

# THE KNOCKTURNAL

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## On The Scene: Diner en Blanc New York 2016

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By [Estefania Garcia-Correa](#)

As soon as the clock hit 4 o'clock, I started checking Twitter, emails, texts. Until finally at 5:01 p.m. I received a voicemail that said: "the secret location is the Robert F. Wagner Junior Park" in Battery Park City. Jackpot.

I pulled out my white dress, white bag, and white accessories. Put everything on and headed down to the subway towards Battery Park.

When I arrived, the sponsors were still setting up which gave me enough time to see all the guests arrive in all their splendor.

Some of the guests wore white wigs, gowns, and even top hats. It was fascinating to see how a group of over 5,000 people were able to organize themselves into forming the most beautiful white event that New York has seen.

There was a live band and swing dancers revolving around the sea of white decorations. While some people setup their elaborate center pieces, others opted for sitting down quickly and enjoying the complimentary Moët & Chandon champagne or Apothic wine bottles.

A nice addition this year was the option to purchase Todd English picnic baskets. If guests wanted they could purchase one of the offered baskets filled with delicious treats instead of bringing their own food.

In fact, Todd English, the chef himself, made an appearance at the event to let important guests sample some of his newer plates. He offered two plates. One had peanut noodles with chicken and the other one included avocado mousse with salmon and a crème fraiche sauce.

At 7:30 p.m. all the thousands of guests stood up with their napkins and cheered for the official start of the dinner. At the same time a boat that was passing by shot water off like a shaken bottle of champagne opened at a party.

After that it was officially time to eat, enjoy, laugh and celebrate the fact that you were part of the most exclusive dinner party in New York City and definitely the most fun one to be at.

Todd English, four-time James Beard winner, author, restaurateur, returned by popular demand to curate menus for guests who ordered online.

Le Dîner en Blanc was launched in France nearly 30 years ago. Today, the storied Paris tradition attracts close to 10,000 people. After Dîner en Blanc's U.S. debut in New York in 2011, the event exploded in popularity with requests to host it pouring in from around the world. This year the event is expanding to 70 cities across five continents. In the U.S., 20 cities will be celebrating their own Dîner en Blanc, including for the first time Las Vegas, Orlando and Sacramento.

The legendary event has proven to be such a coveted tradition that many American cities will celebrate their 5<sup>th</sup> Le Dîner en Blanc event this year, including Chicago (August 13 – 3000 guests), Philadelphia (August 18 – sold out with 5000 guests) and San Diego (coming this fall). Many cities have huge wait lists, including New

York which has exceeded 40,000. No worries, though -- organizers make sure that everybody on the list has a chance to attend.

The uniqueness and local flavor of each location entice many to sample more than one event. Many people travel from city to city and often country to country to attend Dîner en Blanc with family and friends. *“It is truly a great feeling being here with all of these amazing people and to see how into it they are”* explain co-founders Sandy Safi.

From (Jennifer Heffner/Vita Images)



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