

12-18 March  
2016

# TV & Satellite week



**NEW**  
**INDIAN SUMMERS**  
Julie Walters' hit drama returns

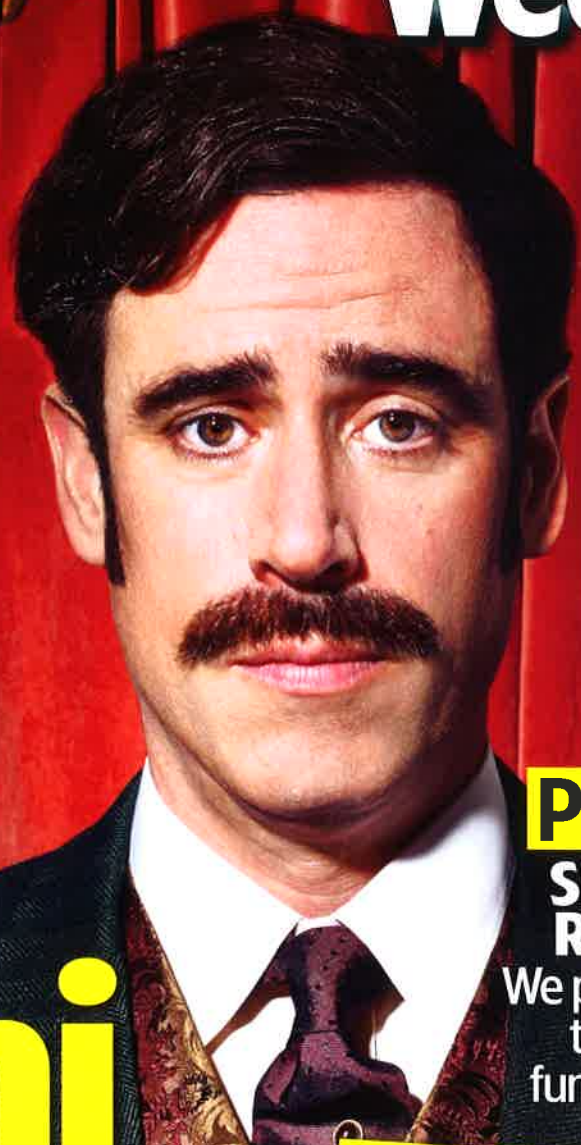
**FIRST DATES**  
Picture exclusive with maître d' Fred

**NEW DRAMA**

# Houdini & Doyle

The escapologist and Sherlock Holmes creator team up to investigate the paranormal

**STARTS SUNDAY** ITV HD & ITV ENCORE HD



**PLUS**  
**SPORT RELIEF**  
We preview the epic fundraiser

**DAREDEVIL**  
Marvel's superhero is back to fight more crime



**NEW**

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10  
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Fred Sirieix shared some dating tips at our exclusive photo shoot



First Dates maître d' **Fred Sirieix** reveals love is as easy as pie

# Waiting on romance

**NEW REALITY**  
**First Dates**  
Tuesday, Channel 4 HD, 9pm

Not so long ago, TV dating shows were for extroverts and aspiring actors, all hoping Cilla Black would give them their moment in the spotlight. Now, Channel 4 has given the genre a reboot with *First Dates*, where genuine, friendly singletons are given the chance to find real love with a hand-picked date over a swanky dinner.

Guiding them is charming maître d' Fred Sirieix, who works as general manager at London's Michelin-starred restaurant, Galvin at Windows on Park Lane.

Sirieix, 42, films the hit show at Paternoster Chop House near St Paul's Cathedral, and always hopes he'll introduce some of his diners to their future spouses.

Here, he tells us why dating is not as hard as everyone seems to think...

**First Dates has become a national obsession. Why do you think the show is such a hit?** I think it just resonates with everyone, because finding love is something that's very close to our hearts. People like the fact that everyone on the programme is trying to find love and we are matchmaking people to that effect. We're not putting people up to fail or have horrible dates. We love it when a couple get on.

**Do you think a restaurant is a good place for a first date? Wouldn't it be better to go for a drink with a quick escape route?** Going for a meal forces you to take the time for the date, which is something people never do. When you take the time relationships blossom and flourish.



The staff at the First Dates restaurant

**'Going for a meal forces you to take the time for the date, which is something people never do'**

**Let's not forget, Fred, your business is gastronomy, not romance. Is it weird that people think of you as a dating guru now?** Yes and no. My brother thinks it's very funny. I'm a normal guy with a normal job and I don't think I'm an expert. There are a lot of similarities between the art of love and the art of service – you need to start by having faith in yourself and understanding who you are and what you can deliver.

**You're very settled, and live with your partner and two children. But do you remember going on any bad dates in your younger years?** I've never had a bad date and I don't have any problem with

dating. A lot is to do with how comfortable and confident you feel in your own skin. It depends if you've been hurt with love before and if you can handle it. Some people feel awkward but to me it's just good social skills.

**How does working in the First Dates restaurant compare to your day job?** Well, I am not rushed off my feet in the same way I am at work. On the show we don't have so many tables and everything is very organised, because I have to take the time to talk to people and soak up the atmosphere.

**We're now on series six and First Dates is getting even more popular with viewers. Are there any more exciting changes planned for the show?** The essence of the show is the dating, and that's not going to change, but other things might. We are talking about lots of different things but I have got to keep it secret. I'm committed to the show as it's a good gig and I like being part of something that's good.