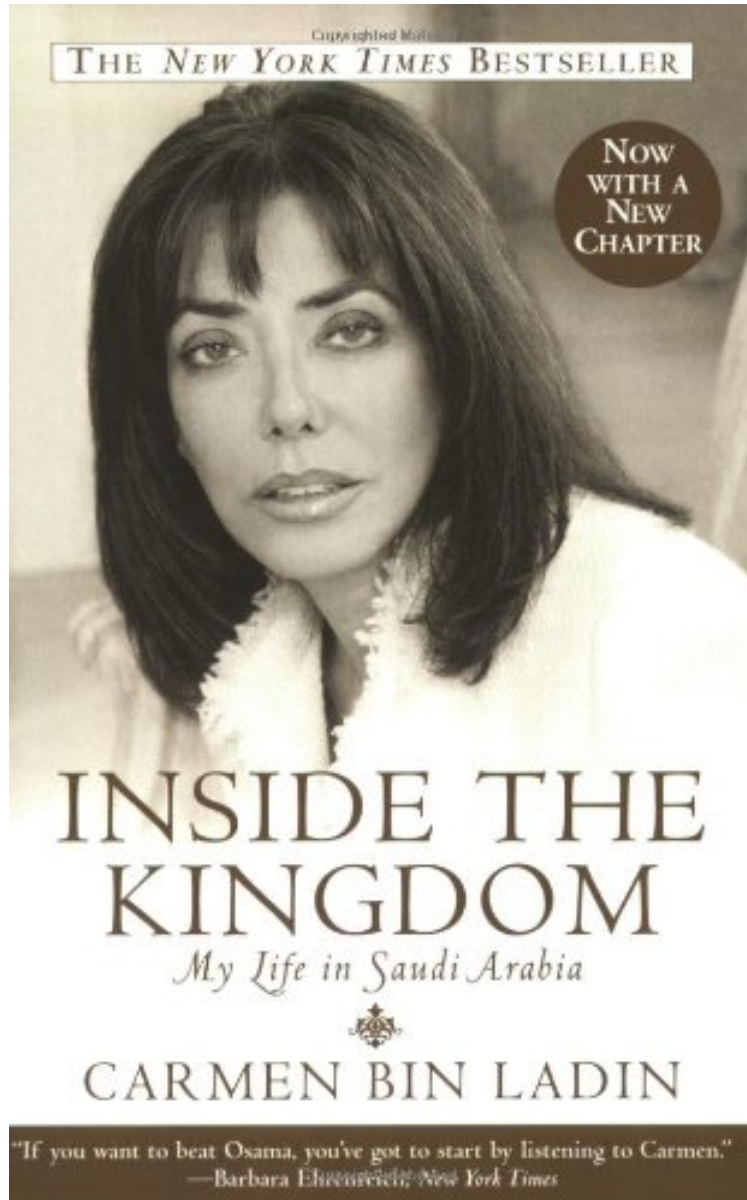


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Inside the Kingdom: My Life in Saudi Arabia

Carmen Bin Ladin

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Carmen Bin Ladin : Inside the Kingdom: My Life in Saudi Arabia before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Inside the Kingdom: My Life in Saudi Arabia:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Happy I read thisBy Kindle CustomerI didn't know what to expect

with this book, but I am so happy I read it. Although I cannot in any sense understand how Carmen fell in love with Yeslam in the first place, I do know that love is a powerful feeling. Carmen walks you through a woman's life in Saudi Arabia. I thought I knew their customs, but found out quickly that I didn't. I thank God I was born into a free country. Basically if you happen to be female, your life is written for you from your first breath. Also, I truly didn't know anything about the Bin Laden and Al Saud relationship and the differences/similarities. I can't imagine keeping the Bin Laden name! I'm sure there is many who would and many who wouldn't. I guess one of the biggest reasons I liked this book is the courage and determination to get what she wanted for her and especially her 3 daughters. She is a lucky one...0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good for CarmenBy Mickey Rhodea fascinating book, appears to be very genuine. It gives us a real insight into the life and culture of Saudi's. Just another example of the twisted view of the Saudi mind. I feel, as others that Carmen is a heroic character in protecting herself and her precious daughters. Good for her.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I love the bookBy DorisI love the book. It gives a great deal of information on how Saudis live and believe. It is hard to believe how the Saudis (the rich ones) could go off to other countries and behave in the ways opposite to the strict ways in which they were taught to believe.It took a lot of courage for Carmen Bin Ladin to teach her daughters in the way she did, especially while she had to live within the family. Her stubbornness in not wanting her girls to grow up and live like Saudi women was commendable. I kept worrying that she would lose her children if she decided to leave Saudi Arabia.This is a hard book to put down.

Osama bin Laden's former sister-in-law provides a penetrating, unusually intimate look into Saudi society and the bin Laden family's role within it, as well as the treatment of Saudi women.On September 11th, 2001, Carmen bin Ladin heard the news that the Twin Towers had been struck. She instinctively knew that her ex-brother-in-law was involved in these horrifying acts of terrorism, and her heart went out to America. She also knew that her life and the lives of her family would never be the same again. Carmen bin Ladin, half Swiss and half Persian, married into and later divorced from the bin Laden family and found herself inside a complex and vast clan, part of a society that she neither knew nor understood. Her story takes us inside the bin Laden family and one of the most powerful, secretive, and repressed kingdoms in the world.

From Publishers WeeklyAddicted to the "I-married-the-Mob" genre? Try this variation: smart women who marry Islamic fundamentalists. In 1973, Swiss-born Carmen fell in love with Yeslam bin Ladin, Osama's older brother; after a fairy-tale courtship, including a semester together at USC, the two married in Saudi Arabia. Alas, it wasn't long before the fantasy turned sinister. By Saudi Wahhabi custom, women are usually confined to the home. Activities like listening to music or reading books other than the Koran are either sinful or shameful. Only Carmen's young daughters, occasional international trips and her dear, understanding husband helped her cope. Then, things worsened. The 1979 Saudi mobilization to support Afghan Muslims against the Soviet invasion gave religious hard-liners like Osama more clout. Carmen's husband, now a successful Geneva businessman, reverted to a more orthodox lifestyle. Finally, in 1988, Yeslam divorced Carmen, but by bringing charges against her in Saudi Arabia, made certain she feared for her lifeand her daughters' freedomif she ever again entered an Islamic country. Beyond Carmen's terrible story hovers the larger, later tragedy of 9/11. Remember, Carmen warns, the bin Laden brothers have always supported each other, financially and socially. When Osama dies, he'll certainly be replaced. The gravity of the events Carmen writes of, her insider's perspective and her engaging style make this memoir a page-turner. Photos. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistMarried in 1974 to Osama Bin Laden's older brother, Carmen Bin Laden spent nine years futilely attempting to adjust to both the conservative, tight-knit Bin Laden clan and the repressive Saudi culture she was naively unprepared to face. Half-Swiss and half-Persian, Carmen was raised in relative freedom in Europe. Carried away by romantic notions of love and loyalty, she initially struggled to bridge the gap between her background as an independent Western woman and Middle Eastern expectations of female submission and subservience. Life among the huge Bin Laden clan was especially treacherous since they claimed myriad complex ties to the Saudi royal family. After the birth of three daughters, with her Western-educated husband becoming increasingly parochial and reactionary, she realized it was time to shuck the abaya that literally and figuratively concealed the woman she once was and desperately wanted to be again. Although the notorious Osama Bin Laden appears a few times in the book and his name is bandied about to hook readers, the real story is Carmen's bid for self-actualization within a society and a family that harshly resisted and rejected every minor challenge to traditional wisdom and authority. A riveting testament to courage and determination, this intimate memoir of one woman's spiritual reawakening and odyssey has best-seller written all over it. Margaret FlanaganCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "Makes a fiery case against what its author calls the oppression and fanaticism that dominates much of Saudi society." -- The New York Times (New York Times)