



STATE DINNER

In Honor of
PRIME MINISTER MATTEO RENZI
and
MRS. AGNESE LANDINI

THE WHITE HOUSE
Tuesday, October 18, 2016



Overview

Official Arrival Ceremony

On Tuesday, October 18th, the President and Mrs. Obama are hosting Prime Minister Renzi and his wife, Mrs. Agnese Landini, at the White House for an Official Visit and State Dinner. This marks the 14th State Dinner or Official Visit of the Obama Administration. Previous visits include: India in November 2009, Mexico in May 2010, China in January 2011 and September 2015, Germany in June 2011, Korea in October 2011, the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland in March 2012, France in February 2014, Japan in April 2015, the Holy See Visit in September 2015, Canada in March 2016, the Nordic countries (Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Iceland) in May 2016, and Singapore in August 2016.

This visit is an opportunity to recognize the depth and breadth of our relationship with Italy and exchange views on the future of Europe. Italy is one of our closest and strongest allies, and we cooperate across a range of shared interests, from addressing climate change and the global refugee crisis to promoting global security and inclusive economic growth.

State Dinner

Prime Minister Renzi and his wife, Mrs. Agnese Landini, are joining the President and Mrs. Obama for a State Dinner on the evening of Tuesday, October 18th. The dinner is being held in a tent on the South Lawn, and followed by a performance by Gwen Stefani.

Guest Chef

As guest chef for the Italy State Dinner, Chef Mario Batali is collaborating with White House Executive Chef Cris Comerford and White House Executive Pastry Chef Susan Morrison on this meal.

Mario Batali is one of the world's most renowned chefs and restaurateurs. He has over two dozen restaurants, ten cookbooks, and numerous accolades, including the James Beard Foundation's *Best Chef: New York City* award. Batali was raised in Seattle, attended high school in Madrid, and studied Spanish theater at Rutgers University. After graduating, Batali spent three years in Italy, training in a small Northern Italian village, Borgo Capanne, with a population of 200 people. Batali returned to New York City and started his long career in the restaurant industry. In 2008, he founded the Mario Batali Foundation with the mission of feeding, protecting, educating and empowering children.



Capturing America's Bountiful Harvest

The Italy State Dinner highlights the bountiful fall harvest. Chef Mario Batali, White House Executive Chef Cris Comerford, and White House Executive Pastry Chef Susan Morrison present an array of courses featuring traditional Italian dishes that have been ingrained in American cuisine. Prior to the meal, guests are offered an assortment of passed canapes made with fresh ingredients from Mrs. Obama's final harvest of the White House Kitchen Garden. These appetizers include Hamachi Agrodolce with recently harvest eggplant, roasted figs with speck and herb pesto made from the garden's cinnamon basil, crab cannolis with homegrown currant tomatoes, and grilled rosemary lamb with freshly picked rosemary.

The first course is a velvety pillow of paper-thin pasta stuffed with a puree of sweet potatoes, garnished with a hint of nutmeg and Italian parsley, and topped with browned butter and sage leaves. The dish is finished with grated Vella Select Dry Monterey Jack cheese from Sonoma County, California, which adds a tangy and salty layer that complements the sweetness of the dish.

The next course is a composed salad of roasted butternut squash topped with bitter chicory, preserved pumpkin, and shaved ewe's milk cheese from New York. It is drizzled with a raw apple cider vinaigrette made with DaVero extra virgin olive oil from California. This dish captures the taste, color, and texture of the season.

The main course is a Beef Braciolo Pinwheel, an Italian Classic with a twist. The prime tenderloin is cut and lightly pounded, then layered with Bresaola, Fontina Cheese, parsley, garlic, and Panko breadcrumbs. It is sliced and served atop broccoli rabe, and garnished with a horseradish gremolata, apple matchsticks, and arugula.

Dessert

The plated dessert is a green apple crostata. A flaky and delicate pasta frolla crust is filled with a tender semolina batter and a lightly poached green apple. It is finished with a thyme caramel sauce, with thyme from the White House Kitchen Garden, and crunchy toffee crumble, and topped with a creamy quenelle of buttermilk gelato.

Our festive seasonal theme continues with "Celebrating Autumn's Harvest," a handmade dessert creation served to each table. This treat highlights the fruits and vegetables of the season for both the United States and Italy. Made of chocolate and sugar, guests will enjoy a platter featuring a pumpkin, cornucopia, milk chocolate chestnuts, grapes, corn, pears, squash, tomatoes, peas, carrots, green peppers, and a beehive replica. The miniature pastry selections include a sweet corn crema and blackberry cup, a Concord grape chocolate leaf, orange and fig slices, a pumpkin cranberry tart, and tiramisu.

Dinner Menu



First Course

Sweet Potato Agnolotti with Butter and Sage
Palmina Vermentino "Santa Ynez" 2015



Salad Course

Warm Butternut Squash Salad with Frisee
and Pecorino di New York
Villa Ragazzi Sangiovese "Napa" 2012



Main Course

Beef Braciolo Pinwheel with Horseradish Gremolata
and Broccoli Rabe
A vegetarian version of this dish will be available
Ridge Vineyards Zinfandel "East Bench" 2014



Dessert

Green Apple Crostata with Thyme Caramel
and Buttermilk Gelato

"Celebrating Autumn's Harvest"

Petits Four Display:
Sweet Corn Crema and Blackberry Cup
Concord Grape Bittersweet Chocolate Leaf
Orange Fig Slice
Pumpkin Cranberry Tart
Tiramisu



Decòr

The State Dinner will take place in a tent on the South Lawn. The décor for the State Dinner celebrates the Italian influence on American culture and society, and the partnership between our countries. The design is inspired by an Italian design technique called Fresco, meaning “fresh” in Italian.

Detailed chandeliers hang from the ceiling of the tent. A portion of the table tops are mirrored, reflecting beautiful bouquets and candlelit centerpieces, creating a sense of light and dimension; other tables are draped in dusty rose and gold. Honored guests are seated in grand chairs backed with colored fabric.

Each table features handmade glassware, neo-florentine charger plates that are hand-painted with a traditional design in gold-leaf, and fall floral arrangements celebrating the season.

On the way to the tent, guests are invited to visit the White House Kitchen Garden, which will be lined with lanterns. Earlier this month, First Lady Michelle Obama dedicated the White House Kitchen Garden, and announced how the garden will be preserved into the future. Making the garden even more accessible, the updates include establishing a revised layout with a new threshold, an entryway with an arbor, a wider walkway, and a gathering area with a table and benches.

Entertainment

Following the dinner, the White House will host a performance by Gwen Stefani. A three-time Grammy Award winner, Stefani has achieved worldwide success as a performer, songwriter, and recording artist. She has sold more than 30 million albums as a multi-platinum solo artist and with her former band, No Doubt. Earlier this year, Stefani released her critically praised third solo album, “This Is What The Truth Feels Like” which debuted at #1 on the Billboard Top 200 and featured the gold certified first single “Used To Love You.” Stefani returned to the road this summer with her acclaimed headlining “This Is What The Truth Feels Like” tour that traveled throughout North America. Stefani is also widely recognized as an accomplished fashion designer and entrepreneur.

As guests enter the White House, they are welcomed with an acapella performance by students from Rosie’s Theater Kids (RTKids). The organization’s goal is to inspire excellence, motivate learning, uplift the human spirit, build confidence, and spark a lifelong appreciation for the arts. In 2015, Rosie’s Theater Kids ACTE II program received the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, an initiative of the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH), identifying RTKids as one of the top 12 creative youth development programs in the country. The President’s Committee partners with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and the National Endowment for the Humanities) to administer the program.



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