

THE IMPERIAL COURT OF NEW YORK

Office of the Minister of Protocol

Memorandum for the General Membership

Subject: Attire, Protocol, Etiquette for the Night of a Thousand Gowns Ball

Dear Courtiers,

It seems necessary to once again address the area of proper attire and behavior in regards to the Night of a Thousand Gowns Ball. The Board of Directors of the New York Court require that all of our Courtiers assist us in creating a memorable evening by dressing their absolute best. A Coronation Ball is the most formal event in the Imperial Court System.

Firstly, It is of overriding importance that any member expecting to be presented during the presentation of the New York Court must be signed in, in order to be announced. There will be a well-marked location set aside for this purpose, at the entrance of the ballroom. This must be done before actually entering the ballroom and all members must be signed in by 7:30 p.m. SHARP at which time the SIGN-IN DESK will close. Please be advised that there will be NO EXCEPTIONS to this rule.

In brief, for gentleman tuxedos are considered the minimum requirement for that night. White tie and dress uniforms are highly desirable, including the wearing of military orders, decorations, gold braid, etc. Uniforms involving the wearing of leather can be practical provided they are adapted a "white tie, black tie" look. For example, leather pants and jackets, even caps, coupled with a wing collar, cummerbund and gloves could work for us. For this look a "spit and polish" finish for leather is essential. In regard to gloves, it is well-known that the Widow Norton has expressed her wish that all men wear white gloves at least while being presented. For our part, we strongly suggest the wearing of white gloves with dress uniforms and white tie. With ordinary tuxedos this accessory is definitely optional. In addition, bare chests or butts, attractive though they may be, cannot be tolerated on this occasion. Neither will the wearing of short pants be permitted.

For the ladies, a floor length evening gown (or dress) would be considered the minimum requirement. Accessories should harmonize, and gloves while desirable are optional. However, if worn, gloves should not be worn while dining. We hope fancy dress ballgowns will worn by many. In this case it is almost impossible to overdress. This is the time to flaunt your biggest jewels and bead work that you have been doing all winter, and it is certainly the time to wear a tiara should you have one.

Our only suggestion of restraint would be that the ensembles should not be impractical for walking, sitting at table, and especially ascending or descending stairs. Take note, that a gown which needs to be picked up to walk on a flat floor is too long. Again, regarding nudity, a gown may be very low cut, front or back, as long as the display of nipples or gluteal cleavage is avoided. See through fabrics in the above mentioned areas counts as nudity. Finally, in regards to dresses slit to show the leg, mid-thigh is as high as you may go. The aforementioned guidelines do not intend to cramp anyone's style or inhibit anyone's self-expression. They are only meant to inform all of our members as to what is considered "correct" presentation for the evening.

In regards to etiquette, there are just few formalities to be discussed at this time. Specifically, during the Coronation Ball all courtiers should make their bows or curtsies to all Monarchs reigning and past. That is to say, that each of these persons should be greeted with a short curtsy or bow upon your first meeting that evening. It is not necessary to continue doing so throughout the evening. Never attempt to kiss the hand of a Monarch - unless it is offered and we all know that the kissing of cheeks - if offered - does not involve any actual physical contact.

Visiting Monarchs are usually noticeable by very elaborate regalia, and sometimes by identification tags. These persons must also be granted the courtesy of a proper bow or curtsy. If a particular Monarch's identity is in question they may be properly addressed as "Sir," "Madame" or "Your Majesty." Visiting Royalty are always pleased to be recognized in this manner.

We also remind you that each member should consider him or herself as a host or hostess. By this we mean that we have invited these guests to our party and we should make a particular effort to meet and greet as many people as practical. This will insure that our guests will feel welcome and be encouraged to return on future occasions.

One might think that this seems like a lot to remember. But actually it is really simple matter to make these efforts and well worth the trouble in the long run.

We thank you all for your cooperation in these areas. These efforts on your part will contribute to a overall effect of Haute Couture Splendor, which is our aim. These guidelines are to assist us all in producing an event, particularly distinct from any and all other events, and achieve a function of which we may all be overwhelmingly proud.

This promulgated under the hands of Minister of Protocol HRH The Dowager Grand Duchess Swana Swarovski and Assistant Minister of Protocol HH Princess Josephine Boner Parte in accordance with the wishes of T.M.I.S.M. William and Panzi of the Emerald Empire.