

GUIDANCE FOR DINNERS



1. The Loving Cup

According to Chambers Book of Days, the Ceremony of the Loving Cup, which is traditional with all Livery Companies, is said to derive from the assassination of Edward, King and Martyr, while drinking from a cup on 18th March 978. It then became customary that when one of the company stood to drink, the person next to him stood with drawn sword, to defend him while drinking. Nowadays, the cup is passed round the table, each in turn guarding his neighbour, and only three people should be standing at a time — the holder of the cup who drinks, the holder of the cover of the loving cup, facing the drinker, and the guard who stands back to back with the drinker.

When a guest receives the loving cup he/she turns to face the neighbour, who will drink after, and they bow to each other. The neighbour removes the cover from the cup, holding it while the bearer of the cup drinks, then at once wipes the rim with the napkin. The cover is then replaced, the two bow to each other, and then the cup changes hands.



The new bearer turns to face the neighbour on the other side, and the same procedure continues round the table, each guest who has drunk remains standing, back to back with the next drinker, on guard and sitting only when the cup cover is replaced. The cover is to ensure nothing can be added to the cup's contents.

2. The Loyal and Civic Toasts

An official dinner will include loyal and civic toasts. The toasts are initiated by the Beadle and proposed by the Master.

Please stand after the Master stands and says "The Queen". If there are musicians they will play the first verse of the National Anthem and everyone should sing. You then pick up your glass and say "The Queen" and drink the toast.

The toast to The Royal Family will follow next. Do not sing if the National Anthem is played and the toast is "The Royal Family".

Third is the toast to The City. The toast is "The Lord Mayor and the City of London Corporation".

3. Photography

Please do not take any photographs during dinner. Official photographs are available for all dinners.

4. Comfort Breaks

Please avoid taking any comfort breaks until after the Loyal Toasts.
