

SATURDAY/SUNDAY IAN THOMPSON

Fly to Paris, drink wine and enjoy people-watching



International Interior Award winner Ian Thompson (45) creates bespoke designs, both residential and commercial. He is married to Cheryl and has two children, Jared and Kelly. They live in a 400-year-old gate lodge in Killinchy, which Ian and Cheryl call their dream home ...

Do weekends find you at the coalface or draw bridge up?
I'm very much at the coalface.

We have a design boutique and interiors store, Ian Thompson Interior Design, at 665 Lisburn Road in Belfast.

It is open six days a week and Saturdays are one of the busiest days, where clients call in to confirm design schemes, furniture and lighting. So it's a very busy day.

If you can, do you grab a lie in?
Never — there is plenty of time to rest when you are six feet under.

To be honest, we only truly rest when we are on holiday and even then I have to admit that we are normally eager to check out the local antiques and Kasbahs for unique interior finds.

What do you remember most about the weekend as a child?
Saturdays were always chore day — cutting the grass and sorting the house out.

On Sunday mornings, my dad would get us out of bed early to walk from our house on the Antrim

Road to Belfast Castle. We always called in to a local shop to get the papers and sweets on the way back. Sunday dinner was always at our grandparents' house.

If you could do anything this weekend what would it be?
That's easy. I'd fly to Paris (below, far left) and book into the Hotel Coste on the Rue Saint-Honoré.

Then I'd order a plate of their smoked salmon and have a bottle of wine beside the fireplace, and people watch!

We would then get up early for coffee and croissants and hit the Sunday morning flea market, Les Puces de Saint-Ouen, for unusual pieces to add that finishing touch to a client project.

At weekends, do you eat out or rustle up something at home?
If we are working late to finish off a project, then we would definitely rustle up something at home for supper.

We really only relax when we take time out and are away for the weekend. Only then, do we have the time to truly chill out at a restaurant

A night at the cinema or a DVD?
Last Christmas my wife bought me the wonderful Bose surround sound system so our house feels like a cinema.

An added bonus is the dog at our feet in front of a log fire and a good bottle of red.



If you could read anything this weekend what would it be?
Our good friend Nicholas Haslam, who has been an interior designer to icons such as Jackie Onassis and Mick Jagger (below, left), has written a new book, so I will be reading that.

His stories are wild and it's always good to keep thoroughly in the loop.

Do you switch off your mobile or log out of email?
Absolutely not — we have two 18-years-olds who are never at home, and our workload at the moment is completely full on.

The mobile is always on for clients, architects, builders and suppliers. For this job you need to be in touch 24/7.

Do you go to church on Sunday morning?
When I get the time but it's not often enough.

Your perfect Sunday?
Last Sunday was perfect — a lunch party for 12 good friends which went on well past supper.

When do you start getting depressed at the weekend ending?
Never, because I love what I do.
My wife and I usually drum up some of our best ideas at the weekend and come Sunday night, we are simply itching to get back to work and put them into motion.

Ian Thompson Interior Design, 665 Lisburn Road, Belfast

GOING UP

SESAME STREET

Today's Navigator is brought to you by ... no, that's too obvious. But still Happy 40th to all the guys and gals (and furry things) at Sesame Street which this week celebrated four decades on the air.



The show began back in the mists of hippiedom and now, four decades later, hasn't changed that much.

The kids love it. The students love it. And the parents love it (for the little refresher course in counting to 10 after a particularly hard night on the town).

Who would have thought back then that Kermit, Grover, Cookie Monster, Bert & Ernie and Big Bird would become iconic figures right up there with Elvis and Marilyn?

Brings a sentimental tear to Nav's normally dry eye. So all together ... ONE birthday, TWO birthdays, THREE birthdays, FOUR birthdays ...

POPES IN SPACE

Well, we're not quite talking Pope James T Kirk yet but the Vatican is getting serious about the idea of little green men.

The Church has just finished hosting a special "study week" on astrobiology, gathering top scientists from around (this) world.



"The questions of life's origins and of whether life exists elsewhere in the universe are very suitable and deserve serious consideration," says Father Jose Gabriel Funes, the chief papal astronomer.

Space ... the Final Frontier. These are the voyages of the Starship Enterprise. Its five-year mission? To explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and make the 12-eyed little horrors go to confession ...

JANE FONDA

The movie star says that at 71 her sex life is "better than ever".

Well, I suppose it's striking a blow against ageism but, Jane, enough already.

Navigator's kind of tired of hearing from ageing baby boomers that 60 is the new 40, 70 is the new 30 ...

Youth may be wasted on the young but it's definitely wasted on reality-defying OAPs.



KATIE PRICE AND I'M A CELEBRITY ...

It all sounds slightly, well, desperate, doesn't it?

Jordan/Katie is on her way back to the jungle ... to what exactly?

Price is the first celeb ever to appear twice on the show and now she's being paid five times the amount of the other contestants.



Still, maybe it will give her a chance to rabbit on about Peter Andre for a few weeks.

Bet you Mr Andre's solicitors will be watching every episode ...

GOING DOWN