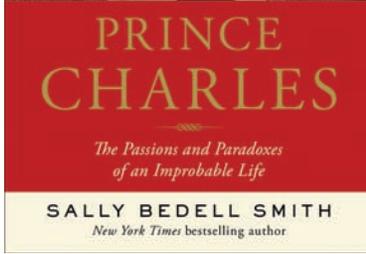




George Christy



Queen Elizabeth II during a polo match where Prince Charles emerged victorious against the Argentinians



Random House Archives



Biographer Sally Bedell Smith

Let's Talk About ...

The Brits.

Dark chocolate. The darker the better. For **Queen Elizabeth II**.

Heinz Ketchup is a yes, awarded a royal warrant.

Her favorite gin and Dubonnet cocktail with lemon accompanies the morning meal.

Champagne lunch and dinner with wine. Chicken or fish (most likely Dover sole with vegetables). Both meals finished with a taste of her favorite dark chocolate.

So divulges Her Royal Highness' former chef **Darren McGrady** to *Travel + Leisure's* **Stacey Leasca**.

Afternoon tea calls for an herbal drink, tiny cucumber or jam sandwiches, a piece of pie or her favorite chocolate bundt cake.

Chef McGrady adds that the Queen's interest is not so much in food, as it is with her horses and dogs.

Evening meals call for a dry martini, champagne and wine. No rice or potatoes. Garlic is banned in the royal kitchen.

At 91, the Queen has aged with grace, style and humor. Her coronation occurred in 1953 when she was 26.

On an exceedingly hot day years ago when the Britannia paused here in San Pedro Harbor before sailing to San Francisco, we met the Queen who was served for a gin and tonic with "no ice, please." Her Royal Highness commenting that the Brits aren't as fond of ice as we Americans are.

Also, in the long ago, an invitation arrived to a luncheon for **Prince Charles** from **Terry and Dennis Stanfill** to attend the luncheon at 20th Century Fox, in the studio's dining room, where the Stanfills gathered executives and stars to meet the Prince.

Cary Grant graciously introduced us, and asked Charles what he would like to drink.

"Dying for a dry

martini," responded Charles, with Cary delivering on the double.

As we three were indulging in small talk, we were interrupted by Merle Oberon who wedged between us. Smack dab and embarrassingly intimate against Charles, informing him and ignoring us that she was "very close to your father," whatever that suggested.

Cary managed to shoo her away, realizing this was a conversation that Charles did not care to pursue.



Dania Ramirez



Yvette Nicole Brown



Constance Wu



Carly Hughes



Bellamy Young

Lauren Bacall was Charles' luncheon companion, both slap-happy with laughter. Always a great guest, Lauren could be counted on for lots of fun.

Another time, not far from London, Charles engaged in a polo match against the Argentinians which he won. Where we again met the thrilled Queen, resplendent in a yellow silk coat, congratulating her son.

Charles was the perfect gentleman, shaking hands with well-wishers and proud of his polo-playing prowess (his father being a winning polo player).

In her bestselling biography, *Prince Charles: The Passion and the Paradoxes of an Improbable Life*, **Sally Bedell Smith** assesses that Charles will be King and **Camilla**, the Duchess of Cornwall, the Queen. They will not step aside for **Prince William** to ascend the British throne. [*Publisher's Note: At deadline Thursday, the Internet was full of gossip that Prince William would in fact be chosen as the next King*].

Charles' reign will be followed by William, Prince of Wales (born 1982); **Prince George** of Cambridge (born 2013) ascends the throne, followed by **Princess Charlotte** of Cambridge (born 2015). Then **Prince Harry** of Wales (born 1984).

While the biography is unauthorized (four years of endeavor), Sally Bedell Smith's bestselling biographies document Princess Diana, the **Kennedys**, the **Clintons**, CBS conglomerate William Paley.

Her illuminating Charles biography is praised for its "delicious blend of glamour and grandeur, jealousy and rivalry, greatness and human foibles."

Researching Charles' life, Sally Bedell Smith was impressed with his charitable accomplishments and philanthropic trusts, etc...

About Princess Diana's tragic death, "he cried and believed he would be blamed

for it. He was right."

Before Diana died in that horrific car crash in Paris, where the driver was evading the paparazzi, her beau Dodi Fayed called from his father's yacht, The Sokar, to say they were in Sardinia. Cruising the Mediterranean and then arriving in Los Angeles soon. He had leased Jerry Weintraub's oceanside Malibu estate, Blue Heaven, and wanted to host a lovely welcoming party for Diana, who was ecstatic about spending September in California.

He asked that we begin the party planning, with caterers (**Wolfgang Puck**, who else?), decorators, florists, etc.

We were at our cousin's rehearsal dinner prior to his daughter's wedding in Baltimore when the news broke of Diana's death, and the party spirit fizzled.

We flew to Canada afterward to host our annual Toronto International Film Festival luncheon at the Four Seasons Hotel (ultimately a 30 years event!), when we ran into **Anne Budman**, the mother of *Roots* co-owner **Michael Budman**, who admonished us to be up before dawn (considering the difference in time zones), not to miss Diana's memorial service on television.

"No one organizes a royal wedding or funeral better than the Brits. We will be moved for days."

A tragedy remembered. Now and forever.

Online at www.bhcourier.com/category/george-christy



Celebrity Photo/Scott Downie

Willow Anwar and mother Gabrielle Anwar attended the Disney ABC Television Group TCA summer press tour at The Beverly Hilton Hotel