## **Spotted**



British entrepreneur Theo Paphitis (left), star of reality TV show Dragon's Den,

strolling through the grounds of Atlantis. Irish footballer Stephen Ireland chilling by the pool at the same spot. Scottish tennis ace Andy Murray kicking a ball around in the At the Top observation deck of the Burj Khalifa.

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#### **Best International DJ Set**

The top sets from the biggest DJs to visit Dubai

#### **Best Ladies' Night**

The feeling's right at these hotspots on ladies' night

#### **Best New Club**

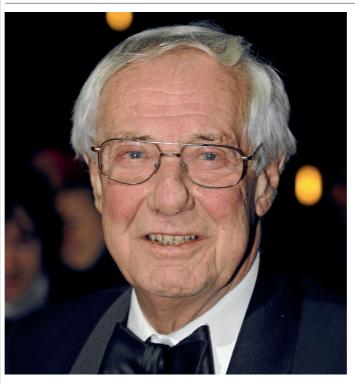
It's been a great year for new nightspots, but which is best?

#### Most viewed this week

- 1 Dubai through a lens
- 53 top weekend getaways
- **Q**Golf-course restaurants
- / David Guetta in Abu Dhabi
- 29 to try on February 29

# **Hot seat Barry Norman**

The renowned British film critic, novelist and media personality, 78, is in Dubai this week as chairman of his charity cricket team. *Rob Garratt* had a chat



What are you doing in Dubai? I'm here with the charity cricket club I chair, The Lord's Taverners. I used to play for them but now I've taken to the sidelines, so I'll just be swanning around here. It's very much a 21st century city.

You share the cricket chairing duties with former *Who*Wants to be a Millionaire?
host Chris Tarrant. Seems like an odd pairing...

Chris is an old mate. We're very different people who see things in different ways – but he's the reason I'm here.

## So, the Oscars: did *The Artist* deserve to win best film?

Yes. The fact that is harks back to another era isn't important: it's a very good movie.

Any other picks of the season? Tinker Tailor Solider Spy was a very good film. We Need to Talk About Kevin was mainly ignored by the awards, but shouldn't have been. And the best performance of the year was Meryl Streep in The Iron Lady.

### 'Schwarzenegger wasn't an actor – he was a special effect'

## You're a revered movie critic. What's the secret of a good review?

I decided right at the beginning to just be completely honest. People might be planning to take their whole family to a movie on my recommendation and that can cost a lot of

money, so I have to say what I really believe.

The top seven movies in the US last year were sequels... Studios aren't run the way they used to be, by people who cared about movies. Now they're run by accountants.

#### Do you ever regret leaving the BBC in 1998, after more than 25 years hosting your Film... show?

I didn't have any real regrets about leaving then, and I don't now. The BBC used to be a wonderful place to work, then it became a very anxious place to work.

What do you think of your replacement, Jonathan Ross? I think after I left something happened in television towards movies – a serious art form was relegated to light entertainment. It was very difficult to see.

## Who's the most intimidating person you interviewed?

I wasn't intimated by anyone. There was one person I was in awe of and that was Laurence Olivier. I believed then, and still do now, that he's the best stage actor I will ever see.

And the worst interview? Arnold Schwarzenegger. Before we started, he said, 'I bet I can mention the name of my film in answer to every question you ask me.' I said, 'Please don't – it'll be rubbish!' But he did and he thought it was really funny. I don't remember what film it was - there weren't many of his films I liked. I never regretted the incident. I thought of him less as an actor and more as a special effect. Barry Norman hosts the Lord's Taverners gala cricket dinner at Meydan on Friday March 2. Tickets Dhs450. www.urbanevents.ae (04 445 6842).

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