

Dîner en Blanc: We Attended The Ultimate Dinner Party in Paris With 12,000 Guests

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Celebrating its 25th anniversary, the world's largest dining experience, Dîner en Blanc illuminated the City of Light with an epic fête this past Thursday. Attended by 12,000 participants dressed in all-white who brought champagne picnics, the dinner seatings took over the Louvre and the Trocadero gardens at the foot of the Eiffel Tower, turning the two iconic sites into beautiful alfresco restaurants.

As always the date for this Dîner en Blanc was known in advance but the location remained a tightly kept secret until the last minute, with most participants only learning of the destination upon arrival at their designated meeting points. Once on site, tables were laid out, champagne was poured, and for the next three hours, conviviality took over. This year, as the Tour Eiffel lit up at 11 pm, guests lit sparklers and "Happy Birthday" boomed from the speakers. This marked the moment when people rose from their seats and a dance party filled the gardens.

Dîner en Blanc

One long-time attendee of the annual Paris event who wished to remain anonymous, reflected on past Dîners en Blancs, bringing up a remarkable moment from a previous dinner, "We sat dressed in white along the Champs Élysées some years ago when a large truck stopped in front of us, and all of a sudden it pulled down its side door to reveal a live big band that started to play at the same time. All guests jumped up and started singing and dancing, on the trottoir, in the middle of the street and even on cars!"

The concept of the now "secret" flash mob dinner has gained momentum internationally, and this year 40 cities will host 100,000 eager dinner guests. The story of the epic growth of the festive dinner will soon be available for all to see in a behind the scenes documentary Dîner en Blanc by filmmaker Jennifer Ash Rudick. Following François Pasquier and the nine friends that organize the dinner, Rudick tells the remarkable story of a gentleman who wanted to nothing more than unite people for a dinner in beautiful surroundings.

Addressing a group present in Paris for an advanced screening of the film, Monsieur Pasquier said that for him, and the close group of friends involved, Dîner en Blanc is about the simple pleasure of uniting people for a joie partagé (a shared joy). Images by Carina Okula

