Nanna Emily, who died in her 60s when I was 11. She was great fun – I always asked her to take her false teeth out. I wish she'd lived to see me get on in life.

The unending quest that drives you on... To never give up.

The poem that touches your soul... I'm not into poetry but I love the hymn *Lord Of The Dance*. It reminds me of going to church at school for the Harvest Festival, which taught me the importance of giving back.

PS...

Downton's Lily James stars in Kenneth Branagh's Cinderella, in cinemas from Friday. Arthur Miller's Death Of A Salesman is at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford from Thursday. And boy band Blue's UK tour kicks off in Portsmouth today



NEXT WEEK

- Meet the finalists of BBC1's Big Painting Challenge
- Delicious Easter baking with Fiona Cairns
- Monty Don's essential new series on sensational container planting for summer
- PLUS Britain's best TV listings guide