



STATE DINNER

In Honor of

HIS EXCELLENCY FRANÇOIS HOLLANDE
PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

THE WHITE HOUSE
February 11, 2014



Overview

Official Arrival Ceremony

Today, President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama host the President of the French Republic, François Hollande, for a State Visit followed by a State Dinner. This marks the seventh State or Official Visit of the Obama Administration; previous visits include: India in November 2009, Mexico in May 2010, China in January 2011, Germany in June 2011, Korea in October 2011, and the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland in March 2012.

The United States and France are long-standing allies and friends who share core values of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law. For over two centuries, our Nations have worked together to promote these ideals, and this visit will highlight and strengthen our mutual cooperation.

State Dinner

The President and Mrs. Obama will host President François Hollande for a State Dinner on the evening of February 11, 2014. The State Dinner will be held in a tent on the South Lawn of the White House. White House Executive Chef Cris Comerford and White House Executive Pastry Chef William Yosses have created a select menu featuring delicacies from across the United States.

Across America Menu Selection

The State Dinner celebrates the best of American cuisine. This event highlights the talents of our Nation's cheese artisans, as well as the bountiful produce grown by farmers across our country.

The First Course, American Osetra Caviar, farmed from the estuaries of Illinois, is paired with quail eggs from Pennsylvania and twelve varieties of potatoes from farms in New York, Idaho, and California.

The Salad Course is petite mixed radish and baby carrots, served on a bed of merlot lettuce with a red wine vinaigrette. The Winter Garden Salad pays tribute to The First Lady's White House Kitchen Garden. Even when covered with snow, the winter vegetables in the White House Kitchen Garden continue to thrive, and little hints of spring are already starting to sprout.

The Main Course, Dry-aged Rib Eye Beef, is sourced from a family owned farm in Greeley, Colorado and served with a Jasper Hill Farm Blue Cheese crisp from Greensborough, Vermont.

The dessert is a celebration of American traditions and produce. The Chocolate Malted Cake is a modern version of an all-American layer cake presented in a geometric form. This dish combines bittersweet chocolate from Hawaii, tangerines from Florida, and is served à la mode with vanilla ice cream from Pennsylvania.

After dinner, guests can enjoy fudge made from Vermont maple syrup, lavender shortbread cookies, and cotton candy dusted with orange zest.

Dinner Menu



First Course

American Osetra Caviar
Fingerling Potato Velouté, Quail Eggs, Crisped Chive Potatoes



Second Course

“The Winter Garden Salad”
Petite Mixed Radish, Baby Carrots, Merlot Lettuce
Red Wine Vinaigrette



Main Course

Dry-aged Rib Eye Beef
Jasper Hill Farm Blue Cheese, Charred Shallots, Oyster
Mushrooms, Braised Chard



Dessert

Hawaiian Chocolate-Malted Ganache
Vanilla Ice Cream and Tangerines



Wine

Morlet “La Proportion Doree” 2011
Napa Valley, California
Chester - Kidder Red Blend 2009
Columbia Valley, Washington
Thibaut-Jannison “Blanc de Chardonnay”
Monticello, Virginia



Décor and Arrangements

The theme of the décor for the French State Dinner was inspired by the shared history and long-standing friendship between the United States and France.

French design has long inspired the White House motif. In fact, French furnishings can be found throughout the State Floor. In the East Room sits an exceptionally crafted French Plateau made by French Artist, Denière et Matelin. The 14 foot table has seven mirrored platforms that are surrounded by a gilded bronze balustrade. This piece—along with several other French furnishings that can be found in the Blue Room and State Dining Room—was chosen during President James Monroe’s 1817 renovation.

Former First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy celebrated French floral art by weaving simple garden flowers and stylish embellishments into French bouquets displayed throughout the White House. For the French State Dinner, White House Chief Floral Designer, Laura Dowling, created French-inspired bouquets to set the tone. Laura studied floral artistry in Paris for nearly 15 years, and her knowledge of French Floral Design is evident in the free-flowing lines of vines and flowers emanating from the classical bouquets.

Entertainment

Following the dinner, The White House will host a State Dinner Performance featuring Mary J. Blige.

Performances by

MARY J. BLIGE



Mary J. Blige

Recording Artist

Mary J. Blige is from Bronx, New York, and began her music career at the age of 18. She was the first woman and the youngest artist to be signed to Uptown Records. Over the course of two and a half decades, she has produced eight multi-platinum albums, sold over 50 million albums, and won nine Grammy Awards and four American Music Awards. Blige is the co-founder of the Foundation for the Advancement of Women Now, which strives to empower women from all walks of life to reach their full potential.

