

Carole V

They've got titles, estates and fortunes, but all they really want is to slip you a knobbly carrot. ES

Daylesford



Left: Carole Bamford. From top: Daylesford; the exterior and interior of Daylesford Organic Farmshop. Below: Sir Anthony Bamford with one of his JCB diggers.



THE BOSS Lady Bamford OBE, 61, is a stern blonde with an organic empire and a fondness for Learjets. The former Carole Gray Whitt was born in Nottinghamshire to parents who owned a house-building firm. She went on to become an air hostess with BOAC, and while working the aisles she caught the attention of JCB heir Sir Anthony Bamford. They married in 1974. Her friends now include the Prince of Wales and Camilla, the Rothschilds and Tony Blair.

THE LOOK Perennial tan honed on private beaches in Barbados; platinum mane; she wears soft natural fabrics in shades of oatmeal.

SHOP In 2003, Carole decided it might be fun to sell the cheddar from her dairy herd. Thus was born the Daylesford Organic Farmshop, a converted barn resplendent with timber beams and antler door handles. There are now further barns selling clothing and garden wares, a tea house and the Hay Barn spa offering yoga classes. Staff include Tibetan monks. Kate Winslet, Kate Moss and Gwyneth Paltrow have all visited. In London, there is: a café-food market on Pimlico Road with a white Carrera marble interior; Bamford & Sons, a four-storey menswear shop in Sloane Square with a Daylesford café, and another in Ledbury Road; a womenswear shop on Draycott Avenue; a Daylesford café at Clifton Nurseries in W9; and a farm shop at Selfridges.

WARES It started with the cheddar (wrapped in organic linen) which won best British cheese (£17.95 for 1,000g). Tom Aikens designed the soups (£3.95 for 475g of organic beetroot and smoked bacon). There are venison sausages from the family deer herd (£4.40 for six) and olive oil from the French estate (£16.95 for 50cl); £1,000 cashmere goods and £300 wellingtons.

FAMILY Sir Anthony's late father, Joseph Cyril Bamford (JCB), was a Rocester man who started selling excavating machinery in 1945. He handed the company on to his son in 1975. Sir Anthony was knighted by the Conservatives in 1990. He and Carole have three children: Alice, 31, who has run a record label and co-produced *The Darjeeling Limited* with Wes Anderson; Joe, 30, who now works for JCB and last year married knitwear designer Alex Gore Browne; and George, 27, who takes the photographs for his mother's brochures. Alice and Joe were born in the US to help avoid inheritance tax. Lady B

has two adored shih-tzus, Fudge and Bellini.

GREENBACKS The fortune is estimated at more than £1 billion. There are numerous palatial residences, including Daylesford, a 1,500-acre Gloucestershire estate with a domed Regency building; a 3,000-acre farm in Wootton, Staffordshire; a £26.5 million Chelsea house; the £15 million Heron Bay house in the Caribbean (where the Blairs and the Clintons have stayed); and the Château de Léoube estate in Provence. The family have a fleet of vintage cars; the *Virginian*, their 240ft yacht; a private jet; and Sir Anthony's Sikorsky S-76, one of the most spacious private helicopters, which Prince Charles has, reputedly, borrowed.

CREDENTIALS In 1978, Carole strolled into the organic farming tent at an agricultural show and insisted that the family's Staffordshire farm become organic at once. Today, at Daylesford, as far as possible, everything is organic, seasonal and locally sourced. Bread is from the bakery on site, cheese is from the creamery and meat is from the herd in Staffordshire. Most of the packaging is biodegradable and the milk jugs are made of chalk. 'I drive and take flights, but I've made a commitment to improve wherever possible,' says Lady B.

THE GOOD LIFE Lady B likes designer clothes and breeding racehorses. The family are also big on bashes. At one India-themed party, elephants ferried guests down the drive.

Food fight: the battle



Daylesford Organic Butternut Chutney, £5.25 for 330g Unfortunately, this resembles baby food, with the texture of badly mashed potato. Disappointingly flavourless, bar the occasional unexpected sultana.



Daylesford Organic White Chocolate and Cranberry Fudge, £3.95 for 220g Much too rich, it melts in the mouth like pure butter, with the sickly sweet combination of syrup, sugar and white sugar.



Daylesford Organic Apple Juice, £1.40 for 25cl ★ WINNER ★ Although the apples are French (from Nantes) rather than local, thus losing Daylesford valuable eco points, this juice is wonderfully appley. Very drinkable.