

# [***A Barbie for Queen Camilla***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BNM-X8F1-JBVN-6002-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Her Majesty the ***Barbie***! During a "Women of the World" (WOW) reception at Buckingham Palace earlier in the month, Queen Camilla received a one-of-a-kind doll crafted in her likeness. The presentation was a delightful nod to the Queen's "dedication to gender equality and empowering of women and girls".

The miniature Camilla dons a teeny version of the royal's elegant blue Fiona Clare dress and Amanda Wakeley coat, capturing her signature style. The Queen herself seemed tickled pink by the gesture, quipping, "You've taken about 50 years off my life - we should all have a ***Barbie***!"

The mini-me was a tribute to Queen Camilla's role as president of the WOW festival, an initiative that champions girls' education and future opportunities. The doll even sported a miniature WOW brooch just like hers. Part of Mattel's ***Barbie*** Dream Gap Project, the one-off model brings a regal flair to the initiative's mission to close the gender gap.

This isn't the first time that royalty has gotten the ***Barbie*** treatment. Queen Elizabeth II received a doll in her honour for her platinum jubilee in 2022. The toy manufacturer Mattel had then released a special ***Barbie*** doll in her honour to mark the British monarch's 96th birthday and also as a keepsake for the platinum jubilee celebrating 70 years of her reign that year. The limited-edition doll was priced online at $75 and had the monarch's likeness dressed in an ivory gown with details drawn from the Queen's past. The ***Barbie*** featured a tiara modelled on her ancestor Queen Mary's fringe tiara, which Queen Elizabeth II wore on her own wedding day. A pink ribbon imitated one given to a young Elizabeth by her father George VI, and a pale blue imitated one from her grandfather George V.

For decades, delightful dolls inspired by royals from around the world have attracted interest from collectors, enthusiasts, children, and the young at heart. There are ***Barbie*** versions of Queen Elizabeth I, Queen Elizabeth II, and the Princess of Wales, with a special edition even released to mark the royal wedding of Prince William and Kate in 2011.

European royals have also been given the ***Barbie*** treatment, with Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden reimagined in miniature form in honour of her 2010 wedding to husband Prince Daniel. Princess Grace of Monaco, whose name remains a byword for impeccable taste, was also honoured with a likeness. The Marie Antoinette ***Barbie*** is understood to be one of the most expensive ever sold. Queen Letizia and Princess Leonor of Spain have merited their own ***Barbies***; as have Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden, Empress Elisabeth 'Sisi' of Austria, and Diana, Princess of Wales.

Back to Queen Camilla. The ***Barbie*** presentation was not all glowing and rosy-pink, though. The 76-year-old royal was handed the doll while on board the charity's WOW girls' festival bus, which made its final stop on a tour of the country at the palace, where the Queen toured it with Mathilde, Queen of Belgium, and the Duchess of Gloucester. But social media broke into a nasty rash with some double-barrel criticism. The timing was all wrong, most felt. The news of Prince Charles' cancer and the Kate Middleton-doctored pictures controversy kind of sullied the Camilla ***Barbie*** celebration. More importantly netizens went into overdrive on how the Queen or the Queen Consort was undeserving of her position, and hence the ***Barbie*** too was unbefitting!

For ***Barbie***, was the Camilla doll mere tokenism or genuine admiration? Either way it was very smart marketing for the dolls brand: Global brand coverage, royal patronage, and endorsement and pride of place at the prestigious WOW platform.

***Barbie*** is, and always has been for 60 years and more, the "girl hero". The message from ***Barbie*** herself has always been that "you can do anything, be anything". ***Barbie***'s the one that has shown girls different paths they can follow, and shone the light on how to unlock doors. ***Barbie***'s sheros have always been women of substance. The question being asked is whether Camilla measures up to that definition, that stature.

A doll likeness is a badge of honour. For fame. For public adulation. For being extraordinary or doing extraordinary. When a ***Barbie*** likeness is created for someone not truly deserving, it undermines the honour already bestowed on real greats. Camilla may be the Queen but she has still to do stuff that makes her aspirational or worthy of emulation.

In any case, with Camilla having got her ***Barbie***, what's next - a King Charles?!

The writer is chairman of Rediffusion

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