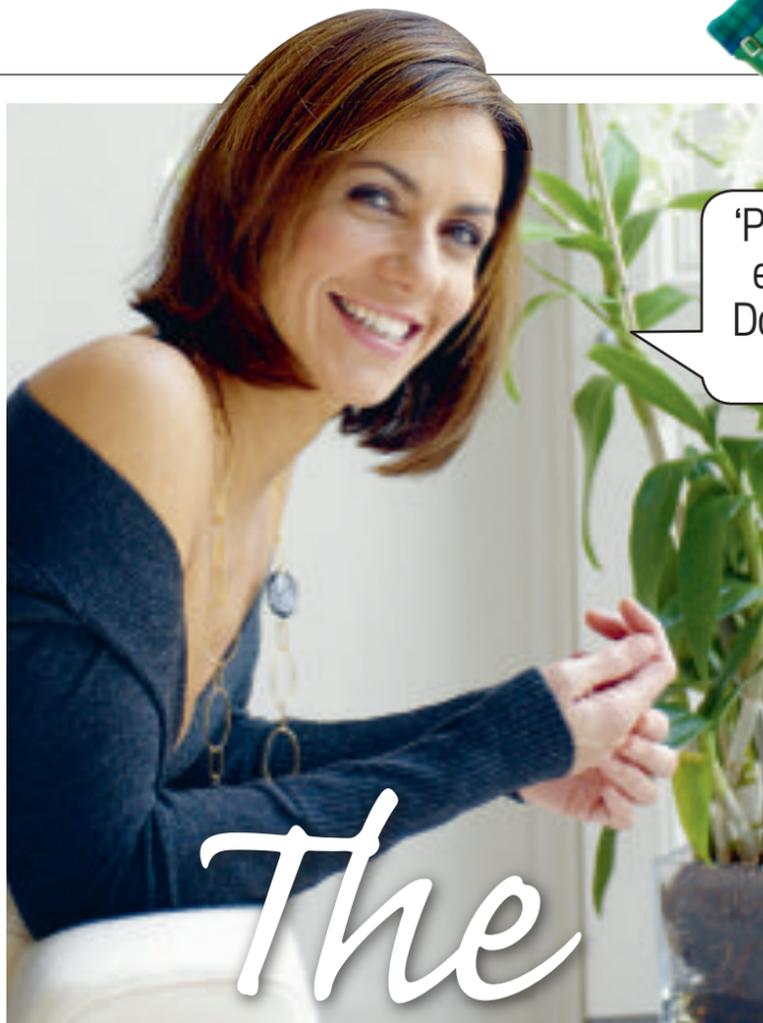




'People think I spend my entire life in a cagoule. Do they think I go out for the night in wellies?'



The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's Countryfile's Julia Bradbury

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... I love heavy house music.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... The purple corduroy trousers I had from when I was about five until I was ten. I wouldn't wear anything else, even though I'd outgrown them. Eventually, my mum threw them away and told me I'd lost them. I was devastated and in tears for days, and kept telling her it was impossible I'd lost them. She confessed years later.

The unending quest that drives you on... I have a ruthless ambition to dominate television.

The poem that touches your soul... Prothalamion by the 16th-century poet Edmund Spenser. I like it for many reasons but mainly because it mentions my son's name and encapsulates the essence of what he is to us. Zephyrus was the Greek god of the west wind, the softest wind that brought spring. Zeph is the fresh air in our lives.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I spend my life in walking boots and a cagoule. If people see me on TV in a skirt or dress they tell me, 'You shouldn't wear things like that, they don't suit you.' Do people think I go out for the night in wellies?!

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Having Zeph. He came late in life [Julia was 41 when he was born last August] and being a mother is a thrill and an amazing adventure.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd do 130mph down my favourite country road in Leicestershire. It has dips and curves that deserve to be driven wildly.

The song that means most to you... Here Comes The Sun. It's my favourite Beatles song but I love Nina Simone's version. It reminds me of my late 20s when I was with friends, partying, travelling and embarking on exciting careers.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... The two moments last spring when I knew my parents' urgent operations for cancer had been successful.

The saddest time that shook your world... Finding out my parents had cancer. I was in shock and very upset.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... I'd love to become the first female presenter of Top Gear. **The philosophy that underpins your life...** Always smile, no matter how ruthless and outrageous your demands.

The order of service at your funeral... I fancy having my ashes scattered under a tree somewhere hot so my spirit becomes part of the tree's fruit. I'd want Pete Heller's dance classic Big Love played, then everyone would have to drink a freezing shot of Aquavit. It's so delicious I defy anyone not to feel happy after it!

The way you want to be remembered... Big nose, wonky teeth, good sense of humour. **The Plug...** The Great British Countryside is on Thursdays on BBC1 at 8pm; Julia returns to BBC1's Countryfile on 11 March at 7pm. Visit www.juliabradbury.com ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

The prized possession you value above all others... My new silver V8 Range Rover Sport Supercharged. I'm a complete petrolhead and I adore it.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend... Writing off an old boyfriend's Ferrari Testarossa in Monte Carlo 15 years ago. I was driving fast out of the tunnel and clipped the kerb, which sent the car into a spin. We ricocheted off the wall and ended up on the other side of the road. Luckily, we walked away uninjured, but my boyfriend wasn't exactly happy, and our relationship went downhill after that!

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions...

I'd head with my partner [property developer Gerard Cunningham] and our baby son Zephyrus to my family's home in the Rutland countryside. We'd have a bracing walk, followed by a slap-up lunch prepared by my mum. We'd then leave Zeph to go to Ibiza with friends to party with lots of cocktails. We'd fly back to London for dinner at Scalini, the best Italian restaurant outside Italy, then go to the cinema.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Chocolate milk.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran is about patience, forgiveness and how to be a good person – which I'm not sure I've fully mastered yet!

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day... I'd stalk the Royal Family to see how they really interact on a casual family day.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Financial meanness, like not getting your round at the pub, because it says a lot about your appetite for life.

The film you can watch time and time again... I never get tired of Jaws.

The person who has influenced you most... My mother. She was a designer and entrepreneur in the fashion business for 40 years and is very driven. She taught me you can achieve anything if you have the courage to go for it. She's also the most loving, nurturing and generous person imaginable.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Boudicca. I love strong women.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... To embrace all adventures and experiences. You can't have experiences if you're frightened, so be brave. And always be kind and generous.

From top: the countryside in Rutland, Nina Simone, chocolate milk, the poster for Jaws, Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet, the Royal Family, Boudicca and a Ferrari Testarossa

PS...

Bill Nighy, Celia Imrie and Dames Maggie and Judi check in to The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel – in cinemas now. Torchwood's Eve Myles stars in All New People at London's Duke Of York's theatre. And Meat Loaf's new album, Hell In A Handbasket, is out Monday



NEXT WEEK

- John Sergeant's snapshots of Britain's golden days
- Monty Don on how he turned a patch of weeds and rubble into the garden of his dreams
- Jamie Oliver's mouthwatering Far Eastern soups
- PLUS Britain's best TV listings