

Travel Tales
by
Llewellyn Toulmin

The Super-Model, the Super-Yacht, and the Super-Scandal

Part 1

Faviola Dadis is the super-model who sailed aboard the super-yacht “Phocea,” the second-largest private sailing yacht in the world, and was inadvertently involved in a huge recent scandal in the South



Faviola Dadis is a supermodel caught up in a huge scandal in Vanuatu

Pacific. If you believe press speculation, the yacht was smuggling drugs into the island country of Vanuatu, Faviola resisted arrest, and the owner of the yacht was both a Vanuatu diplomat and a drug smuggler. But can you believe everything you read? Faviola has never before had a chance to tell her side of the story. So for the next few “Travel Tales,” we will learn about the scandal, and life as a super-model.

Tell me about your unusual four-part name.

My namesake, Faviola, was a beautiful woman from Venezuela. It’s a pretty common name in Latin countries, but typically spelled with a “b” rather than “v.” Irmgard was my grandmother’s name—she passed away when my mom was quite young, and my parents gave me this name in her memory. Brugger is my mother’s maiden name from my German side, and my father’s name Dadis is Arabic.

What is your heritage?

I come from a diverse background, and each culture has influenced me. My mother is German, and my father was Egyptian. They both immigrated to Canada later on, but I was born in the US. I grew up in the Netherlands—in Amsterdam and a smaller town called Hilversum, but I have lived in almost ten countries, including Canada, Italy, Switzerland, Australia, China and Japan.

How did your parents meet?

They were on dates with other people, met each other at a dinner, and ended up together by the end of the night.

Where were you born?

Los Gatos, California

What year?

Not telling!

Why is your Twitter and Instagram name "GypsieBarbie?"

Years ago when I was leaving for a modeling contract, a friend gave me a Barbie to take along. He said she could accompany me upon my many travels, and that I could take photographs of her doing exciting things like me. She has now been photographed at multiple fashion shows and red carpet events. The nickname "Gypsie Barbie" stuck after that and in a way embodies my persona—a doll who gets dressed up and travels all over the world.

Where were you educated?

Preschool in California; elementary school in Vancouver; high school in the Netherlands; bachelor's degree at UNLV [University of Nevada at Las Vegas]; and currently working toward my Ph.D. in cognitive neuropsychology at VU University, Amsterdam.

Tell me about your family.

I'm very close to my family and they have always supported me no matter what. They can be a bit crazy at times as most families are, but I love them with all my heart. My father passed away two years ago very unexpectedly, and I will never forget the amazing man he was and the impact he left upon my life. My younger sister is one of my best friends in the whole world, and I couldn't imagine my life without her.

Were you always interested in modeling?

Not exactly—I've always been a bit of a tomboy. When I was around eight years old, I remember coming inside from the woods with a big cut on my knee. My friend's dad said to me, "If you keep playing rough all the time you can never be a model when you grow up." I replied, "Why would I ever want to be a model?" At the time, I had already done several fashion shows and photo shoots, and could not imagine ever making a career of modeling.

What was your first modeling assignment?

The first job I remember vividly was a commercial for Fischer Price roller skates when I was in first grade. It was in Vancouver, Canada, and my agency sent me for the audition—which involved showing I could skate and had memorized the lines for the commercial. The client liked me and I booked the job.

Describe your modeling career.

Although I started modeling when I was 5 and modeled throughout my childhood, my real modeling career didn't start until I was 16. I was living in Europe at the time, but moved to the States not long after and signed with an agency in Los Angeles. When I was 19, I had a contract with Versace's jewelry line for a year, which really helped my career. I booked a lot of jobs after that, and then during a fashion show for Saks Fifth Avenue, I was scouted by my previous manager and he started booking me internationally. Currently I travel abroad regularly for modeling jobs. I've worked with some of the top designers and photographers in the world, have shot for Vogue two times, and have paid for my education almost entirely from my modeling earnings.

What is your height and weight?

5'9", 110 lbs.

How do you hold your weight down?

Healthy diet and exercise. I've been a vegetarian for over 10 years, and I exercise regularly. I am not a fan of the gym, so I do a lot of hiking, rock climbing, and surfing. I also love kickboxing.

Have you ever done any movies or TV?

I've done lots of commercials, and had featured roles on "Entourage" and "CSI." Recently I was in a short film called "The Darkest Passenger."

Your website says you do body art and nude modeling. Can you discuss this?

With select photographers who are very reputable, I have done implied art nudes. This means photos where the model is posing nude, but you are unable to see anything. I'm very comfortable with my body, but you will never see me completely nude in a photo.

Do TV shows like "America's Next Top Model" capture the real life of models?

I've only ever watched one episode, but I suppose they do capture some aspects of a model's life. Models typically live together in an apartment while on contract. As you can imagine, this can create all sorts of dramatic situations. It's a cut-throat industry and lots of people don't make it.



Modeling has paid for most of Faviola's advanced education

What was your most unusual modeling assignment?

One that stands out was a shoot where I rode in a Ferrari driven by a race car driver, to show that the hair products could stand up to anything. It was exciting, but hard to look pretty going 200 miles per hour!

The story "Foreign Babes in Shanghai" states that you were working as a model there and had to "choke a client at a fashion show who was trying to rip off your sister, to get the client to pay her" for her modeling work. True?

Yes, but that wasn't the full story. That was misprinted in a couple of different publications. The man had refused to pay several models and punched one girl in the stomach after she threatened to call the police. That was when I took action and "choked" the client – I subdued him so he could not assault any of the other models.

Silver Spring resident Lew Toulmin recently worked in Vanuatu for almost three years.

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