



From top: Byron Bay, There Must Be An Angel by Eurythmics and Ella Fitzgerald



Above: mechanic's tools and Fortnum & Mason. Below: Robert Downey Jr and Jude Law in Sherlock Holmes



The prized possession you value above all others... My teddy bear Gosy. I've had him since I was eight. I was adopted when I was 18 months old and then fostered when I was eight [after her adoptive mother became ill. She later returned to her]. I had ups and downs, but Gosy was my constant companion.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... That I didn't go to university after school. I made up for it last year though with a first-class honours degree in Culinary Arts Management.

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

I'd begin with a swim in the ocean off Byron Bay, Australia, then I'd join my daughter Ella, 17, for breakfast by the beach with my partner Neil and his three children. I'd have pancakes with bacon, blueberries and maple syrup. Later I'd go for a walk in the Cotswolds, near where I was raised in Oxfordshire, and have scampi and chips with ketchup and tartare sauce and a glass of dry white wine in a country pub. In the afternoon I'd hang out in the old quarter of Barcelona, eating tapas, people-watching and drinking rosé. I wouldn't drink too much because I'm way gone after two glasses! Dinner would be fillet steak with peppercorn sauce followed by cheesecake and the apple tarte tatin at Le Gavroche in London. I'd end the day at home in west London with friends, watching a DVD.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Soft blue cheese, especially Saint Agur from M&S.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... Man's Search For Meaning by Viktor Frankl. It's a remarkable account about surviving Auschwitz, which I've read at least ten times.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day... I'd watch Albert Roux cook lunch and Michel Roux Jr cook dinner at Le Gavroche. They are the masters of cooking.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... People who don't say thank you!

The film you can watch time and time again... Sherlock Holmes with Robert Downey Jr and Jude Law. I saw it with Ella and we were blown away.

The person who has influenced you most... My adoptive mother Audrey. She taught me to believe in the impossible and the value of hard work. She's 80 now and has dementia but she was very feisty and a real inspiration.



'I'm a bit of a petrolhead. I was a trainee mechanic in my early 20s so I'm pretty useful under the bonnet'

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's TV cook Lorraine Pascale's turn

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Ella Fitzgerald – her voice totally captivates me. My daughter was born the year she died, 1996, and was named after her.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Don't get stuck in a job – do what you love and the rest will follow.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Cars! I'm a petrolhead and was a trainee mechanic in my early 20s so I'm pretty useful under the bonnet.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... My ability to eat like a horse without putting on weight. In my 20s I could eat anything and never put on a pound. These days [she's 41] I spend a lot of time on the treadmill.

The unending quest that drives you on... To be at peace in myself. I've had challenges which brought insecurities like fear of rejection, abandonment, and never feeling worthy. Life's great now, so I'm closer to finding contentment.

The poem that touches your soul... Broken Dreams by Anonymous. It tells you to let go of a situation, then things will sort themselves out.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I don't eat the food I make! I'm 5ft 10½in, so maybe I look slimmer than I am.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Joining a ten-week course at Leiths School of Food and Wine in London in 2005. I'd been a successful model but was unhappy. I fell in love with cooking on the course.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd break into Fortnum & Mason on Piccadilly and eat my way round the aisles.

The song that means most to you... There Must Be An Angel by Eurythmics. It came out in 1985 when I was almost 13 and starting to feel grown up.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Ella's birth. She was the first person I'd ever met who shared the same blood as me.

The saddest time that shook your world... Falling out with a dear friend at 21. The next day I looked in the mirror and realised it was *me* who was the problem. That was when I realised the impact my childhood was having on my life and decided to get counseling.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To one day have a big, normal, happy family.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Remain true to yourself and stick to your beliefs.

The order of service at your funeral... I'd have it at a Methodist Church with Don't Stop Me Now by Queen and Go West by the Pet Shop Boys. There'd be a 'bring a dish' party and I want my ashes scattered in Byron Bay – an incredible place from which to float away.

The way you want to be remembered... For my food. For loving it, sharing it and for teaching people how to cook it.

The Plug... A Lighter Way To Bake by Lorraine Pascale, HarperCollins, £20. Visit www.lorrainepascale.com. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

PS...

Take the family to see Frozen – Disney's Christmas blockbuster – in cinemas from Friday. Matt Smith stars in musical thriller American Psycho at London's Almeida Theatre. And Il Divo welcome some very special guests on new album A Musical Affair – out Monday

NEXT WEEK

- Meet the people who put up Britain's craziest Christmas lights
- Jamie Oliver cooks his goose – with all the trimmings
- Monty Don's tips for helping wildlife survive winter
- PLUS Britain's best TV listings