

# From her Majesty's service... the Italian servant poached by Kate and William



HARD WORK AND PASTA: Antonella Fresolone

## EXCLUSIVE

By **Camilla Tominey** ROYAL EDITOR

**M**AMMA MIA! She cooks, she cleans and she was once one of the Queen's most trusted servants. Meet Antonella Fresolone: William and Kate's new right-hand woman. The petite Italian has landed the most sought-after job in the royal household after being appointed as the couple's housekeeper.

The childless, unmarried 42-year-old used to be one of the Queen's three top housemaids but has been poached by the Duke and Duchess with Her Majesty's blessing to help them in their new life as parents.

The experienced staff member, who has worked at Buckingham Palace for 13 years, was among dozens of applicants for the coveted role. She beat fierce competition for the £23,000-a-year position, which will see her overseeing the Cambridges' household and even walking their dog.

Popular among her peers, Miss Fresolone is famed for her strong work ethic, dedication to the Royal Family and delicious Italian cooking. William and Kate can look forward to returning to steaming bowls of pasta and home-baked bread as their new chief of domestic staff settles into the role.

Miss Fresolone, who is understood to have started her job two weeks ago, has moved into a staff apartment at Kensington Palace, where the couple are renovating their new family home.

She is tending to their every need at Nottingham Cottage, their temporary accommodation at the royal residence, while apartment 1a, Princess Margaret's former 20-bedroom home,

## Scott's View



"Will you ask Harry to stop requesting pizzas!"

is finished for them to move into with their new baby in the autumn.

As the Sunday Express exclusively revealed in January, when the couple first advertised for a housekeeper, Miss Fresolone's responsibilities include cleaning all areas of the residence, caring for Their Royal Highnesses' clothing, silverware and glassware, and doing all the laundry.

She is also required to run errands, prepare basic meals and look after the couple's cocker spaniel Lupu.

The couple had asked for previous housekeeping experience and could not have found someone with a better pedigree. A royal insider said: "Antonella is renowned for being very hard working. She is extremely dedicated and fully intends for this job to become her whole life."

"The Queen will have given it her blessing. She does not like to stop people progressing through the ranks and will be happy that William and Kate have someone they can trust."

The couple had stipulated in their

advert, posted at Buckingham Palace, that "discretion, loyalty and reliability" were paramount. It read: "Attention to detail, together with a flexible and pro-active approach is essential."

"The candidate must also be able to demonstrate strong operational skills, excellent verbal and written communication skills and the ability to work on their own and as part of a multi-disciplined team."

Miss Fresolone works an average of 37 hours a week from 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday, with overtime as required. The going rate for such a position in the royal household, where pay is notoriously poor but employment comes with free accommodation, is thought to be about £23,000 per annum.

The couple had planned for their housekeeper to "live out" but it is understood that Miss Fresolone has already switched her staff accommodation from Buckingham Palace to Kensington Palace.

**T**HERE have been rumours that Kate plans to move in with her parents in Berkshire once the baby is born in July but Miss Fresolone's appointment suggests that they foresee being in London too. As one royal source put it: "They wouldn't have taken on a housekeeper if they did not intend to spend time at Kensington Palace."

"Yes Nottingham Cottage is cosy but there are two bedrooms; one for the couple and one for the baby. Of course it is only natural that the Duchess will want to spend time with her mother Carole but she will also want to be on site to oversee the £1million renovations at apartment 1a as they near their end."

The appointment of a housekeeper rather than a "mother's help" also suggests Kate is reluctant to delegate many parental duties. She will eventually hire a nanny to help her care for her firstborn but William and Kate pride themselves on keeping their entourage to a minimum.

They have spent three years living without domestic staff at their rented farmhouse in Anglesey, where the Prince works as a search-and-rescue pilot at RAF Valley.

The couple are expected to leave North Wales before the baby is born but William is still to announce whether he will remain in the military or become a full-time working Royal.

Miss Fresolone's appointment comes after they hired a young Fijian lance corporal from the Parachute Regiment as their new household orderly at the end of last year.

Pictures: SAM PEARCE; EAMONN MCCORMACK



SMART CHOICE: Kate and William posted ad for a housekeeper



HOME MAKER: Antonella has taken up residence in Kensington Palace