



From top: Table Mountain from Bloubergstrand beach, cowboy boots, Eric Cantona, a lifebuoy, The Quiet Man with John Wayne, Treasure Island, a classic car, Primark and an Action Man

The prized possession you value above all others... A No 7 Manchester United shirt worn by Eric Cantona. I bought it at auction for £1,500 – you could still smell his aftershave on it! Years later I met him and he signed it. He's a big hero of mine.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend... Not learning to swim. I have four brothers and none of us learnt because our mum Josie, who's now 85, couldn't swim and she was very protective of her boys.

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

I'd have a relaxing start at a spa with a lovely massage, followed by a breakfast of fresh fruit and yoghurt. After that I'd head off on my own to enjoy some horse riding as a cowboy at Purgatory ranch in Colorado. I've been there before and I can even lasso pretty well. I love the whole idea of the cowboy life, enjoying nature and being out in the open. From there, I'd have lunch with my brothers on Bloubergstrand beach in Cape Town, looking back at Table Mountain. In the afternoon, I'd play golf at Gleneagles with an old mate called Bill. After that I'd go to Belfast to meet my wife Ruth and our son Jack, 11, and my three other children – Declan, 24, Rebecca, 22, and Niall, 19. We'd have dinner at Long's fish and chip restaurant. I'd end the day with Ruth at a cinema watching the latest blockbuster.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Pleasing my wife! She knows I can't resist her and takes advantage.

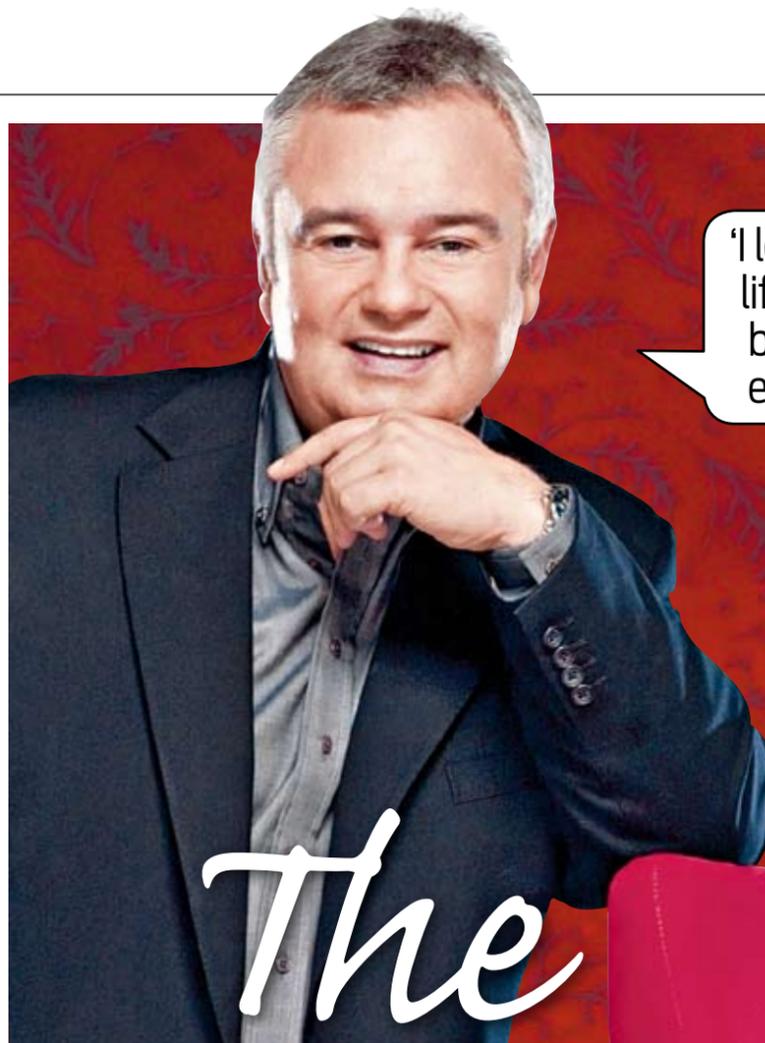
The book that holds an everlasting resonance... Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson. A teacher read it to my class when I was eight and I was totally gripped by the adventure.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I get annoyed with angry, rude people, so I'd do things to make them angrier, like let their tyres down or tie their shoe laces together.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Long queues at airports.

The film you can watch time and time again... The Quiet Man with John Wayne from 1952. The landscape always makes me nostalgic for Ireland.

The person who has influenced you most... The Irish TV sports presenter Jackie Fullerton. He was my mentor when I started at Ulster Television. He taught me the tricks of the trade.



'I love the idea of cowboy life, enjoying nature and being in the open. I can even lasso pretty well!'

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week: TV presenter Eamonn Holmes

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... The actor James Stewart, but I'd talk to him about his experiences as a bomber pilot in World War II. He was a decorated war hero, but he never, ever discussed it.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Always use sunscreen! If I could turn back the clock, I wouldn't sunbathe like I used to in the 80s when I wanted to look like Don Johnson from Miami Vice.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... I'm intrigued by the restoration of classic cars. I don't do it myself, but if I had the money and the space I'd have a whole fleet of them.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... The toys of my childhood, especially my Action Men. At one time I had eight of them, but everything's gone now.

The unending quest that drives you on... A hunger for knowledge.

The poem that touches your soul... He Wishes For The Cloths Of Heaven by WB Yeats. I find its message about love and dreams very moving.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I have a private box at Old Trafford. I have two season tickets that cost me a fortune.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Becoming a trainee manager at Primark when I was 18. It was the hardest experience of my life but it re-doubled my conviction that I wanted to be a broadcast journalist. I got a place at journalism college at 19 and I never looked back.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd break into the best art museums at night and stare at works of art without the crowds.

The song that means most to you... Danny Boy. My family threw a party for me when I got a job with the BBC in Manchester when I was 26 and my dad, Leonard, sang Danny Boy. I can't hear it without getting emotional.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... My 50th birthday party at Old Trafford on 3 December 2010. I had all my dearest pals and family there and Alex Ferguson stayed late chatting to everyone and dancing.

The saddest time that shook your world... The death of my father from a heart attack when he was only 64 in 1991. I think about him every day.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... I'd love a part in a film.

The philosophy that underpins your life... The harder you work, the luckier you get.

The order of service at your funeral... I'll have a service at St Patrick's Catholic church in Donegall Street where I was baptised. I'd want Elvis's Bridge Over Troubled Water and I'd be buried in the churchyard near my dad.

The way you want to be remembered... As a matinee idol!

The Plug... Eamonn presents Sunrise, Monday to Thursday from 6am-9am on Sky News. Visit www.skynews.com. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

PS...

Brit Henry Cavill takes the lead in Superman prequel Man Of Steel, in cinemas on Friday. Daniel Radcliffe's back on the London stage in The Cripple Of Inishmaan at the Noël Coward Theatre. And KT Tunstall's new album, Invisible Empire/Crescent Moon, is out Monday



NEXT WEEK

- Philip Glenister takes us behind the scenes on Mad Dogs
- Eric Lanlard's recipes for the most exquisite chocolate treats
- Monty Don on how to make a majestic wall fountain
- PLUS Britain's best TV listings guide