

Heni Frischmann With Her Mother Magda



My mother and me. I was born in Sopron, a town close to the frontier. My father made a very good living there; he was a wheat wholesaler and he had a filling station as well. We used to live a very normal middle-class life. My mother, Maria Weinberger, came from a completely different family [from my father's which was Orthodox]. Everybody called her Mila. She was born in Zagreb in 1884. She graduated high school in Vienna, and I don't know where she learned it but I've never seen such housekeeping in my life. She cooked wonderfully, and kept everything very spick and span. I still remember that the bed sheets in the sleeping-room wardrobe were put in pink tissue paper. So, she was a real wife and mother. We used to speak German at home. My mother tongue is German as well because my mother came from Zagreb but she grew up in Vienna. You know, we used to have a servant girl all the time and mother used to go to the market with her. My mother was a wonderful housewife and there were [Jewish] shops there, we went to Jewish shops for everything, even for stockings. Of course, there were two kosher butcher shops as well, we bought the meat only from there. But most of the time we went to do shopping in Vienna. There were washerwomen, ironers and needleworkers who came to our house, so that was a completely different world. My mother used to go to the hairdresser every week, she dyed her nails like I do - I probably inherited that from her - she had beautiful hands. She smoked a cigarette every Sunday at midday. So she was absolutely modern.