

DUCHESS
MEGHAN

Inside Her New Life

FROM ROYAL BRIDE
TO REGAL DUCHESS,
THE REAL WORK FOR
MEGHAN MARKLE STARTS
NOW—AND SHE IS
READY FOR IT

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FROM LEFT: TIM ROOKE/SHUTTERSTOCK; GEORGE PINNELL/WIREIMAGE

**The
Newlywed**
Meghan (on May
22) “is a lovely
addition to the
family,” says
a royal-family
friend. “She’s
very warm.”

Meghan and
Harry on their
May 19
wedding day.

Meghan Markle’s transformation into the Duchess of Sussex appeared to be complete—from head to toe—on May 22, a mere three days after she and Prince Harry tied the knot in a historic ceremony at St. George’s Chapel. With her custom Philip Treacy hat (a go-to milliner for her new sister-in-law Princess Kate), polished side chignon (bye-bye, messy bun) and her usual bare legs covered with sheer pantyhose, the former *Suits* star’s laid-back California style seemed a thing of the past. Effortlessly navigating her way through her first engagement as a royal—a Buckingham Palace garden party in honor of Prince Charles’s upcoming 70th birthday—she shared easy laughter with her new father-in-law and even clasped hands with mother-in-law Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall. “They were being really warm and friendly,” says a guest at the party. “The relationship is obviously very comfortable and supportive.”

It’s a remarkably affectionate bond for the famously reserved royals—and just the latest in a series of fast-tracked milestones for Meghan, 36, who had already breezed through a series of public engagements even before her May 19 wedding to Prince Harry. Now she has a new title, a new coat of arms and everything that goes along with it—including the Queen’s former aide Samantha Cohen to guide her through the ins and outs of a life very few people in history have ever experienced. “Samantha has been helping her with protocol—how to address people and deftly manage her new situation in the royal world,” says an insider. Meghan, who officially quit acting upon the announcement of her engage-

ment to Harry in November, “needs to carve out a role that she is happy with, or she will go crazy,” says the insider. The constraints of royal duty—which calls for an abundance of caution and layers of vetting and deliberation—can feel oppressive to even seasoned members of the family. With Cohen, a veteran royal aide who is well-liked by both William and Harry, helping to guide, “she will make sure Meghan is as happy as she can be without ruffling feathers,” says the source. “She will represent her voice both internally and externally and fight her battles.”

By all accounts Meghan has already been embraced by “the Firm,” as the royal family is sometimes known—most clearly when Prince Charles escorted her to the altar on her wedding day. “It was rather beautiful that she was welcomed into her new family by her new father-in-law,” says Colleen Harris, Charles’s former press secretary. “That was quite symbolic.”

‘Meghan draws a lot of strength from her mother’

—MAKEUP ARTIST AND FRIEND DANIEL MARTIN

Of course, Meghan’s key support continues to be her mom, Doria Ragland, a yoga instructor and social worker, who returned home to L.A. a few days after gracefully stepping into the spot-

In with the In-Laws

“Camilla [with Meghan and Charles on May 22] has given Meghan a few tips along the way about joining the Firm,” says royals author Robert Lacey. “She has managed with style and aplomb.”

Like Mother, Like Daughter

“She’s very poised—so much like Meghan,” Martin says of Ragland (arriving at the Cliveden House Hotel after meeting the Queen at Windsor Castle on May 18).



light at her daughter’s wedding. “She has a softness, but I detected a steely core to her,” says a royal-family friend. “She has come through a hell of a lot. She was lovely to talk to and bursting with pride.”

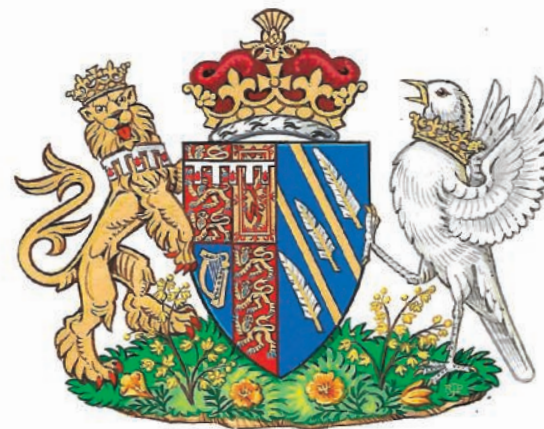
And it’s clear where Meghan gets her independent streak. Ragland told a neighbor “that Meghan wanted to move her [to London],” says a local friend, however, “Doria didn’t want to hear about it. She likes her neighborhood and plans to stay for now at least.” Meghan’s longtime friend and makeup artist Daniel Martin says, “Meghan draws a lot of strength from her mother. Doria is classy, chic and confident but not unapproachable. I definitely feel Meghan gets a lot of that from her mother.”

Today that steady confidence is as essential to Meghan’s new life as it was in the early days of her romance with Harry. Martin, who did her wedding makeup, was one of the few people in whom Meghan confided as the relationship grew serious. “She came to New York [in March 2017] for a U.N. meeting that got snowed in, and we went to have dinner,” says Martin. “And that’s when she told me. Just the way that she was telling me I could see, ‘Oh my goodness,

he’s the one.’ She had to keep everything so quiet for so long. She really needed to make sure that this was for them. It helped their relationship because it was just the two of them in this time, no one else.”



Now the couple’s strong partnership will extend to their royal work. Meghan will likely focus on issues concerning “young women and teenage girls. She is familiarizing herself with the landscape in this country,” says Lorraine Heggessy, chief executive officer of the Royal Foundation, which oversees the charitable efforts of William, Kate, Harry and now Meghan. “She’s meeting groups and wants to do that privately so she can get to know people.” In February, at her first joint appearance alongside Harry, William and Kate, Meghan said she hoped to “hit the ground running” in support of women’s rights. “With so many campaigns like #MeToo and Time’s Up, there’s no better time to continue to shine a light on women feeling empowered and people supporting them,” she said during the panel discussion. Adds a royal insider: “She’s not going to want to be a quiet prin-



Her Coat of Arms

An official coat of arms is typically given to the father of the bride just ahead of a royal wedding, but in a break in tradition, it was given directly to Meghan herself. (Her dad, Thomas Markle, unexpectedly bowed out of attending the nuptials.) Meghan worked with the College of Arms herself on the design, which features nods to her home state of California (the golden poppy state flower, rays of sunshine, blue for the Pacific Ocean) and her new home with Harry at Kensington Palace (wintersweet, which grows outside their cottage). The three quills represent communication and the power of words, symbolic of Meghan’s activism and her passion for writing. (She once worked as a calligrapher and also authored her own lifestyle blog, the Tig.)

Duchess Style

Chignon vs. Messy bun

Meghan ditched her signature hairstyle on May 22 for a more refined look that is reminiscent of the impeccably styled chignon Princess Kate has worn.

Clutch vs. Crossbody

It’s customary for royals to carry clutch bags, which they will often hold with two hands to help keep proper posture while walking and chatting.

Pantyhose vs. Bare Legs

Pantyhose have been a staple of Kate’s wardrobe, and the Queen never goes out with bare legs. In a departure from her engagement look (right), Meghan wore hose on May 22.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: SHUTTERSTOCK; NELL HALL/PA; EFE/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK; CHRIS JACKSON/GETTY IMAGES; KENSINGTON PALACE; STEVE PARSONS/PA WIRE; TIM ROOPE/SHUTTERSTOCK; ALAMY/ADMEDIA



Her Jeans Equal Jobs!

Meghan wore Hiut Denim on Jan. 18 in Cardiff—and helped spark new jobs at the factory.

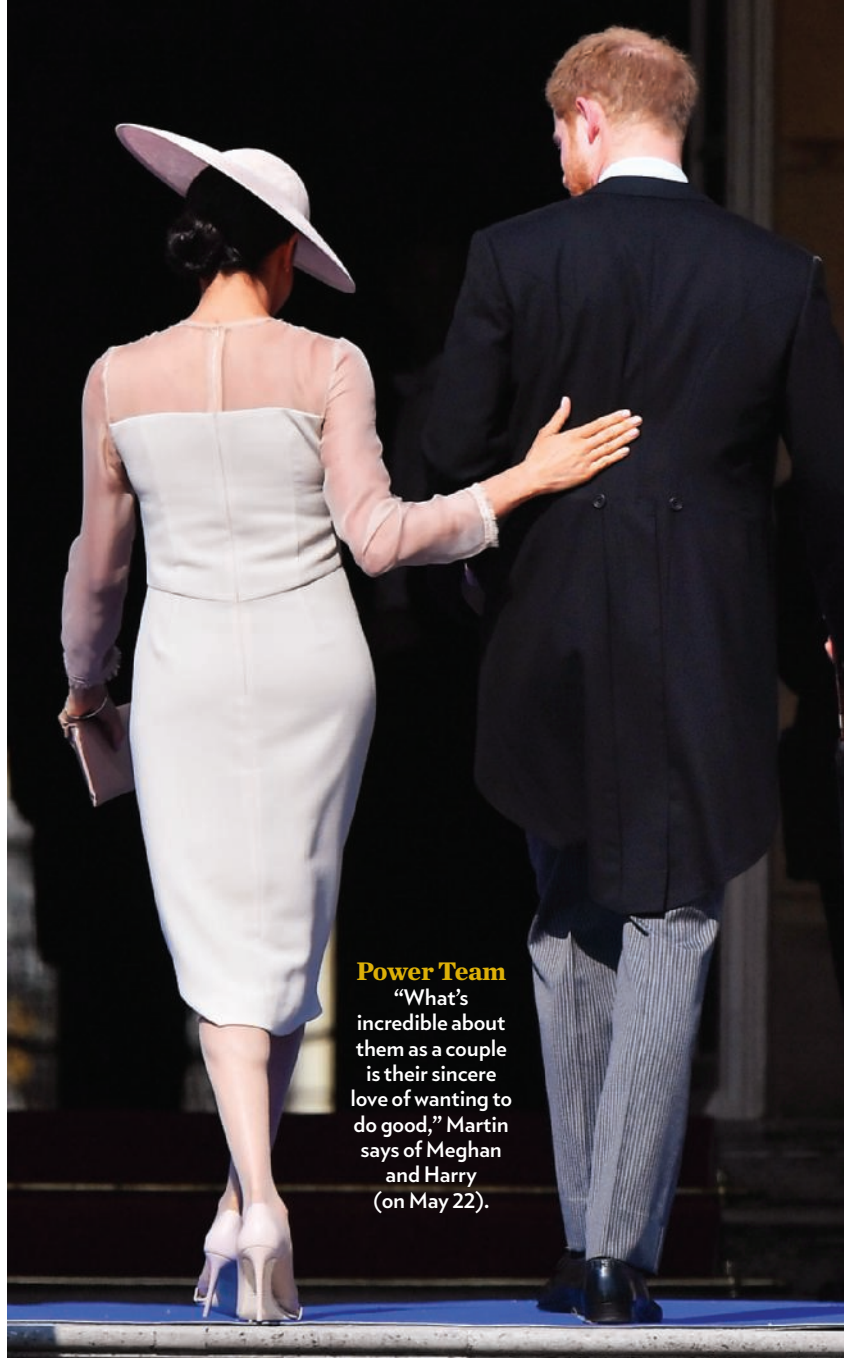
The Meghan Effect

Even before she was a duchess, Meghan was a royal trendsetter. Stepping out in \$246 skinny jeans by Hiut Denim Co. in Wales, Meghan launched global interest in the tiny Welsh label. “It’s had a halo effect everywhere,” says cofounder David Hieatt. Thanks to the explosive demand, Hieatt has employed five new staff members and is looking to move to a bigger factory. “We must be one of the few jeans companies that have no jeans. The shelves are barren,” he says. And after Meghan wore earrings by Paris-based jeweler Vanessa Tugendhaft on May 22, “we were completely sold out in 10 minutes,” says Tugendhaft. “It was crazy!”

cess and simply open hospitals or cut ribbons.”

On a personal note, the next big milestone on the horizon is children. The couple have made no secret of wanting to be parents, with Harry himself saying in the couple’s engagement interview, “Hopefully we’ll start a family in the near future”—and Meghan noting their eventual need for baby gear during a public outing with Harry in March. “I imagine they will probably think about a family really quickly,” a wedding guest says. And they’ll have plenty of opportunities to see firsthand what it takes to raise a family within the palace: William and Kate and their three children, 4-year-old Prince George, 3-year-old Princess Charlotte and 5-week-old Prince Louis, are their neighbors in the Kensington Palace compound. During the family portrait shoot on their wedding day, the bride and groom gravitated toward the littlest members of their bridal party. “They wanted to see their family and see the kids and be together,” says Martin. “So when it was time to take a photo, it was really easy and harmonious and joyful, and Harry was playing with the kids.”

Still, with at least one overseas trip on the horizon for the couple—to Australia in October for the Invictus Games—insiders predict a royal



Power Team

“What’s incredible about them as a couple is their sincere love of wanting to do good,” Martin says of Meghan and Harry (on May 22).

‘She’s not going to want to be a quiet princess and simply open hospitals or cut ribbons’
—ROYAL INSIDER

baby won’t be likely to arrive before summer 2019. In the meantime Meghan is set to make her first appearance alongside Harry and the rest of the royal family on the Buckingham Palace balcony during the annual Trooping the Colour celebrations on June 9. But she’s already proven she can hold her own with her in-laws, having confidently broken tradition and given a speech in front of the family at her wedding reception. “She’s a very warm person. Her speech showed how capable she is,” says a guest. Adds Martin: “There is a lot of work ahead of her, and it takes a really strong person to fill those shoes. This is now a huge platform for Meghan to really get into the activism that she wants to do. She’s really stoked about taking on the role and trying to make change happen.” ●