WHO IS THE OWNER OF HARRODS?

MEET DODI AL FAYED!

Mohamed was born in 1933 in Alexandria, Egypt. In the 1930s Alex, as it was known, was a fascinating city, with communities of Greeks, Jews, Lebanese, Italians and Turks living alongside the native Alexandrines. Though it was never legally colonised, Egypt was administered by the British for more than 70 years. The British army HQ was in the city of Fayed, in the Canal Zone, from which the family originates.

Mohamed’s father was a professor of Arabic. His grandfather was a merchant – and it was at his knee that Mohamed learned the first rules of being a successful businessman (and from the advice he received from the Jewish merchant next door).

Mohamed's was a happy and loving family. His two younger brothers, Ali and Saleh, were always close to their lively and ambitious elder brother. To this day, they are the best of friends. Their mother was the pivotal point of a family that loved being together.

Al Fayed’s has became himself a name after his beloved son Dodi was romantically linked to late Lady Diana Spencer. Both were kill over a frantic rush in the Tunnel d’l Almà in Paris, back in 1997, when they were trying to escape some paparazzi.

The Dodi and Diana Memorials

DODI AND DIANA MEMORIALS (IN CASE YOU WANT SOME PICTURES)

There are two memorials located in the Harrods store and Mr Al Fayed’s son’s tomb lies in the ground of his country home.

All three were designed by Bill Mitchell, the honoured close friend of Mr Al Fayed and architect for Harrods for more than 40 years.
Lower Ground Floor Memorial in Harrods
On the lower ground floor of Harrods, at the base of Bill Mitchell’s spectacular Egyptian escalator, there is a quiet, candle lit shrine to Dodi and Diana, Princess of Wales. This memorial was constructed in 1998 with the original intention that it would remain in the store for two weeks only. It is still there to this day due to the vast numbers of people wishing to remember and express their own feelings about the tragedy of Dodi and Diana’s end.

To reflect the happy days of the couple’s last holiday together, their portraits are set amidst sculptured seagulls and Mediterranean plants and leafage. A fountain supports the images, with its endless flow of water symbolising eternal life. The interlinked ‘D’ photo frames illustrate the powerful harmony of this romantic connection. Four candles burn steadily, adding a sense of peacefulness and the passing of time.

The inscription beneath the acrylic pyramid reads: “The wine glass has been preserved in the exact condition it was left on the couple’s last evening together at the Imperial Suite at the Hotel Ritz in Paris. Dodi bought this engagement ring for Diana on the day before the tragedy.”

Above the memorial itself, in the carved walls of the Egyptian escalators on the third floor, is Dodi’s handprint set in stone. It was the summer of 1997 and Bill Mitchell was finishing his Egyptian escalator masterpiece, when he suggested to Mr. Al Fayed that it may be possible to have all of the family set their hands in the wet cement. Dodi came with the family to do so. Ten days later, Dodi was dead, whilst the imprint of his hand remains, reminding the world of the shock-felt loss of his life.

Door Three Memorial in Harrods
On 1st September 2005, eight years after Dodi and Diana’s deaths, Mohamed Al Fayed unveiled a second remembrance shrine in Harrods. The bronze statue of the couple dancing is entitled “Innocent Victims” and is located at Door Three. It is a life-sized sculpture of Diana and Dodi gazing lovingly into each other’s eyes as they release an albatross into the sky.
Dodi and Diana’s love brought Muslim and Christian faith together in the meeting of their souls. The Eastern and Western traditions are interlaced through the symbol, applicable to both religions, of the bird as Holy Spirit.

The figures of Dodi and Diana emanate freedom as they dance together beneath the protective wings of the bird. Mr. Al Fayed has stated, “This is a statue to stay here forever” as a monument dedicated to his late son and the Princess.

A large, leather bound book lies open and is signed by people from all over the world, who are united in their loss on the mezzanine, at Door Three, in Harrods. Messages, inscribed in various languages, fill one book every two weeks.

**Dodi’s Memorial at Oxted**
Set in the grounds of Mohamed Al Fayed’s country estate in Oxted, Surrey, lies the tomb of Dodi. It was intended to be a temporary structure, designed by Bill Mitchell with the input of Mr Al Fayed. This home was made for Dodi’s grave to last until a more formal mausoleum would be erected made out of Italian marble. However, the more elaborate replacement has remained only as a design model in the studios of Bill Mitchell.

Once Mr Al Fayed viewed the original mausoleum, he decided that it was so peaceful and fitting to Dodi’s presence that it would remain forever. The structure is rugged, yet the atmosphere is intensely dignified. The grave lies at the heart of the mausoleum, with the echoing simplicity of the inscription, “Dodi”.

There is nothing imposing about this remembrance site. There is a timber roof decorated with ivy, 12 supporting pillars, and a stone floor. The timber structure has become part of the landscape, open to the forces of nature. Bill Mitchell has drawn the parallel between this setting and Dodi’s love of the outdoors. He comments: “Because of its design, the mausoleum fits perfectly in the surrounding area. There is some shelter, but it does not keep out the rain or the wind. It means Dodi is a part of nature”.

**HARRODS AT KNIGHTSBRIDGE**

Visitor Guidelines

At Harrods we are committed to providing our visitors with a wonderful experience that exceeds expectations. Whilst Harrods is steeped in tradition and can boast an impressive history, we pride ourselves on our forward thinking and progressive attitude which has enabled us to maintain our position as the leader in retail theatre for an ever-changing modern world. Whilst we celebrate and embrace individuality, it is of utmost importance that every single visitor that passes through our doors has a positive and pleasurable experience that they will remember. It is for these reasons that Harrods kindly asks all visitors to follow these guidelines when visiting the store.

- Please make sure that all clothing is clean and presentable and that shoes are worn whilst in the store.
- We ask that visitors refrain from presenting themselves in a way which may cause offence to others or may otherwise be deemed inappropriate. We hope that
our visitors bear in mind that people of all cultures and ages visit the store. It is for this reason that we ask our patrons not to wear clothing which may reveal intimate parts of the body, or which portray offensive pictures or writing.

- Crash helmets are to be carried rather than worn.
- We ask that visitors with large items of baggage make use of our Left Luggage facility at Door 3 for later collection. Visitors carrying rucksacks will be asked to carry these by hand rather than on the back or shoulder, to prevent any injuries to other customers or unintentional damage to displays.
- Eating and drinking is only permitted in the Restaurant areas. Please see our Store Guide for information, as there are over 30 to choose from!
- We encourage our visitors to respect others by refraining from loud singing, shouting or using obscene language or other inappropriate behaviour in and around the store.
- Although we understand that visitors wish to take home lasting memories of Harrods and capture some of the magic, we ask you not to take photos in the Fine Jewellery, Banking Hall or Antique Furniture Department for security reasons.
- For your safety and enjoyment, please keep all walkways, staircases, doorways and fire escapes as clear as possible.
- There are periods, when the store is at its busiest, that Harrods has to take the difficult decision to deny access to tour parties and larger groups of visitors. It does so for the benefit of its regular customers, especially the young and elderly, who may find the store environment uncomfortable when overcrowded. Harrods has no interest in upsetting or alienating potential customers by turning them away and only does so reluctantly when entirely necessary.

Thank you for taking the time to read our Visitor Guidelines, we hope that when you visit Harrods, you will have a safe and pleasurable experience. For further information, please contact Customer Services on 020 7730 123