



**The prized possession you value above all others...** A Rolex watch my parents gave me on my 18th birthday. It was way more expensive than they could afford. I only take it off to have a bath.

**The unqualified regret you wish you could amend...** Not keeping up with writing my diaries. I have 12 of them – I wrote several pages every day from when I was ten until my 20s.

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

I'd have fresh fruit for breakfast on the beach in the Maldives with my boyfriend Charlie [Thomson, an insurance broker from New Zealand], then explore Paris's antique shops. After lunch with all my family on a huge yacht cruising near Cannes, I'd go horse riding through the mountains of Arizona, then head to New York at night with a group of friends. I'd drink Espresso Martinis and we'd have a sophisticated dinner before going clubbing all night.

**The temptation you wish you could resist...** Being the last to leave a party for fear of missing out!

**The book that holds an everlasting resonance...** The Twits by Roald Dahl inspired my love of reading when I was eight. It reminded me of our neighbours, who also lacked a bit of care in the personal hygiene department!

**The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day...** I'd definitely spend the day with the Queen to get a sense of what she's *really* like. I bet she's a right character.

**The pet hate that makes your hackles rise...** Having to give directions to minicab drivers. I've only lived in London for two years but I'm always having to tell them which way to go.

**The film you can watch time and time again...** The Poseidon Adventure. I love the drama and the people all pulling together to survive. The scene where Shelley Winters dies a heroine always has me welling up.

**The person who has influenced you most...** I learnt my values from my mum Mary and father Alun, but particularly from my mum. She had a tough childhood and couldn't achieve all the things she wanted to in life, so she taught me to strive to do a job I love.

**The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint...** Coco Chanel. She came up with beautiful designs that women will probably still be wearing in 100 years' time.



'I'd love to star in a fabulous West End musical like Cabaret but it might be best if I mime as I can't carry a tune too well!'

**The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase...** People think of me as fun and flighty but underneath there's a deep-thinking, hard-working and very sensible girl.

**The event that altered the course of your life and character...** The call from Sandy Smith, editor of The One Show, on 8 July 2010 telling me I'd got the job. I was on Brighton beach and I screamed with excitement. He had to tell me to shut up because it was still a secret!

**The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it...** I'd love to be able to park anywhere I fancy because I'm forever getting tickets.

**The song that means most to you...** California Dreamin' by The Mamas & The Papas. It reminds me of great family holidays travelling through France in our camper van in my teens.

**The happiest moment you will cherish forever...** Seeing Jennie holding her baby son, Dash, when he was born last year. It was like she'd grown up from a girl to a mother overnight.

**The saddest time that shook your world...** My maternal grandad Trevor dying after a stroke in 1998 when he was 74. My mum let out the most awful noise, a real guttural howl of pain.

**The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you...** I'd love to star in a fabulous West End musical like Cabaret but it might be best if I mime as I can't carry a tune too well!

**The philosophy that underpins your life...** When the going gets tough, keep going. You have to have determination.

**The order of service at your funeral...** I'll have a few ashes scattered in London and the rest over the Black Mountains in Wales to reflect my split life. I'll have either Moon River or The Dying Swan played. I want my funeral to be a joyous occasion, but I'd also quite like people to be a bit sad.

**The way you want to be remembered...** As a trustworthy friend who could be relied upon in any situation.

**The Plug...** Alex presents The One Show, weekdays, 7pm, BBC1. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

# The DEFINITE ARTICLE

*We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week: The One Show presenter Alex Jones*

**The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child...** You are never fully dressed without a smile.

**The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity...** Photography. I won a national Kodak competition when I was 12 for a picture of the Acropolis in Athens.

**The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again...** A tape recording of my sister Jennie and I singing a musical we put together when I was 12 and she was nine. I lost it at university.

**The unending quest that drives you on...** To be better at everything – as a friend, as a daughter, and in my job. I'm hard on myself: each day I look back on what I did the day before and criticise it.

**The poem that touches your soul...** An anonymous Welsh poem called Dal Fy Llaw, which means Hold My Hand. It's about a couple supporting one another through all the hardships of life. I read it at a friend's wedding a few months ago and sobbed all the way through.

From top: horse riding in Arizona, photography, Roald Dahl's The Twits, the Queen, The Mamas & The Papas, a camper van, an Espresso Martini, the Black Mountains, Coco Chanel and a fruit salad

PS...

*Martin Freeman is Bilbo Baggins in The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey – in cinemas from Thursday. David Hasselhoff stars in Peter Pan at the Manchester Opera House. And the new album from Bruno Mars, Unorthodox Jukebox, is out Monday*



**NEXT WEEK**

● Could ITV's Mr Selfridge be the next Downton? Judge for yourself as the man behind it reveals all ● Christmas dinner the Jamie Oliver way ● Matthew Jukes selects wines for the big day ● PLUS Britain's best TV listings guide