

Inci Modiano



This is my wife Inci Modiano. The photo was taken in Athens in the 1960s. I got married to Inci, a young Turkish woman, in 1963. I was then aged 37, and my wife was six years younger. We had met during an Aegean cruise. She had just divorced and her Greek hairdresser in Istanbul advised her to go to the Greek islands, which were just then becoming a fashionable tourist destination. I had joined the ship with a friend who was British consul in Athens. Inci and I fell in love and I proposed to her while dancing in a nightclub on the Island of Rhodes. She was a Muslim Turk and very liberal-minded. So was her family who accepted me instantly. The question of religion never came up. We had a civil wedding in Istanbul. Then we came to Athens and, since the civil marriage was not yet recognized in Greece, we looked for a hakham to marry us without too much fuss. We looked all over - Turkey, London, Paris, Rome - but they were very strict and wanted to go by the rules. Then thankfully we found a kind hakham in

Athens who said to Inci, 'If you respect his faith as he respects yours, it is fine with me.' So he did. We were married in my bachelor apartment on Alopekis Street. Being my wife wasn't easy. The Greeks dislike the Turks and they don't hide it. The Turks knew that I was Greek and they were always extremely polite and would avoid any controversial subject. Here it was exactly the opposite. They often behaved in an insulting way to her. However, I called Inci 'lion-tamer.' When she saw that someone was openly hostile to her, she would go out of her way to tame them and make them eat out of her hand. She had so much charm, and she was deeply interested in people. So she would win them over.