

**TAKE
10**



SUBJECT

Maggie Barry

**FRANCES COVENTRY CHATS WITH THIS
GARDENING LEGEND, TV & RADIO
PERSONALITY, AND PROUD MUM ...**

1 A great night out for you would go like ...?

MAGGIE: It would start off with a few margaritas somewhere, then a fantastic meal in the company of good friends. Sometimes I'll cook at home – but I'm a gardener, not a cook, so I settle for a few signature dishes. I make a thing called the seven-hour lamb, which involves a bottle of red wine, garlic and anchovies.

2 Who do you most admire, and why?

MAGGIE: The Dalai Llama. I was asked to introduce him when he visited New Zealand. I got to spend the day with him, and he's the most remarkable man. Very humble, very entertaining, with a great sense of humour. And he loves orchids, as I do. He'd taken two orchids with him on the Great March out of Tibet, and only one had survived. We were able to trace it in New Zealand and we gave it to him. I've been to Nepal and spent some time in a Tibetan refugee camp. The thing that keeps the refugees going is the Dalai Llama and his ability to look after them and remain happy no matter what. That's a lesson I brought back with me from that trip. I felt enriched by his presence.

3 If you could do anything in the world and could not fail what would that be?

MAGGIE: I'd like to be able to physically walk long distances to places you can't get to any other way. To me, it's all about the plants – but I'd like to be fit enough to enjoy the walks as well.



4 What's the hardest thing about being a mum?

MAGGIE: Never knowing if you've got it right. I say cherish every day but don't get bogged down in the day-to-day issues. Raise your head and picture your children in their early-30s perhaps. With Joe, I think about what kind of man I would like him to be ... happy, secure, etc.

5 What book is currently on your bedside table?

MAGGIE: There's a trilogy by Stieg Larsson. I'm reading the first one, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* – and my partner and I are vying for the second book. He generously stayed up until the wee small hours trying to get it read so that I can have it.

6 If you weren't a celeb, what else would you love to be doing?

MAGGIE: I'd be gardening. I know I've still got a great garden in there somewhere.



Interviewing English designer Chris Beardshaw at Ellerslie Flower Show.

It would have lots of trees and grass ... and probably a lake, because I love the serenity and the reflections in the water. My mother was a florist so there'd have to be a picking garden with lilies, roses and euphorbia.

7 What's your favourite movie ever?

MAGGIE: I've got out of the habit of going to the movies, but I mainly love musicals. *The Blues Brothers*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and *Cabaret* are some of my favourites. I've got a lot of song lyrics in my brain – which is amazing, because I can't sing! If I try singing in the car my son curls up in the foetal position and begs me to stop.

8 Imagine you're stuck on a desert island with just one person – who would that be, and why?

MAGGIE: My squeeze! We met on *Outward Bound* and he's the sort of guy you'd go into the jungle with. You learn a lot about a person in adverse situations.

9 What's your most embarrassing moment?

MAGGIE: I turned 50 last year, and I think it's good to have challenges that humiliate and humble you and remind you that you haven't got it all sorted. I went skiing and took a tumble right under the ski-lifts. I skidded 50 metres backwards down the hill. Joe laughed his head off, told everybody, and still wishes he'd had a camera.

10 Have you any tips for a young wife and mum?

MAGGIE: Get or keep a good sense of humour. I see people struggling and I think, *'I wish they'd lighten up'*. Most things we worry about are not that important. Each relationship is different and what do we know? I'm hesitant to give people advice even about gardens – so I don't think I'd be into relationship advice. I even hate it if people ask me if I like their garden, because it's important that they do their own thing and just enjoy it. ❁