

## **The Do's and Don'ts of Table Manners**

### **The Do's**

Take your cues from your host/hostess. Place your napkin on your lap at the beginning of the meal.

Take small bites so you can easily take part in the conversation.

When using silverware, work from the outside in and leave the silverware used for each course on the plate when finished.

Place your bread roll on the small plate to your left and break it into small pieces before eating. Butter, jam and other condiments are spread on each piece just before it is eaten.

When asked to pass the salt, it is most appropriate to pass BOTH the salt and pepper, placing them on the table close to the person who requested them. Do not pass hand-to-hand.

When you are finished with your meal, place your utensils at the 10:2 position with the tips of your utensils at 10 and the handles at 4. This indicates to the server you are ready for your plate to be removed.

When using a soup spoon, dip the spoon away from you and avoid scraping it on the bottom of the bowl. When you are finished, place the spoon on the right hand side of the soup plate.

Pass food from left to right (counter-clockwise), except bread which should be passed from right to left (clockwise.)

Keep your arms and elbows off the table. Place your napkin on your seat, not the table, if you must briefly excuse yourself.

### **The Don't's**

If you drop a utensil or your napkin during your meal (at the Ball or a restaurant), do not pick it up. Quietly signal the wait staff to bring a replacement.

Do not push your plate away from you when you have finished eating.

Do not dunk food into your beverage or soup. Do not mop or clean your plate with your bread.

Do not gesture with your utensils.

Do not talk with food in your mouth.

Do not eat your neighbor's bread or salad!

The bread and butter plate is placed slightly above the salad plate to the LEFT of your dinner plate.

Do not check your phone, talk on it, or text from it at the table. If you are expecting an important call or text, say so upfront and excuse yourself when you need to respond.

Do not groom yourself at the table, i.e., apply make-up or lipstick, pick your teeth, etc.

Personal items like purses, glasses, keys and cell phones do not belong on the table.

Do not take a sip from your glass after the host proposes a toast in your honor. Instead, reciprocate the toast, then drink.