

The life of a hard-working future king

His eccentric habits are known to the world, but the Prince of Wales has every reason to feel content. A man with wide interests and deep passions, he is finally happily married. Daniella Kent reports.



Prince Charles is often portrayed as bad-tempered and spoilt. There are stories that every day seven eggs are boiled for his breakfast so that he can find one that is cooked just the way he likes it. His toothpaste is squeezed onto his toothbrush for him. And his bath towel is folded over a chair in a particular way for when he gets out of his royal bath.

He has an enormous private staff – secretaries, deputy secretaries, press officers, four valets, two butlers, housekeepers, two chefs, two chauffeurs, ten gardeners, an army of porters, handymen, cleaners and maids. They are expected to get everything right. When HRH (His Royal Highness) feels they have performed their duties well, they are praised in a royal memo. But if they have made mistakes, they are called into his study and told off. The Prince can get so angry that he has been known to have tantrums, throwing things and screaming with rage.



The private and public man

Charles is eccentric, and he admits it. He talks to trees and plants. He wants to save wildlife, but enjoys hunting, shooting and fishing. He dresses for dinner, even if he's eating alone. He's a great socializer. Poets, artists, writers, broadcasters, politicians, actors and singers all eat at his table. Arriving at Highgrove, his family home, on a Saturday afternoon in time for a stiff Martini, guests are entertained in the height of luxury. They are then sent on their way before lunch on Sunday, having been shown round his beautifully-kept gardens.

The Prince also entertains extravagantly at Sandringham, one of the Queen's homes, at least twice a year. There are picnic lunches on the beach, expeditions to local churches and lavish dinners with organic food from Highgrove. Conversation is lively, but the heir to the throne has to be careful what he says, because he knows only too well that anything he says in private may be repeated in public.

The future monarch that we don't see is a man of great humour, who cares passionately about the state of the British nation, and is devoted to his two children, William and Harry. He is madly in love with 'his darling wife', which is how he refers to Camilla in public.

A dutiful life

Together Charles and Camilla perform royal duties, both at home and abroad. He attends over 500 public engagements a year. He visits hospitals, youth groups, performing artists, charities, and business conferences. He hosts receptions to welcome visiting heads of state and VIPs. He travels abroad extensively, as an ambassador to the United Kingdom, representing trade and industry. He works hard to promote greater understanding between different religions. He is also President of the Prince's Charities, which are active in promoting education, business, the environment, the arts, and opportunities for young people. The group raises over £110 million annually.



Camilla shares Charles' passion for hunting, and also his interest in conservation of towns and countryside. The one thing she leaves to Charles is skiing. She prefers to stay at home when he makes his annual trip to Klosters in Switzerland.

Everything except the top job

Since his second marriage, Prince Charles has everything he wants except, as Diana (who was killed in a car accident in 1997) used to call it, 'the top job'. Yet despite not being on the throne, he has worked hard to accomplish so much. He is concerned about the state of the country he loves, and shows his frustration that governments do little to tackle those problems about which he feels so strongly.

The Prince of Wales has his own food company, Duchy Originals. It originally sold biscuits, but is now expanding to become one of Britain's best-known and most successful organic brands, with over 200 different products, including food, drinks, and hair and body care products.

Charles, well-intentioned, hard-working, conservative and old-fashioned, continues to do his duty as he sees it. But he is no longer alone. One day he will be King, and his darling Camilla will be HRH The Princess Consort.