

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's former Dallas star Linda Gray

The prized possession you value above all others... My home, deep in the country north of Los Angeles, which I built in 1973. It's ranch-style, very warm and welcoming.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... Not finishing my biology studies. I quit college when I was 19 because I was having fun flying around making TV commercials.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Collecting cookbooks! I have around 200 and I'll never manage to cook everything in them.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... The Four Agreements by Mexican healer Don Miguel Ruiz. It reminds you to live with integrity.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day... I love dogs, so I'd go inside the brain of a dog to learn what they think of humans. Sadly, all my animals have died now.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Abuse of any kind. With what's going on in the world, humanity needs a good cleanse.

The film you can watch time and time again... I love Casablanca, I admire its richness and attention to detail.

The person who has influenced you most... My grandma Betty, who was so wise. She told me to treat my friendships gently, like grains of sand in my hand. I was 15 when she died, but I still feel her and hear her voice.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Bette Davis. I love how feisty she was. We had dinner shortly before she died in 1989, she was wonderful.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Follow your dreams, always be curious, read, and don't forget to be kind.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Quantum physics. I've studied it since the 1980s. I still do workshops and classes.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... Time. I'm 77 but have the energy of a 20-year-old. I need to live until 150, I have so much to do!

The unending quest that drives you on... To keep learning. I even watch The Great British Bake Off because I'm curious to know how they bake such wonderful things.

The poem that touches your soul... Anything by 13th-century Persian poet Rumi. His writings are timeless and poignant, and still so relevant.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That Sue Ellen and I are the same person. I adored her and feel blessed to have played her but people assume that I'm crazy, neurotic and a heavy drinker. If I drank like Sue Ellen I'd be dead by now, so thank God I don't!

The event that altered the course of your life and character... When my sister Betty – named after Grandma – died aged 43 from breast cancer in 1989. All the family was with her and it instantly changed me because it taught me about the fragility of life.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd have a helicopter pick up my car when I'm stuck in traffic on the freeway in LA.

The song that means most to you... Louis Armstrong's What A Wonderful World. It was my dad Leslie's favourite so I heard it all the time growing up. Dad died in 2002 aged 86 and we played it at his funeral.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... I'd begin with a cappuccino in Positano, Italy, then zip to Paris for a croissant. Then I'd be joined by my kids – Jeff, 52, and Kehly, 48, and my grandkids, Ryder, 25, and Jack, 14. I have a thing for colour and beauty, so we'd head to Japan to see the cherry blossom. We'd then watch Jack play bas-

'People assume I'm just like Sue Ellen in real life. But if I drank like her then I'd be dead by now!'

ketball in California. He'd need carbs after, so I'd cook pasta with home-made pesto at my house. We'd see the beautiful fall foliage of New England before I drag everyone off to Mars! We'd then go hiking in the mountains of New Zealand and I'd have a vodka martini in Dukes bar in St James's, which is a ritual whenever I'm in London. I'd end the day watching the sunset in Malibu, then go home to bed.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Nothing beats the miracle of seeing your babies born.

The saddest time that shook your world... My sister Betty's death really shook my world. It was monumental, such an enormous feeling of loss.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To be the Pied Piper that inspires people of my age group to get more out of life.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Strive to be better each day and do everything with love.

The order of service at your funeral... I want lots of white flowers and for people to have fun, share memories and scatter my ashes in the places I loved.

The way you want to be remembered... As a good human who lived with curiosity, passion and kindness.

The Plug... Signed copies of Linda's memoir The Road To Happiness Is Always Under Construction are available on her website lindagray.com. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



Left: Bette Davis. Above: a brainy bulldog. Right: cherry blossom trees at Himeji Castle in Japan



PS...

See Daniel Day-Lewis in his final film, Phantom Thread, in cinemas Friday. Justin Timberlake's new album, Man Of The Woods, is out the same day. And Ben Whishaw opens in Julius Caesar at London's Bridge Theatre on Tuesday



NEXT WEEK

- We investigate the new series of Endeavour with the young Morse, Shaun Evans
- Delicious family dishes that are fancy enough for a feast
- PLUS Britain's biggest and best TV guide