



JOHNNY ROXBURGH
PARTY ARCHITECT

CHRISTMAS PARTY DECEMBER 2018

BACKGROUND

My client is an old friend and she and her family have asked us to help them with the arrangements for their winter parties for the last three years.

They usually have two parties, one day after the other, in the week before Christmas, and the brief is always that each evening should look and feel different.

They have 40 guests on the Friday night and 65 on Saturday and can have 18 to stay in the house.

My client is German, with a French husband. She used to work for a Swiss Bank and he has a successful Art Gallery in the West End, where he deals in Contemporary Art. Nanette and Philippe love entertaining and with three teenage children, are famous for their generous hospitality.

CREATIVE CONCEPTS & AUDIENCE

- The first night (on the Friday) is for local friends and neighbours
- The second (on a Saturday) is for friends from London who will stay in the house or local hotels
- And on the Sunday there will be a lunch for Saturday guests before going home in the afternoon.

THEMES

The emphasis for the parties needs to be fun, edgy and creative.

This year they have asked me to create a Friday evening built around the theme of TIME. They have already sourced a marquee which they are erecting on the lawn for dinner and plan to dance in the dining room.

The house needs to be dressed for Christmas – there are large fireplaces in all the main rooms, a double height hall where the tree usually stands, a large front door flanked by pillars and a huge stone flagged kitchen with a long wooden family table, which is normally decorated at this time of year. The Christmas decorations you install need to be perfect for Christmas but altered for this evening to reflect the theme.

Saturday evening is a different brief entirely. Fun, full on and altogether much more ‘out there’.

Having had a wonderful trip to St Petersburg in the summer to see the White Nights, Nanette wants to have a Russian Christmas.

She has asked to dress the tent in a Russian style – you can decide if this should be an inside or outside look. She wants Russian entertainment, food, cocktails etc. The staff dressed up – the house decorations altered to feel Russian (she wants them to be returned to traditional Christmas by the following Monday). She wants the tent to look amazing with great table centres.

VENUE & LOGISTICS

The house is located near Amesbury in Wiltshire and has beautiful gardens with a large flat lawn outside the dining room. The existing dining room furniture will need to be removed and stored safely, so that we can create a night club. The room measures 35' x 20' and is linked to the entrance hall by a set of double doors. The furniture is all antique and very valuable and includes a long table for 18, 20 chairs, a sideboard and several little side tables plus lots of 'bits'. The art is a mixture of modern and old masters – these are large and hang on 15' high walls. There is a pair of French doors leading out into the garden.

Pre dinner drinks and canapés will be in the drawing room, where there is enough room without moving any furniture.

The access to the tent site is good and Nanette wants to use the tent on both nights. Tent dimensions tbc.

Nanette usually likes her guests to sit at long tables, however she will sometimes consider rounds for 10 people. She has asked us to suggest chairs, china, glassware and table cloths and decoration for the tent.

Philippe's mother is very old and in a wheel chair – mentally she is spot on and doesn't like to be nuisance – she needs to be able to get into the tent. Their downstairs loo has been adapted for her, but there aren't enough loos for everyone else – solution please.

She needs lighting both in the tent and the dining room night club (this also needs to be dressed with a bar and seating, dance floor etc). She also wants the gardens lit – these are about three acres in size.

FOOD & BEVERAGES

The Friday party will have a less adventurous menu as the locals are more traditional – this needs to include vegan options and should also have wine pairing suggestions. Don't be offended if Philippe decides to supply the wines from his own cellar but he is always interested in new ideas. The menu should be 3 courses.

The Saturday night – think Russian. Also please suggest cocktails both alcoholic and non-alcoholic.

Both evenings will need Pre dinner drinks and canapés.

On Sunday they want a traditional roast lunch (with a veggie option) for 30.

ENTERTAINMENT

For the Friday night, Nanette would like some entertainment ideas, including background music for dinner. The evening will end around 12.30am, guests having been invited at 7.30pm.

For Saturday night the party will go on until 3am – what can you suggest to make it fun and Russian Christmas. There is an open cart barn at the far end of the drive – they wonder if they could have drinks there? How could it be dressed?

She would also like an ice rink with skates and all the gizmos - she would like someone to supervise this and help the young to skate.

COMMUNICATIONS:

She will need tangible invitations for each night to send to her friends and will also need any necessary comms on site i.e. place cards, menu cards, seating plan etc.

BUDGET

The budget is £550,000 plus VAT, so it needs to be good