



THE
GERMAN STATE DINNER

In Honor of

Her Excellency Dr. Angela Merkel,
Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

THE WHITE HOUSE

June 7, 2011



Overview

Official Arrival Ceremony

Today, the President hosts Her Excellency Dr. Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, at the White House for an Official Visit. This marks the fourth State or Official Visit of the Obama Administration, after visits by India in November, 2009, Mexico in May, 2010, and China in January, 2011.

The President and First Lady have invited nearly 500 students ages 7 to 16 from the Washington area to help welcome the German delegation at this arrival ceremony. Schools in attendance include Orange Hunt Elementary School in Springfield, VA, Washington Irving Middle School in Springfield, VA, The French School in Bethesda, MD, George Washington Middle School in Alexandria, VA and The German School in Potomac, MD.

First Lady Celebrates Women in Diplomacy

This visit represents the first Official Visit by a female head of government during the Obama Administration. Mrs. Obama will host a special event with local young women to highlight the importance of women in diplomacy. Ambassador Brooke Anderson, National Security Staff Chief of Staff, will join Mrs. Obama as they speak to young women from Banneker High School in Washington, DC, Wootton High School in Rockville, MD, the Girl Scouts and Girls Inc. The event, which will be held in the State Dining Room, also will preview the dinner's table settings, food and entertainment and the young women will sample the dessert that will be served during the evening's State Dinner.

Presidential Medal of Freedom

President Obama will present the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civil award of the United States Government, to Her Excellency Dr. Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. The medal is awarded by the President of the United States to persons who have made especially meritorious contributions to the security or national interests of the United States, to world peace, or to cultural or other significant public or private endeavors.

Chancellor Merkel came to symbolize the triumph of freedom by becoming the first East German to serve as Chancellor of a united Federal Republic of Germany. She also made history when she became Germany's first female Chancellor. A dedicated public servant, Chancellor Merkel has promoted liberty and prosperity in her own country, in Europe, and throughout the world.

President Obama will present the medal during the evening's State Dinner.

State Dinner

The President and Mrs. Obama will host Her Excellency Dr. Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany for a State Dinner on the night of June 7, 2011. The State Dinner will be held in the Rose Garden of the White House, just outside the West Wing and Oval Office. White House Executive Chef Cris Comerford and White House Executive Pastry Chef William Yosses have carefully constructed the evening's menu, using local ingredients – including vegetables and herbs grown on the White House South Lawn.

A Spring Harvest Dinner

The State Dinner for Germany will celebrate the first harvest of the spring. Many of the vegetables and herbs used to prepare this evening's dinner came from the White House Kitchen Garden. This garden was created by Mrs. Obama in March of 2009 and has become a central hub for activities here at the White House. In the early spring of this year, students from Tubman Elementary and Bancroft Elementary Schools in Washington DC planted vegetables in the White House Kitchen Garden. On June 3rd, only four days shy of the State Dinner, American Indian children joined the First Lady to plant traditional Native American crops and also harvested these vegetables just in time for the dinner.

Local Menu Selection

All of the courses are subtly infused with the perennial and annual herbs from the garden.

The first course reflects a cornucopia of spring harvest, aptly named, "White House Garden Chopped Salad." The salad is tossed in a vinaigrette made with White House honey and apple cider vinegar and garnished with spiced Mammoth Pecans from Georgia.

The tuna in the second course is from Hawaii. The main course consists of Maryland blue crab and is served on a bed of wild ramp puree from West Virginia.

The meal is completed with a delicious dessert, an apple strudel. The apples are from Maryland, the raisins from California and the topfen, a Farmer's Cheese, is from Vermont. The apple and topfen combination is a twist on a traditional German recipe for strudel and will be served with schlag, an unsweetened whipped cream.

Dinner Menu



White House Garden Chopped Salad

Fine Herbs

White House Honey Gastrique



Tuna Tartare with Rye Crisps

Pickled Young Carrots and Mustard Oil

Spring Pea Salad

Shaved Ham and Ginger Snaps



Petite Filet

With Maryland Crab Ravioli

Wild Ramp Puree



Apple Strudel

Golden Raisins and Topfen



An American wine will be paired with each course.

Entertainment

The White House will host a State Dinner Performance following the dinner in the Rose Garden, featuring performances by members of the National Symphony Orchestra and selections by James Taylor.



Performances by

Members of the National Symphony Orchestra
Christoph Eschenbach, Conductor
Nurit Bar-Josef, Violin
George Li, Guest Piano Soloist, 15 years old



Selections by

James Taylor

Jeff Babko, Piano
Jimmy Johnson, Bass Guitar
Kate Markowitz, Vocals
Arnold McCuller, Vocals
Caroline Taylor, Vocals
Chad Wackerman, Drums
Andrea Zonn, Vocals



National Symphony Orchestra

Conducted by Christoph Eschenbach

Now in its 80th season, the National Symphony Orchestra is the affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and regularly participates in events of national and international importance, including performances for state occasions, official holiday celebrations, and one of the nation's finest education programs. Through its foreign tours the NSO also fulfills an important international role. NSO Music Director Christoph Eschenbach is one of the world's finest musicians, globally active as conductor, pianist, and mentor. In his first season with the NSO, his distinguished leadership has already had a profound impact on the NSO's artistry and reputation.

George Li

George Li gave his first public concert in Boston at the age of 9 and has performed extensively since then, including appearances with the Cleveland Orchestra and Venezuela's Simon Bolivar Orchestra. He studies with Wha Kyung Byun at New England Conservatory, and plays with technical brilliance and interpretive depth far beyond his years. As the First Prize Winner of the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, 15-year-old Li makes his formal debuts this Fall opening the Young Concert Artists Series at Washington's Kennedy Center and New York's Merkin Hall. Next month he performs on a European tour as soloist with the New England Conservatory Orchestra including Vienna's Musikverein and at Germany's Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

James Taylor

James Taylor was featured on the cover of Time magazine in 1971, heralded as the harbinger of the singer-songwriter era. Four decades later his warm baritone, introspective lyrics and unique guitar playing have set a precedent and blazed a path to which countless young musicians have aspired. He has sold more than 50 million albums, beginning in 1968 when he was signed to The Beatles' Apple Records. Throughout his long career, Taylor has earned 40 gold, platinum, and multi-platinum awards and five Grammy awards. He recently received the National Medal of Arts from President Obama in a ceremony at the White House. The medal is the nation's highest honor for artistic excellence recognizing "outstanding achievements and support of the arts." Raised in North Carolina, Taylor lives in Massachusetts with his wife, Caroline, and their twins, Henry and Rufus.

Décor and Arrangements

The inspiration for the décor of the Germany State Dinner is a modern interpretation of the German Bauhaus school of design which was founded with the idea of creating a 'total' work of art in which all arts, including architecture, would eventually be brought together. The design has a clean austere feel, and uses blocks of glass as vessels and sculptural elements within the floral design. The look, designed by Rafanelli Events design, also embraces technology, using the architecture of the White House itself as a canvas for the projection of photography, including images of many of the beautiful varieties of flowers in the Rose Garden itself. Other design highlights include:

- The Rose Garden lawn will be covered with protective flooring and carpeted in stripes of white and grey. Tables will be a mix of long and round tables, with linens in white and silver.
- Tabletop décor will include: floating candle holders, tiered glass candle holders, white silver-rimmed votives, and milk-colored glass globes.
- The Bush china will be used with White House flatware and Flamingo glassware.
- Floral arrangements will feature yellow calla lilies, green viburnum, green dianthus, and ruffled asplenium leaves as well as yellow oncidium orchids, euphorbia, green dianthis and soft bunny tail. All arrangements will be accented with sculptural greens and leaves designed in plate glass vessels varying in size.
- A visual "proscenium" will be created in lighting by cropping the colonnade Frieze and up-lighting the columns through which guests will enjoy viewing spectacular slowly-changing imagery. The dinner area within the garden will be bathed in warm tones. The flower beds will be sculpted with organically textured tapestries of light and various natural elements within the garden will be sculpted through delft up-lighting and highlighting.

Previous Germany Visits

There have been two State or Official visits since reunification:

- Chancellor Helmut Kohl Germany Official visit. February 9-10, 1995
- President Richard von Weizsaecker, State Visit. April 28-May 1, 1992
And Addressed Joint Meeting of Congress April 30.