

Remembering Princess Diana



It was the stuff of fairy tales...

Commoner marries Prince and they live happily ever after, except that she was no commoner, he was the Playboy Prince, and as for happily ever after...



Diana Spencer first met Charles when she was sixteen. He was dating her sister Sarah. Three years later she was invited to spend the weekend galloping over the moss covered moors of Balmoral, the Scottish castle of the British royal family. Over dinner whilst sitting across the table from Charles, the pair re-counted yachting hijinks. Charles thought Diana's sense of humour was wicked and so promptly invited her to go fishing with him the next morning. Peeking out shyly from under her glossy fringe and decked out in corduroy culottes and sweatshirt, she proved to be irresistible. The prince proposed 6 months later in the nursery of Windsor Castle (expectations setting precedence over romance early on).

On July 29, 1981, Diana walked down the aisle of St. Paul's Cathedral in a puffy sleeved ivory dress with hand embroidered sequins, 10,000 pearls and reams of voluminous silk taffeta. 750 million people tuned in to watch her raise the bar for Princesses everywhere.

The newly weds honeymooned for three months, during which time Diana became pregnant. She described the honeymoon as "fabulous" and said she "could highly recommend marriage." It was also the time when she started to suspect the true nature of Charles and Camilla Parkes Bowles' friendship. She soon found herself in a companion-less marriage to a man who preferred polo and pruning. The Queen banned Camilla from Buckingham Palace and formal royal functions, but Charles simply wouldn't give her up. The press initially presented Diana as the young wife in love, but it wasn't long before the focus turned to gossip and speculation about her private life. This fodder sold magazines and tabloids for many, many years. Diana was then the most photographed woman in the world. She set fashion trends when she wore pearls, polka dots, shoulder pads and taffeta, and single handedly pioneered the polka dot dress with white stockings combo.

Diana was so much more than just polka dots and polo. She used her high profile role as Princess to bring awareness to more than one hundred charities. She highlighted hunger in impoverished countries, and touched those that society deemed untouchable: those living with AIDS and leprosy. Many remember her campaigning hard for the eradication of land mines. Even then, in her bullet proof vest, cream chinos and crisp white shirt, she was on point for elegance.

After four years of separation, Charles and Diana finally divorced in 1996. She stepped out of the public life and parred down her commitments to humanitarian causes. She purged her closets of the past. Out went the frou frou and in came a more minimal look. Hems were raised and heels were back! Sadly she wasn't able to enjoy her single life for long, as at the age of thirty six she died in a tragic car accident in Paris. The world was saddened that just as she was emerging with a fresh start, her life was cut short. Her legacy lives on through her two sons William and Harry, who remember her in their daily lives and pay tribute to her in many ways. Even the Queen commissioned an artist to decorate a hallway at Kensington Palace with floor to ceiling wallpaper depicting iconic moments from Diana's life. The wallpaper consists of bold and colourful watercolour paintings illustrating Diana's changing wardrobe which reflected her life's changing journey. A fitting modern tribute for a modern Princess.



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REMINISCENCE QUESTIONS



The Princess Diana craft activity can be used in aged care for reminiscence crafts with residents. Reminiscing refers to casting ones mind back to times gone by and feeling nostalgic about those experiences It is often a happy activity enjoyed by anyone at any age. It encourages communication and can strengthen bonds between people. Here are a few questions to assist the stroll down memory lane.

When Diana was a teenager, she had a picture of Prince Charles tacked above her bed at boarding school. Who were your teen idols growing up?
(A few names from the 60's: Tony Curtis, James Dean, Elvis Pressley.
From the 70's: David Cassidy, John Travolta, Michael Caine, Sean Connery)

Did you tune in to watch the Royal wedding? What did you think of all the pomp and ceremony?

The Queen first visited Australia in 1954. She has been back 16 times since. Have you ever gone to see the Queen?

Do you remember buying weekly tabloids, like Women's Weekly and Women's Day and reading about the royal family?

Do you remember where you were or what you were doing when you heard the news of Diana's death?

