



## The Chapman Collection

Melissa Chapman, owner of The Chapman Collection, spent her childhood learning about selling Persian carpets and rugs. Her mother, Tammy Stoneham, was one of the largest importers and exporters of Oriental carpets in Australia.

“While other kids were out playing at the beach, I would be by my mother’s side in one of her stores, learning how to sell and how to run a business, and I loved every minute of it,” says Chapman. “In fact, I was only eight years old when I sold my first carpet! I knew then that I wanted to open my own store and follow in my mother’s massive footsteps.”

At just 19 years old, Chapman “borrowed some money, bought some amazing inventory,” and opened her own store in South Kensington, London. “I was so excited to have my own carpet store that I even wrote a book, *Unveiling the Mystery That Surrounds Persian Carpets*. Yes, I was a bit of a carpet geek!” she jokes.

Bit by bit, she built her business. “I started to get regular clients, even some celebrities,” says Chapman. “I’ll never forget when Hugh Grant bought a carpet from me. I couldn’t even look at him, I was so shy.” Chapman began to bring some of her mother’s antiques into her store, and was shocked at how quickly they would sell. Pretty soon, she became known as an antiques dealer as opposed to a Persian carpets dealer.

Fast forward to 2001, the year Chapman moved to San Diego. She was initially in business with her mother, who eventually decided it was time to retire. So, in 2006, Chapman went out on her own, opening The Chapman Collection. Now located in a 2,000-square-foot showroom in Westfield UTC, the store is filled with hundreds of unique pieces from around the world.

Continuing to garner accolades, in 2012 The Chapman Collection was asked to provide all the stage furnishings for His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama for his “Compassion Without Borders” symposium at the University of San Diego. “We customized a beautiful English chair in a royal sapphire blue fabric of his choosing, and we made sure the chair was wide enough in case he wanted to sit cross-legged on it. We provided for him a meditation pillow, side table, chair for his translator, and an impressive 27x18-foot Persian Nain carpet. Seeing our pieces on the stage being used by this world-renowned humanitarian was something I’ll never forget,” says Chapman.

She is honored to carry on her mother’s passion. “For me to continue on in this industry, creating a non-intimidating place for clients to learn about antiques and Persian carpets, is huge,” she reflects. “I hope that I stay around for the next 50 years and that maybe, if I’m lucky enough, one of my two sons just might continue this family business to make it a third generation affair.” 858.886.7999, [thechapmancollection.com](http://thechapmancollection.com) 