

Spotted



Professional British boxer David Haye (left) shopping up a storm at Mall of the Emirates.

Tony Mortimer, John Hendy and Terry Coldwell of UK boy band East 17 enjoying a Christmas-themed lunch at Barasti. **Former Sports Illustrated** Argentinian model Valeria Mazza in Deira.

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Hot seat

Ellie Goulding

The chart-topping, awards-grabbing songwriter, 25, tells *Rob Garratt* about playing to royals, learning to party and going electro ahead of Sandance NYE



You turned a few heads when you worked with US dubstep musician Skrillex.

In America I have a reputation for being an electro girl – I've been on a lot of remixes.

A lot of people were surprised because they know me from the John Lewis advert.

Do you worry about how to move forward without alienating your fan base?

What I need to do is learn that I have so many different fans. Some love my original music; some love the mixes, or the folky stuff. I need to be sure I'm never alienating people. I don't want to get an incredible fan base, then go and do something really obscure.

Playing the wedding reception of the UK's Prince William and Kate Middleton at Buckingham Palace must have been amazing.

It was the best night of my life. It was a miracle when I was asked, the most surreal moment: I thought it was a joke. I really had to slap myself and say, 'this is a gig'.

If that was the high, what's been your career low?

I don't know if I've had one. I've had ups and downs, but everyone does. I've never thought of giving up music, it's such an amazing thing. I can't think of any low points.

What makes you 'Starry Eyed'?

My assistant just shouted '[short drinks]!' Everyone has different interpretations of that song: some people think it's about being in love, some think it's about being intoxicated.

To me it was having a kind of energy that doesn't come from anything, just a coming together of people.

Ellie Goulding plays Sandance NYE on December 31.

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Are you looking forward to seeing in 2013 in Dubai?

I've never been, so I have no idea what to expect. Come to think of it, I don't think I've ever played on New Year's Eve before – I think this is a first. Last year I celebrated in Thailand with my friends.

What's your idea of a perfect New Year's Eve?

There's always so much to choose from, I feel like I usually end up staying in with mates. It was my mission to do something this year.

You don't sound like much of a party girl.

I've been going out way more lately because I just realised life's short. Before I would do shows and just fall asleep afterwards. I'm trying to go out more and meet more people.

It was a pretty big deal when you won the BBC's annual Sound of... poll and the Critics' Choice at the Brit Awards in 2010. Do you ever think about where'd you be if you hadn't won them?

'I don't think I've ever played on New Year's Eve before – this is a first'

I think about this a lot. It was really cool to have the accolades, but I do wonder where I'd be without them: my name was already being built before then. I think I'd still be in a good place.

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