

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's cricketering legend Sir Viv Richards

The prized possession you value above all others... My gold medals for winning two World Cups. I grew up dreaming of playing for the West Indies, so to achieve wins like that makes me proud. I keep the medals safely hidden at my home in Antigua.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... Not being with my mum Grathel when she passed in 2015 because I was working in Australia. She was 91 and hadn't been well, but I was devastated. I was with my best mate Beefy Botham and we had a few drinks that night. I flew home the next day – it was the longest journey of my life. Mum was the most beautiful woman on Earth.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd listen to what some people say behind my back.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... The Learning Tree by Gordon Parks, about a young African-American man living through racial prejudice in the 1920s. I read it when I was 16 and it helped motivate me to make something of my life.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... When people don't control their dogs. I have two Dobermanmanns, who I love, but you must respect others.

The person who has influenced you most... My dad Malcolm. He was assistant governor at Antigua's prison and brought some of that discipline home. It felt a little tough, but he was a fair man who put me on the right road. He died in 1984 in his 70s.

The film you can watch time and time again... The Godfather trilogy. Something new takes my fancy each time.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Muhammad Ali in his prime. I met him in Lahore in 1988 and he had such a powerful presence. He said, 'I don't know much about cricket but I know you look like Joe Frazier!'

Left: Al Pacino and Diane Keaton in The Godfather Part III. Above: vanilla and strawberry ice cream. Right: Fort James, Antigua



The temptation you wish you could resist... Vanilla or strawberry Häagen-Dazs ice cream. I'm 65 now and have to take care of my body, but that stuff is too delicious.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Church's brogues. I have about six pairs and love their quality.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... My hair. I had a fine afro when I was younger, but it started to go in my late 20s.

The unending quest that drives you on... To see my children happy and successful. I have four kids with three mums, but I'm very close to them all.

The poem that touches your soul... I'm always deeply moved by Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' speech from 1963, particularly when he talked of little black children being able to hold hands with white children.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I was arrogant as a player. It was just confidence. I'm humble and a gentleman – until you rub me up the wrong way!

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Have respect for everyone and listen to advice from older folks.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Playing in front of Somerset vice chairman Len Creed when he was visiting Antigua in 1973. He liked my style and asked me to play for his club. I made my Somerset debut in 1974 and it changed my life.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd break into the White House and have some one-on-one time with Donald Trump to put him right.

The song that means most to you... One Love by Bob Marley. The lyrics mean more to me than ever, when I see so much nastiness in the world, like the far right being against black people.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... I'd begin with a swim at Antigua's Fort James beach, then a walk with my dogs. I'm not a breakfast guy so I'd just have some fruit. I'd play golf at the island's

Cedar Valley course with my golfing buddies, and enjoy a few beers at the 19th hole, then go for lunch at a little cafe in Brixton in London – I love it there and always have stewed fish or oxtail. I'd see my team, Liverpool, win at Anfield then have dinner with Beefy and some old cricket friends at Cambio de Tercio, a great Spanish restaurant in London's South Kensington. I'd end the day at a calypso show in Antigua.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Scoring what was then the fastest Test century, off 56 balls, at the Recreation Ground in Antigua in 1986. My childhood dream had been to play at my home ground, so to achieve something that big there felt pretty good.

The saddest time that shook your world... I lost a little bit of me when we buried our mum. I sobbed all day.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To tour Africa to get a sense of my ancestors.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Keep it simple.

The order of service at your funeral... I want a steel band, and for calypsonian Lord Short Shirt to sing the song he wrote about me. I hope Beefy will say a few words too, if he's still around!

The way you want to be remembered... As a good person who helped others.

The Plug... Sir Viv Richards is tourism ambassador for Antigua. Go to visitantiguabarbuda.com. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



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