

# Life as I know it

# Zoe Ball

TV and radio presenter and one-time “ladette” Zoe, 37, now fits work around her family commitments. She lives in Brighton with her husband Norman Cook – DJ Fatboy Slim – and their eight-year-old son Woody Words by Tricia Welch

**If I could change anything about myself I'd...** be a natural blonde.

**The most romantic thing anyone's ever done for me was...**

cook me something special, just the way I like it. I'm not into grand gestures, I much prefer something simple, straight from the heart. At the weekend for example, I was feeling a bit rubbish and Norman disappeared into the kitchen and reappeared with the most fantastic beef stew with mashed potato and vegetables. I cheered up immediately.

**Not a lot of people know this but I'm very good at...** performing the whole of *West Side Story*. Between us, Norman and I can sing the entire repertoire – we know all the words and all the songs. It's probably quite painful to endure if you're in our select audience, but we're assured it's quite funny, too.

**To wake myself up I...** make myself a cuppa and put Wogan on the radio.

**Last thing at night I...** kiss my little boy goodnight, check he's snuggled in, then jump into bed with a variety of snacks, anything ranging from chocolate buttons to Quavers or Babybels. My gym instructor goes mad when I tell him I've eaten chocolate late at night – apparently it's not very good for you.

**When I'm feeling down I...** go shopping and buy things I don't need. It's dreadful, but it really works.

**My best friends are...** a gang of

girls who are all younger than me. They are all very funny and gorgeous and 10 of us recently went on a hen weekend to New York. They call me Aunty Zoe but I'm not sure that's a compliment.

**My happy place is...** in bed, in pyjamas, with my two boys watching *The Simpsons*.

**The worst thing you could say to me is...** your iPod has fallen down the toilet. I really need my music, so if it breaks down I fly into a panic.

**The best thing my parents taught me was...** that mums and dads aren't always right. I've learned that by default and I'm trying to teach it to Woody, so he doesn't feel too disappointed in us later on.

**If I can I always try to avoid...** lethal shots like tequila and sambuca. I've been in too many situations at the end of a night when they're suggested with dire consequences. Nowadays, if one makes it my way I try to tip it into the nearest pot plant.

**It's not good for my image...** but I like early nights with re-runs of *The Good Life* or a good book.

**The song I can never get out of my head is...** *Just a Gigolo* by Louis Prima. It's been stuck in my head all morning.

**I drive...** a BMW X5 and an old Citroen DS, which is bright green and we call “the frog.”

**I know I'm having a bad hair day when...** I wake up. My hair is so fine

that it never does what it's supposed to. I've learned to accept it.

**If I could pass any law it would be...** that pubs should be made to serve a decent cup of tea. I don't really drink beer and if I'm driving sometimes a cuppa is all I crave.

**When I was a child I wanted to be...** Barbra Streisand – she was my absolute idol. I went to see her perform in Los Angeles recently with one of my best mates and she was fantastic. I just cried my eyes out.

**The best day of my life...** is impossible to choose because every day I spend with my son is filled with special moments. Like the other night I caught him hiding under the duvet and when I asked him what he was doing he told me he was reciting his nine times table. To me, things like that are just the best. Norman and I would like another child and now he's back home from his world tour I'm going to lure him into my web.

**My proudest moment was...** when Dan, my kid brother, got married recently. My whole family was there, my little brother Nick gave the best man's speech, my dad made a great speech as well and all the family loved sharing the day. That made me happier than anything I've ever done or achieved at work.

**My favourite place in Britain is...** on the beach in Brighton, looking out to sea. It's on a par with

spending a day in Selfridges.

**On my last holiday...** we sailed up the east coast of Sardinia overnight and the three of us sat out looking up at the stars, trying to identify as many as we could. Woody fell asleep eventually so we wrapped him in a blanket, but Norman and I stayed awake until the sun came up.

**The last film I saw was...** *All About Eve* which I watched yesterday for the zillionth time.

**The shop I can't walk past without buying something is...** Tribeca in Brighton. They do fabulous clothes.

**The most expensive thing I ever bought was...** a holiday to Mustique in the Caribbean – where it rained, and rained! The same thing happened when we went on a really expensive trip to Jamaica. Both times we ended up wishing we'd stayed at home.

**I always laugh at...** *The Two Ronnies*. Watching them reminds me of my childhood and always has me in stitches, even though I've heard it all before.

**My last meal would be...** oysters followed by chocolate fondant pudding from Nobu. And perhaps a margherita or two afterwards. ☺

*Zoe is backing B&Q's Brighton up Britain campaign which encourages the nation to brighten up their homes on a budget. For more information go to [www.diy.com/brightenupbritain](http://www.diy.com/brightenupbritain).*

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