

Madame Tussauds



A The museum today

Madame Tussauds waxworks museum (1) is one of London's most popular tourist attractions. You often (2) long queues of people waiting to visit their favourite lifelike stars, from Star Wars characters and the US President, to Prince William and Kate. It is amazing that in our technologically advanced world, people still (3) to touch and (4) next to models made of wax.

It (5) four months to make a model and (6) about £150,000. There are Madame Tussauds museums all over the world, from Hollywood to Beijing.

So, where and when was the museum born? And who was Madame Tussaud?

B Who was Madame Tussaud?

Marie Tussaud was born in 1761 in Strasburg. Her father, a soldier, **died** before she was born. When Marie was still very young, her mother **moved** to Switzerland, where she **worked** as a housekeeper for a doctor called Philippe Curtius. Marie and her mother **lived** with the doctor. He could make brilliant wax models. Marie **loved** these and **wanted** to learn how to make them. In 1766, Curtius **moved** to Paris. A year later, Marie and her mother **joined** him. Marie **showed** real talent for wax modelling and during the 1780s she **worked** on them with Curtius. It was the time of the French Revolution, and a frightened Marie **started** making death masks for people who were guillotined, including King Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette.



C The move to England

Philippe Curtius (1) **died** in 1794 and Marie (2) **inherited** his waxworks. One year later, she (3) **married** François Tussaud and two sons were born, but the marriage was not successful. In 1802, Marie (4) **came** to England with the waxworks and her son, Joseph. François (5) **remained** in France with the other son.

Marie couldn't speak a word of English, but she (6) **tried** hard, and she (7) **continued** touring the country with her models. She (8) **visited** over 70 towns in 33 years! The English were fascinated by the wax masks of dead French aristocrats.

In 1835, she (9) **opened** her first museum in Baker Street, London and she worked there until 1842. She (10) **died** in London on 16 April, 1850 – she was 88. In 1884, her grandsons moved the museum to the Marylebone Road, where it still is today.

