



From top: Barbados, The Ashes, Top Gun, Jon Bon Jovi, chocolate, an aeroplane, a mojito cocktail and Steve Irwin

The prized possession you value above all others... My home in west London. It's where I can just be me and relax with my family and friends.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend... The way England captain Andrew Strauss was brought into the headlines last year [when the press got hold of negative text messages Pietersen had written about Strauss to friends on the South African team]. He didn't deserve that. He's a top man.

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

I'd head out at dawn on a safari drive with my wife Jess [former Liberty X singer Jess Taylor] across the plains of the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania. We'd watch the sun come up, then look on in awe at the animals. We'd arrive at Bronte beach in Sydney with our three-year-old son Dylan. I'd have a full English breakfast at a cool cafe, then play with Dylan in the surf. In the afternoon we'd sail down the west coast of Barbados on a beautiful yacht and eat the freshest sushi for lunch. Then I'd sit in the stands at Kings Park stadium in Durban with some mates to watch the Sharks rugby team win the Super 15 league. I'd have some mojito cocktails with Jess at sundown in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, then end the day with an amazing meat feast barbecue with all my family under the African skies at Kruger National Park in South Africa with plenty of decent New Zealand sauvignon blanc wine.

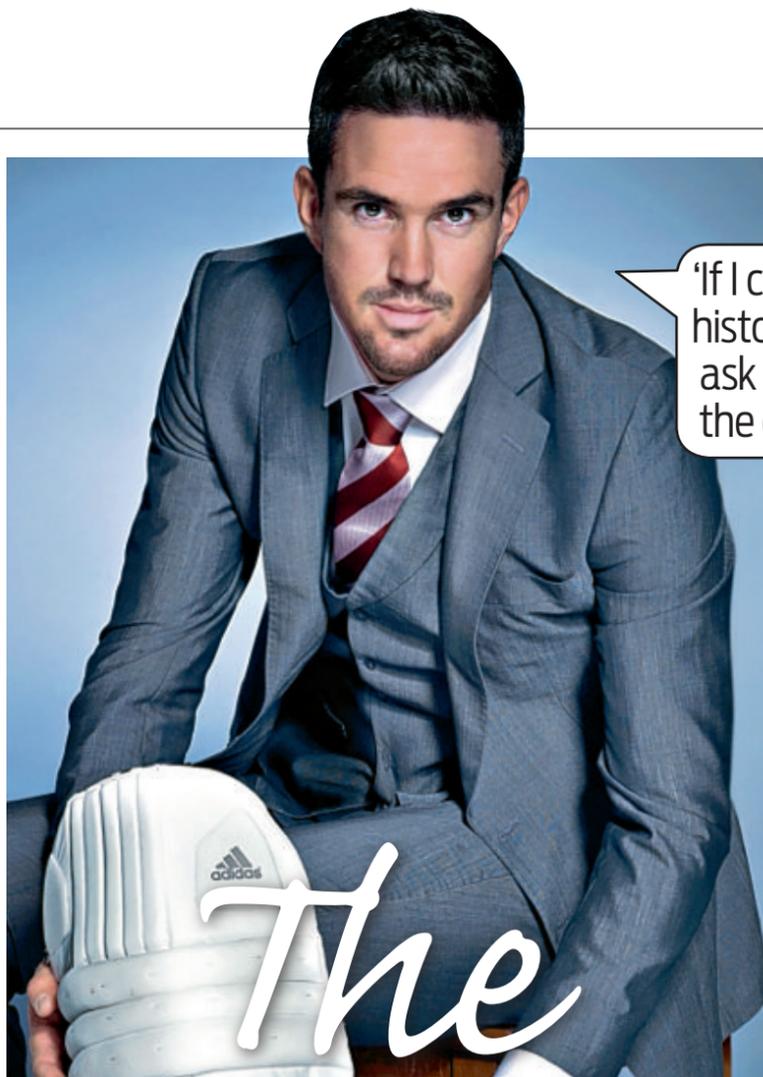
The temptation you wish you could resist... Opening up the naughty cupboard in our house that's always full of lollies, crisps and chocolate.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... The Secret Race by Tyler Hamilton [disgraced American cyclist who was stripped of his 2004 Olympic gold for drugs cheating]. The way Hamilton justifies the use of drugs is fascinating yet truly appalling.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd attach myself to a dolphin and explore the oceans. I love nature and the seas.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Bad manners, particularly when people are rude to waiters.

The film you can watch time and time again... Top Gun has it all – a great storyline, cool characters, brilliant actors and I love aeroplanes. If I wasn't a cricketer I'd be a fighter pilot!



'If I could meet anyone from history it'd be Steve Irwin. I'd ask him how he plucked up the courage to tackle crocs'

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week: England cricketer Kevin Pietersen

The person who has influenced you most... Cricket coach Graham Ford. He saw my talent when I was five at school in my home town of Pietermaritzburg in eastern South Africa. When I need anything in my career, I consult Fordy.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... The Australian wildlife expert Steve Irwin [who was killed by a stingray barb in 2006]. I'd ask how he plucked up the courage to tackle crocs.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... There's absolutely no substitute for hard work.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... I'm totally fascinated by aeroplanes. You'll see me gazing into the sky at The Oval because it's under the flight path. It baffles me how such big things manage to stay up in the air.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... Losing my wicket *always* hurts!

The unending quest that drives you on... To be the best I can be.

The poem that touches your soul... If by Rudyard Kipling. It's inspirational.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I'm selfish. My friends and family know how far away from the truth that is.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Leaving South Africa for England when I was 19. I was all by myself, but I was in pursuit of my boyhood dream to play international cricket. It was worth it!

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd steal a vehicle and go on a game drive into the wilderness of an African safari park after dark, which is forbidden. Most of the exciting activity happens at night.

The song that means most to you... We Weren't Born To Follow by Bon Jovi. I'll never be a sheep.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Aside from the birth of Dylan and my wedding day in 2007, it was winning The Ashes in Australia in 2011. It was a historic win by a great team. I only wish we could have celebrated at home for the fans with an open top bus as we did in 2005.

The saddest time that shook your world... My best friend Jon is battling eye cancer. He's the same age as me – 32 – and it still shakes me every day.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To score 10,000 Test runs. I'm on 7,499 at the moment.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Family always comes first.

The order of service at your funeral... It's not something I think about. I don't even know if I want my ashes scattered in England or South Africa.

The way you want to be remembered... As a great husband, father and son.

The Plug... Kevin is co-owner of the clothing label Nena & Pasadena, available in Harrods or online at www.nenaandpasadena.co.uk. He also supports the Magic Bus children's charity, www.magicbus.org. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

PS...

Carey Mulligan dazzles in Baz Luhrmann's remake of The Great Gatsby – in cinemas from Thursday. Felicity Kendal and Kara Tointon share the stage in Relatively Speaking at London's Wyndham's Theatre. And Rod Stewart's new album Time is out on Monday



NEXT WEEK

- Behind the scenes on Derek Jacobi and Ian McKellen's new sitcom Vicious
- Jamie Oliver and the art of cooking artichokes
- Want the Chelsea Flower Show look? Plant your own roof!
- PLUS Britain's best TV listings guide