

# The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept **THE** definitive answer. This week it's comedian Omid Djalili's turn



'Everyone thinks I'm tall and really fat. I'm 5ft 6in and weigh 103kg, so I'm short and only quite fat!'

**The prized possession you value above all others...** My gold wedding ring. Annabel and I got married in 1992, but a year later I lost the ring. I replaced it in 2009 and now I never take it off.

**The temptation you wish you could resist...** Late night eating in the car after a gig. If it's gone well I'll have a Big Mac. If it's been a disaster I have a Double Whopper from Burger King.

**The happiest moment you will cherish forever...** The moment David Beckham scored that last goal against Greece that meant England qualified for the 2002 World Cup. I was so excited I passed out.

Left: David Beckham celebrates England qualifying for the 2002 World Cup



**The book that holds an everlasting resonance...** Captain Corelli's Mandolin by Louis de Bernières. The ending had me sobbing when I read it.

**The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day...** I'd hang around the Comedy Store changing rooms to see what other comedians say about me.

**The pet hate that makes your hackles rise...** Being interrupted.

**The film you can watch time and time again...** The Graduate. I saw it when I was 13 and really connected with Dustin Hoffman's character – the goofy underdog who had to fight to get the girl.

**The person who has influenced you most...** Professor Soheil Bushrui, a Middle Eastern master of literature. He taught me about truth and beauty when I was 17. He's in his eighties now and we're still in touch.

**The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint...** Mahatma Gandhi – he wouldn't want a pie or a pint, so I'd get more nosh while he droned on about world peace.

**The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child...** Be yourself.

**The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again...** My Panini football sticker albums for the 1974 and 1978 World Cups. I filled them

when I was a kid but in 1995, I gave them to a friend. I want them *back!*

**The biggest regret you wish you could amend...** Giving up playing football when I was 22. I used to play left mid-field in a good amateur league. I was lean and fit but then I packed it in – that's why I'm fat!



Above: The Graduate. Right: The Leap Of Faith slide at Atlantis, Bahamas

**The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity...** Air crash investigation documentaries. I believe I will crash one day so I watch them and absorb any information that might help me survive.

**The unending quest that drives you on...** Striving for excellence.

**The poem that touches your soul...** Rabbit by Anonymous. It's about a rabbit that gets its leg caught in a trap. I came across it during A-level English.

**The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase...** That I'm tall and really fat. I'm 5ft 6in and 103kg so I'm short and only quite fat!

**The song that means most to you...** Simon And Garfunkel's Scarborough Fair. It's a beautiful reminder of that moment in The Graduate when he gets the girl against the odds.

**The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions...** I'd begin the day with Annabel and our three children [aged 15-21] at the Atlantis hotel in the Bahamas. The kids and I would go to the water park and do the

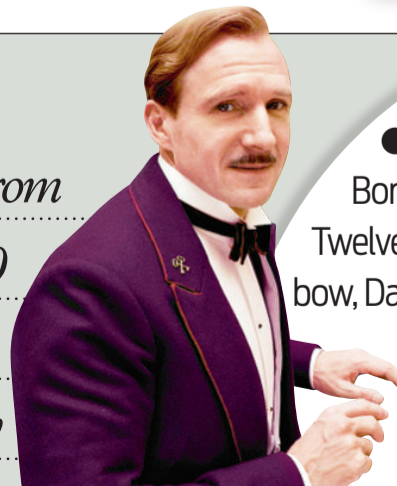
Leap Of Faith slide, a 60ft drop into a lagoon surrounded by sharks behind glass. Lunch would be at The Dome in Edinburgh. I'd start with haggis then have the fish of the day and a cranberry juice – I don't drink. I'd then go skiing at the indoor mountain in Dubai. Later, I'd have a gondola ride with Annabel in Venice before dinner at the Beverly Montage



PHOTOGRAPHS: CAMERA PRESS, ALLSTAR, EPA

## PS...

See Ralph Fiennes in new film *The Grand Budapest Hotel* from Friday. Angela Lansbury is back in the West End after nearly 40 years, in previews for *Blithe Spirit* at the Gielgud Theatre. And Rufus Wainwright's greatest hits album, *Vibrate*, is out Monday



## NEXT WEEK

- Behind the scenes on Hugh Bonneville's follow-up to *Twenty Twelve*, WIA
- As she takes her final bow, Dame Edna recalls her hilarious London debut
- Try Jamie Oliver's hearty ham dishes
- PLUS Britain's best TV guide