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Weekend

Rival camps tear apart Charles's household

Exclusive Book reveals backstabbing by aides

Valentine Low

Prince Charles's court is so riven by backstabbing, in-fighting and turf wars that it is nicknamed Wolf Hall, according to a devastating new portrait.

Rivalries between different factions reached such a pitch that they led to the collapse of a multimillion-pound deal to house his charities under one roof, a book on the Prince of Wales serialised in *The Times* today says.

More than £100,000 was wasted in the loss of the deal, and Charles's charities missed out on a potential future profit of tens of millions of pounds.

Charles: *The Heart of a King*, by Catherine Mayer, depicts Clarence House — Charles's London base — as an institution riddled with "glaring systemic weaknesses". It is hard to know who can be trusted and criticism can send the prince into "despair".

Mayer, a British-based journalist with *Time* magazine, says that turf battles between Charles's outside advisers and his paid employees "are common and bloody".

She writes: "One former householder refers to Clarence House as Wolf Hall, in reference to the treacherous and opportunistic world depicted by Hilary Mantel in her fictionalised account of the rise of Thomas Cromwell under Henry VIII."

Problems are worsened by Charles's habit of expanding his aides' jurisdic-

tions, she says. Some insiders feel "oppressed" by their changing job descriptions, while others are "threatened as colleagues are instructed to undertake work on turf they consider their own".

She writes of Charles: "Apart from his time in the navy, he has never held a paying job and doesn't understand the anxiety such moves can create; no student of management theory, he believes rivalries promote better performance, rather than recognising the glitches and strains which territorial disputes can cause."

The prince, who is called "The Boss" by his staff and is said to identify with Baldrick in *Blackadder*, has also suffered in the process.

"Charles hasn't always chosen his sages wisely," she says. Being surrounded by people more likely to tell him what he wants to hear rather than the gritty truth makes it hard to know whom to trust. "That factor, combined with his native insecurity, means he doesn't always believe he's earned the praise that comes his way, while criticism has the power to cast him into despair."

Some people privately blame "bruising experiences" working for Charles on Michael Fawcett, his former personal assistant who was forced to resign but later reappeared as a close and trusted adviser. The Duchess of Cornwall



Conflict between the Prince of Wales's outside advisers and his paid employees is common and bloody, making Clarence House like Wolf Hall, a new biography says

2 for 1 Cinema tickets every weekend

Weekend, page 6



Caitlin Moran: I hate my cat

Magazine



40 great secret hotels

Magazine: the
travel issue



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Travel

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'We dined like kings on dishes costing €2 each, and drank more than we should'

Helen Ochyra discovers Aragon in Spain

Avicenna Afsana, overlooking the Bay of Kalkan (2); and, below, the villa's sitting room



The best holidays in Turkey

Here are 50 great breaks for 2015 — whether you want adventure, culture, or simply to relax and enjoy the finest Turkish food

Best villas

1 Luxe for less, Kalkan

The newest — and possibly most glamorous — of Simpson Travel's Turkish Mediterranean collection is Villa Zaffre. With up to eight guests sharing four en-suite bedrooms, it makes for an inexpensive five-star escape. The movie star touch is the villa's gently deepening infinity pool — guests may drag their sunlounger into the shallows to cool off. A welcome meze platter (£10pp) can be enjoyed on arrival on the villa's roof terrace. If you have a larger group, the equally classy five-bed Villa Lapis is just next door, and can also be rented through Simpson's. Kalamar Bay,

with its watersports-friendly beach club, shimmers below.

Details One week costs from £548pp per week, based on eight sharing, including flights and car hire (0845 322 8767, simpsonstravel.com)

2 Sea views at Kalkan

Enjoy the views over the Bay of Kalkan from the roof terrace and pool of Avicenna Afsana, one of a pair of new super-chic villas. Of the four bedrooms, which sleep eight in the modern, minimalist interior, the master suite spans the entire first floor, with a hot tub looking out over the sea. It's just a

ten-minute walk into Kalkan, with its roof-terrace restaurants, although in-villa catering can be arranged and fresh bread is delivered daily.

Details Seven nights cost from £1,250pp based on two sharing, including flights, seven days' 4x4 hire and daily cleaning. Each additional guest is charged £750pp (020 8605 3500, exclusiveescapes.co.uk)

3 Villa with a boat, Bozburun Peninsula

Offering a five-star Robinson Crusoe experience, Kuzbuk Waterfront is new from Turkey specialist Exclusive Escapes. It sits on its own uninhabited ▶



20 Travel



waterfront location reachable only courtesy of the skippered boat — which comes as part of the package. The villa (open from May 2015) sleeps six in rustic-chic interiors perched above a turquoise sea. Captain Oguz will whiz you over to the market towns of Bozburun or Selimiye for a blowout seafood dinner. Or use the kayaks to find your own private snorkelling spot. **Details** From £1,350pp per week based on two sharing including flights from Heathrow or Stansted's private terminal, additional guests from £750pp (020 8605 3500, exclusiveescapes.co.uk)

4 Château stay in Kas

The Château feels and looks like a castle. Reintroduced by Kas specialist Elixir for the 2015 season, it crowns the pine-covered Kas peninsula — a strip of land that mimics the Cap d'Antibes a century ago. Where to start? The 14m-long infinity pool? The roof terrace? The complimentary people-carrier to whisk you to the sunken city of Kekova? Or perhaps the resident chef, who makes breakfast, serves a welcome barbecue, and can whip up Anatolian classics on demand (you simply pay for the ingredients). There is a complimentary shuttle boat to Peninsula Gardens and the Doria Hotel, two other Elixir properties. The former offers a luxurious spa, the latter a private sandy beach. **Details** From £5,500 per week for ten people (020 7722 2228, elixirvillas.com)

5 Boho village stay, Kas

Property rental website HomeAway offers a mammoth 21,000 properties to let throughout Turkey, with 7,000 newly added in 2014 alone. Few include such delights as private transfers or welcome dinners, but bargains abound. Newly listed Villa Lara occupies a plum position in Kas, the boho fishing village secreted between Dalaman and Antalya airports. Four guests share two bedrooms and the sea-view swimming pool. Cathedral-sized windows also look out on to the Med from the capacious living space. **Details** From £63 per night for four (homeaway.co.uk, property number p456607)

6 By the sea in Kas

It's all about location at Villa Senar — slap on the seafront near Kas. We're talking waterside sunloungers and swim ladder down to the Med, just steps away from the villa's shared swimming pool; it's what they call *pied dans l'eau* in the South of France. Citrus trees shade the mature gardens. Day beds and loungers can be shifted around to soak up the sun. Load up on supplies in the bucolic town of Kas three miles away, although the gardener can deliver fresh bread daily. Inside there are three modern air-conditioned doubles plus a single room.

Details One week from £650 for seven (journeyanatolia.com)

7 Gardeners' world at Bodrum

Private Villa in Turkey has a dozen traditional homes — some newly built using age-old materials, some truly ancient — dotted in tranquil locations between Bodrum and Oludeniz. All come with pools. Villa Muskebi, near Ortakent on the Bodrum peninsula, has a heavenly garden that loops around the swimming pool. Turquoise loungers and a vast garden offset the villa's pebble façade. The barbecue is also made from stone. One large bedroom boasts traditional beams and white Turkish linen. Multi-coloured rugs and an open fireplace lend a homely air to this petite bargain. **Details** From £550 a week for two (00 90 252 363 8528, privatevillainturkey.com)

Best hotels

8 Bathhouse in Istanbul

In 2006, friends Bulent and Bora purchased Cukurcuma Hamami, a derelict Turkish bathhouse. In autumn 2014, the pair reopened the complex as Hammanhane, a suite-only affair near Orhan Pamuk's Museum of Innocence. Guest spaces are designed like mini-apartments, not hotel rooms, so expect rainforest showers, Ottoman recliners and a breakfast lobby of Grand Bazaar proportions. Bulent and Bora will show you the marble-lined hammam bath area, which is being renovated before opening to guests later this year.



Details A night's B&B is from £65 (00 90 212 293 4963, hammamhane.com)

9 Design hotel in Karakoy, Istanbul

Banker Han opens in March, the latest of a volley of design hotels taking over Karakoy, Istanbul's century-old financial district. Banks and shipping offices are now galleries and cafés — and in this case an oak-floored high-ceilinged hotel. Its owners also run Contemporary Istanbul, the city's famed autumn art fair, so expect video screenings and urban installations in the lobby. Top floor suites (from €129) have huge terraces with views across the Golden Horn. **Details** B&B doubles are from £60 (bankerhan.com)

10 Raffles, Istanbul

Like Soho House, Raffles is opening in Istanbul, above the sparkling new Zorlu Mall. No, it's not Bluewater but a 21st-century cornucopia of Turkey's top brands. Its highest rooms allow guests to gaze out — Shard-style — over 15 million city residents. Best thing? The spa. At 3,000 sq m, it has enough pools, hammams and reclining rooms to get lost in. Its Organic Pharmacy products are so healthy you could eat them. **Details** Three nights' B&B with flights and transfers costs from £792pp (0800 294 9323, classic-collection.co.uk)

11 Turkey's smallest hotel, near Izmir

Amid the vineyards of Turkey's leading wine producer is the nation's smallest hotel. The best thing about 2 Rooms isn't the contemporary Turkish furnishings, the spa-style bathroom or the floor-to-ceiling windows. Nor is it the 200 sq m roof terrace. It's overlooking vintner Urla's working vineyard, then sipping your way through its dozen vintages, which is so alluring. The owners can organise a driver to visit the Izmir peninsula's half-dozen other boutique wineries. The nearest airport is Izmir. **Details** B&B doubles are from £121 (00 90 232 759 0111, 2roomshotel.com)

12 Island hotel on Bozcaada

Bozcaada bobs in the Aegean near Lesbos. It's Turkey's secret Greek island, albeit one without the euro. Of its countless white-washed, rose-choked guesthouses, none come cuter than Rengigul. In the First World War, a



Royal Navy unit was headquartered here during the Gallipoli campaign just up the coast. In 1977, the current owner added granny-esque linen and reopened the building as a six-bedroom hotel. Her breakfasts are legendary. Served indoors under crystal and driftwood chandeliers, or outside amid the pot plants, the communal table groans with island honey, clotted cream and more than 20 varieties of home-made jam. **Details** B&B doubles are from £63 (00 90 286 697 8171, rengigul.net). The nearest airport is Izmir

13 Swissôtel, Bodrum

This is the Aegean Coast's most anticipated opening. From May, Swissôtel Resort Bodrum Beach will overlook a sandy corner of Turgutreis, on its own sunny peninsula near the Greek island of Kos. Just 66 rooms and 72 apartments will share indoor and outdoor pools, watersports and a private beach. Four restaurants include a slow-food eatery and an Asian fusion spot with sushi and a robata-yaki grill. Guest spaces, many shielded by vertical garden walls, are minimalist chic. **Details** B&B doubles are from £300 (swissotel.com/bodrum-beach)

14 Bargains at Bodrum

Foreign voices are rare at the Cennet Park Hotel. This locals' choice (note the bargain room rates) takes pride of place in Gundogan, one of the tranquil creeks that dot the Bodrum peninsula. There's a pool out front, then a lazy beach bar that serves little more than chilled Efes and crispy calamari, followed by a perfect arc of sand beyond. Knockout Turkish grills are served alfresco. The owners' pals whip out the oud and drum several times a week in summer for a traditional singsong and impromptu boogie. You

ALEXANDER KHRIPUNOV / GETTY IMAGES



may be obliged to join in.

Details B&B doubles are from £49 (00 90 252 387 9045, cennetparkhotel.com)

15 Mandarin Oriental, Bodrum

The Mandarin Oriental became Bodrum's must-visit hotel of 2014. Its fragrant landscaped gardens offer lashings of Asian zen. Uniquely for Bodrum, it has two sandy beaches, including the private white arc of Blue Beach. The complex reopens in March with a new seafood restaurant alongside the watersports centre and Little Fans jungle gym, children's pool and kids' club. Also new is the Quintessential Hammam Experience, with a steam bath and loofahs, soaps and hammam bowls to take home. Yoga, Pilates and tennis are on-site, and a sailing boat or golf caddy can be arranged for further afield. **Details** One week's B&B with flights and transfers is from £1,014pp (020 8682 5080, scottddunn.com)

16 Family beach club in Fethiye

The Hillside Beach Club is the standard against which all other beach hotels are measured. Yes, you'd be a fool to leave the resort near Dalaman — which offers a dazzling array of activities from art classes to catamaran school — and few guests do. Action is based around a sunlounger spangled Blue Flag beach. There are float-decks to swim to and a kayak trail to follow. You can even summon a mojito using the Beach Club's app. Alternatively, there's a no-phones/no-kids policy on its smaller Serenity and Silent beaches. Little ones have their own KidSide zone that offers a baby buffet and sterilisers, plus two kids' pools, discos and a

host of other goodies for older children.

Details One week's half board is from £1,223pp including flights (01306 747008, kuoni.co.uk or hillsidebeachclub.com)

17 Farm stay in Oludeniz

High above Oludeniz, Turkey's busiest tourist resort, sits Black Tree Farm, an all-organic retreat presided over by an Anglo-Turkish family, and populated by ducks, rabbits and goats. You stay in an ancient farmhouse or in nine self-catering cottages around the citrus and olive orchard. Kids can collect hens' eggs and pet baby donkeys. The walk down to Butterfly Valley beach on the Lycian Way (a 300-mile hiking trail to Antalya), then a dip in the pool on return, will exhaust the most energetic of visitors. **Details** B&B in the farmhouse is from £10pp, cottages from £30 per night (00 90 252 617 0045, blacktree.net)

18 Chic but cheap in Cirali

Two-mile-long Cirali beach is protected by national park status. That means that the only places to stay are bungalow-style beach joints such as Arcadia. Its wooden "cottages" are separated by orange trees and communal loungers. A mosaic pathway then weaves through the alfresco restaurant down to the empty beach, which is a snorkeler's dream. The open-air breakfast is a typical Turkish feast of farm-fresh eggs, quince jam, pomegranate juice and preserved figs. Come dinnertime, the chef sources wine, olive oil and fruit from Arcadia's local orchards. Dalaman is the nearest airport.

Details B&B doubles are from £75 (00 90 242 825 7340, arcadiaholiday.com)

19 Beach resort, Side

Ali Bey has 450 rooms, 60 tennis courts and a 25,000 sq m water park. The nightly shows are professional but fun is never forced on those seeking a quiet sunlounger break. Ali Bey has a four-night minimum stay and is routinely discounted by UK travel agents, including Thomas Cook and First Choice. Dalaman is the nearest airport. **Details** B&B doubles are from £125 (00 90 242 744 1414, alibey.com)

20 Traditional Turkey at Selimiye

This fishing village, with its seafood restaurants and ruined fortress, is Turkey at its best. Accommodation has been hard to find, the only hotel being the Palmetto Resort, but this year the Swan Lake hotel opens with eight rooms, beautiful gardens and coastal views. **Details** Seven nights' B&B is from £845pp including flights (0844 2733586, anatoliansky.co.uk)

21 Stay in a cave in Cappadocia

For millennia, people have lived here in houses carved out of volcanic rock. Cappadocia Cave Suites in Goreme offers 36 rooms, many with shelves, seats and bathrooms hewn from the rock face. The friendly manager, Ercan, organises tours of the region's underground settlements, entire cities with their own subterranean hospitals and schools. The nearest airport is Kayseri.

Details B&B doubles are from £72 (00 90 384 271 2800, cappadociacavesuites.com)

22



15

Cultural holidays

22 Ephesus and beyond

Roman Ephesus is Turkey's most famous historic site but the region is rich in ruins. This seven-night trip combines Ephesus with visits to Selcuk's basilica of St John and aqueduct, the temples of Didyma and Zeus at Euromos, and three days by the sea in Bodrum.

Details The one-week trip costs from £954pp including flights and B&B (01670 785085, artisantravel.co.uk)

23 Lycian walking

This Cultural Walking Flotilla combines a stay on a luxury gulet with two to four-hour walks each day to the ruins of the Lycian coast, including Pinara, Sidyma and Kayakoy. Evening meals are taken together on the boat.

Details Seven nights' full board costs from £1,750pp, including flights and guiding (020 8605 3500, exclusiveescapes.co.uk)

24 Solo sightseeing

Cox & Kings has exclusive breaks for those holidaying alone, with no single supplements. The six-night Treasures of Turkey tour begins in Kusadasi, travels through Pergamon and the battlefields of Gallipoli to Troy and Istanbul.

Details Six nights' B&B is from £1,195pp for one person in a twin/double room, including flights and the services of a guide (020 7873 5000, coxandkings.co.uk) ▶

24

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