

The jet-set job club

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Photographs MARK HARRISON



Lives on a
super-yacht



Attends
celebrity balls



Gets paid to
travel the world



Parties with
the A-list



Flies by
private jet

It's Sunday night and Amelia Peacock has a rare evening off: the 25-year-old has just flown in after six months working in LA, and her next client isn't scheduled to be born until tomorrow. In the US she lived in her own, eight-bedroom mansion and her average working day involved a beach stroll, meal-planning with her personal chef followed by a Beverly Hills shopping spree, with her boss picking up the tab. While her friends back in the UK were commuting from squashed suburban house-shares and packing onto sweaty trains, Amelia would dial for her chauffeur if she wanted to go anywhere (except if it was abroad – then it would be via private jet).



The nanny

Tomorrow, the start of her new job will see her move into a multi-million pound pad in one of London's exclusive enclaves – rent-free again, although there is the small matter of her very noisy roomie.

Amelia (below, left) works as a maternity nurse to celebrities, the super-rich and royalty. Who precisely hires her services has to be kept under wraps, but her last employer was so rich they could afford to move her into the house next door – so as not to be disturbed by the baby screaming at night. And those shopping trips? Simply because her boss didn't have many friends and hated shopping alone. Seriously.

Her job isn't all sunshine and designer shopping, though: she works 24/7. A baby wanting 3am attention screams louder than even the most obnoxious office boss. A newborn specialist for the past two years, she is each baby's mother figure (in charge of nappies, milk, cuddles and all) for 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for up to six months before she moves on.

Still, with super-nannies scooping £100k-plus salaries and lifestyles worth even more, Amelia and the elite cohort she works alongside – the trainers, chefs, tutors, and entertainers to the uber-wealthy – represent the bright side of millennial employment. The UK's job market might be in good health (national unemployment is at the lowest level for more than a decade*) but the outlook isn't so sunny for my friends and I.

The recession's lingering shadow means that we (and by 'we' I mean all of us born between 1980 and 1994) have become the first post-war generation not to start working life with higher incomes than our predecessors**. And if you're expecting that starter salary to flourish into something bigger, I hate to break it to you, but it looks likely that we will also be the first group of workers in modern times to see our lifetime earnings fall. Yep, that's all



The chef

while facing the brunt of Britain's soaring rents, out-of-reach house prices and the prospect of working until you need a zimmer frame to manage the daily commute.

Yet out of this gloom, a select few have walked away from nine-to-five jobs to create careers that work for them. Their jobs provide a five-star lifestyle and global travel, yet these aren't just perks to make up for a sorry salary: many are also bringing in six-figure pay packets. They try to play down the glamour while FaceTiming friends who are slogging it out in a grey office – but Amelia and her comrades might just have the best jobs in the world.

SITTING PRETTY

Glance out of Alison Dray's office window and you'll see nothing but blue. The sparkling azure seas of the

Mediterranean blend into the sky, and that's all anyone can see for miles around. Most summer days she'll be market-shopping for lunch (with a €1,000 budget) in Sardinia, floating through Mykonos or sightseeing an afternoon away in Albania. The super-yachts the 31-year-old (left) calls her home are all mahogany floors, silk cushions and marble, with art by the likes of Picasso on the wall – "You see it and think, 'What? I studied that at school!'" she laughs.

Alison was a chef at the England football squad's favourite hotel, The Grove in Hertfordshire, when she met the founder of personal chef agency Galor, and was signed up. While the average 30-year-old in Britain earns £24,000, a top yacht chef can easily take home two or three times that amount while having no living costs. Granted, she sometimes has to share a dorm with the other staff (who include a deck hand, engineer, stewardess and captain) but off-water, when working on land holidays, it's all "five-star hotels or incredible villas".

I've at least heard of a yacht chef, but one City recruiter tells me that, for the first time in her 20-year career, she's seeing jobs that just didn't exist six months ago. "Not just niche

ones," she adds, "although Brexit negotiator isn't an ad I thought I'd ever see." Recent posts have included wedding social media manager (someone who organises the personalised hashtags and social media content for the super-rich's nuptials), supercar valet (driving and maintaining the fleet of cars beloved by Middle Eastern playboys) and hotel drone operator (flying cameras over pools and spas to make videos for luxury holiday websites).

Crucially, these high-flying women have also dumped the 'future-

proofing' worries that dog most of us (how will I meet 'the one' when I see only the same people all the time? Will I ever find the forever home I used to dream of? When do I need to start thinking about babies and egg health?) to embrace the now. Amelia admits she "cries every time" she leaves a job. "It's like a bad break-up – I miss the children so much," but she doesn't worry about whether her job will ever allow her the time to start her own family. Perhaps it's because this generation has become so used to having the old certainties – a job for life, a partner forever, an affordable home – snatched out of their reach, twenty- and thirtysomethings have had to adapt to living in the moment instead.

To use a term coined by the tech world, these women are the 'disruptors' of the millennial job market. What WhatsApp did for telecoms and Airbnb did for travel, the jet-set job club are doing for employment. By deliberately jumping off the conveyor belt of what used to be considered 'normal' jobs and lifestyle aims, they've also made the notion of 'working your way up' redundant. They've

found niche careers where you join at the pinnacle, and stay there.

So far, so good, but how do you find them? It's unlikely you'll see a stand popping up at a recruitment fair. It seems for many it's all about embracing whatever is thrown at you. Upon graduation from dance college, Janina Smith (right) figured she'd forge a career in the subject she studied. That was until she was put on a plane (at the suggestion of her tutor) to perform in an opera in the Middle East, where she found herself in a new world of luxury at >



The entertainer

AMELIA WEARS: BLAZER; TOP: BOTH J CREW; JEANS: FREDDY; SHOES: CHANEL; ALISON WEARS: APRON: MOSCHINO; TOP: ZARA; TROUSERS: J CREW; SHOES: CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN; COLANDREA; JOHN LEWIS; JANINA WEARS: DRESS: EARRINGS: GLOVES: ALL ROKIT; SHOES: GIVENCHY



The PA

billionaires' pool parties. "I'd just left university and, looking around me at these huge swimming pools and boozy banquets, I thought, 'How on earth did I get here?!'"

Now, 10 years on, the 28-year-old has a varied career as an actor/contemporary dancer/occasional children's-party entertainer for VIPs. I catch the supermodel-tall brunette in between flying back from performing at a billionaire's 50th birthday party in Sicily and jetting off to Sydney for a run of comedy shows. In Italy, they were put up in an enormous coastal castle. "I was hired to dance as a sexy badger in a samba band," she says. "A fleet of cars whisked about 20 of us to rehearsals, we had champagne-filled riders, and after we entertained the rich and famous we'd go swimming in the sea to watch the sun rise."

GET UP AND GO

All this jet-setting may not just be a perk of the job, but the reason these women have their enviable careers in the first place. "My clients don't want to abandon their fitness regimes when they go on holiday," says personal trainer Kate McTaggart (right), who pumps iron with A-list stars and Saudi princesses. "So they take me with them." She's recently climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, and spent a week working out with a client at her countryside castle. At home, she travels from mansion to mansion offering at-home workouts from 5.30am – breaking only to walk her French bulldog, Gus, or for the occasional money-can't-buy client invite, such as a recent lunch do where "there were more royals than non-royals," Kate reveals.

But before you go drafting your resignation letter, let it be known that

behind the glossy exterior of these roles lies a hell of a lot of grafting. Amber Hylton (left), 26, a personal assistant to one of music's biggest stars, hasn't switched her phone off in six years. "The job never ends – when deals are being struck with Australia, I have to set my alarm to start work at 4am," she says. "My boss is obsessed

"At lunch, there were more royals than non-royals"

with tennis and the other day I got a 3am call as she wanted a particular tournament on TV in her hotel room. I had to call someone local and convince them to sign up to a subscription package to give her access to the match!"

Amelia has similar stories: "One day I was so busy I had to send my

driver to get tampons for me, because I couldn't leave the baby – it was so embarrassing, but the only option I had." And saying goodbye is really hard when you care for an infant 24/7 and then never see them again. "It's like a break-up: last time I didn't leave my house for two days, I was so upset."

These unusual pitfalls of the job can only come about when working for the incredibly wealthy: you have to fit your schedule (and emotions) around their quirks and whims. If they say jump, it seems the only answer is, 'How high?'

"I spent the summer on a very famous celebrity's yacht and he kept spotting friends on boats in the middle of the Mediterranean and inviting them on board. Soon I had 20 hungry stars to feed for dinner," says Alison. "Someone always wants gluten-free, no sugar, no fish or no meat. Recently I was cooking for a model who would only eat a quarter of a melon and eight almonds per meal – I had to try to think up creative ideas with those two ingredients."

Loyalty is also tested: Amber peels into giggles as she reveals: "I work

from my boss's house, and she's always walking around with no clothes on. I've become an expert at ignoring it and trying to maintain eye contact." Why do they put up with it? The fact that celebrity PAs earn at least £70,000 a year must help.

Yet having to put their bosses' needs first has an undeniable impact on relationships. "I see most of my clients more than I see my friends," Kate admits. Alison has had to cancel holidays – including her honeymoon to Venice – when travelling clients "suddenly call and say, 'We don't like the chef here, can you fly out tomorrow, we miss your food.'" Her husband, who works in IT, is "very supportive – but it's hard – he almost expects me to cancel dates. You have to put in a lot of sacrifices for the job. If you say no, you can miss out



The PT

*OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS **INSTITUTE FOR FISCAL STUDIES **HAIR: DIEGO MIRANDA AT BT'S TALENT, USING ORIBE. MAKE-UP: EMILY-JANE WILLIAMS, USING NARS. STYLIST: CHLOE BEENEY, PHOTOGRAPHER: ASSISTANT ROY BARON. MAKE-UP ASSISTANT: AMELIA LAWSON. AMBER WEARS: JACKET, ZARA. DRESS AND SHOES: HER OWN. KATE WEARS: TOP, LEGGINGS, BOTH: LULULEMON. WATCH, APPLE, SHOES, NIKE AT OFFICE. ICONS MADE BY FREEPIK FROM FLATICON.COM

on future bookings or take a huge hit to your reputation."

Even Amelia – whose lullaby-calm voice was clearly made for soothing fractious babies – sounds sad for the first time when describing her isolation at work. "You're not part of the family, and at staff meals everyone else tends to speak Arabic or Russian; I'm left out. It can be really lonely. Plus there's no way I could think about dating or even looking for a relationship – I have zero spare time."

Their work-life balance might be crazy now, but these women are also setting themselves up for the future in a way that most of us can't. "The cost of housing in Britain means that we're now seeing candidates in their twenties coming to us for private household or yacht work to future-proof themselves and earn some serious money," says Izzy Boland, director of Sorted Personal Management, a recruitment agency that finds private staff for the super-rich. "The chance to go and travel with a family or a celebrity for a year, where everything's paid for and you're earning a really decent salary, could mean banking a large deposit in just a few years."

Indeed, all five of the women tell me, unprompted, that they reckon their job is "the best in the world". They live the celebrity travel-packed lifestyle without being stopped for selfies, while brands often gift them designer accessories and invites because they're a conduit to their high-profile bosses. (Amber's diary, for example, is stuffed with invites to fashion shows, Wimbledon, and Elton John's spring ball.) It's no wonder they're pinching themselves. Alison encapsulates it: "When I'm sitting eating just-caught tuna on a super-yacht with fun crew mates, in one of the most beautiful parts of the world, knowing I'm saving every penny of my salary, I just feel like the luckiest person ever." ♦

Steal their jobs

Fancy living the high life? Forget the job centre, *this* is how you get hired by the super rich...



ALL ABOARD

For super-yacht jobs, most recruits show up where they dock with their CV on a USB stick (can't risk it fluttering off into the water). The port of Antibes is a top recruitment spot.



SUPER NANNY

If you've got the vital qualifications, check out Sorted Personal Management to be the next Mary Poppins; Sorted-pa.com



FINE DINING

Galor recruitment are searching for private chefs who know their way around a celebrity's diet; Galor.co.uk



V-I-P-A

Become an A-lister's must-have at boutique PA recruitment agency Bain And Gray; Bainandgray.com



BEHIND THE SCENES

Lucy Tobin

"While researching this piece, I came across jobs I couldn't believe existed.

The best? A woman in Miami who runs a vault for the super-rich: she takes in billionaires' supercars, the rarest wines, the most valuable art and blingiest jewellery, and keeps it safe in a location strong enough to withstand a Category 5 hurricane. It's so sad to think of all the beauty underground where no one – not even its owner – can see it!"