

The Diplomat's Diet

By: Robin Pascoe

One diplomatic wife turned to another at a cocktail reception recently and commented that in case the second wife wasn't aware of it, about a thousand calories in hors d'oeuvres had already slid down the woman's throat. And that was without counting the empty calories in her glass of wine.

"Have we met?" asked the wife with the apparent appetite.

"A hundred calories. Easily."

"Pardon me?"

"A hundred calories in that tiny canape you just ate. See the mayonnaise?"

"No."

"Well it's in there. Hidden calories. The worst kind."

"Aren't you eating anything?"

"No. I'm on The Diplomat's Diet."

"What's that?"

"You haven't heard about the DD? What Embassy did you say you were from?"

The woman mentioned a country known for its pastry.

"Well no wonder. No offence."

"I take it you're North American," countered the spouse of the representative from a pastry-loving nation.

"How can you tell?"

"Because you are obsessed with diets. Wasn't the Beverley Hills Diet invented somewhere in North America?"

Good Point. "Yes, but we also came up with The Diplomat's Diet."

"Well, what is it?"

"It's an eating plan which allows you to attend cocktail parties, lunch and dinner parties, coffee mornings, bridge afternoons, school bake sales, women's clubs bazaars even heavy breakfasts after fancy dress balls and STILL lose weight. And you can adjust it for your husband's schedule too."

"Does absolutely everyone know about this diet?"

"Everyone on the local cocktail circuit. Are you new?"

"Yes. Does it show?"

The diet guru wanted to be diplomatic. "Well, being new explains why you don't know about it," she said, diplomatically avoiding the question. "Look around. Notice anything unusual?"

The new wife put down her glass of wine, wiped the cocktail food off onto a serviette, and surveyed the reception hall. People were busy chatting. The guests continually shifted from one group to another in a synchronized movement. Others stood alone looking lost. Men were exchanging business cards. It all seemed perfectly normal, tedious.

"I'm afraid I can't see anything out of the ordinary."

"Look again."

Frustrated now, the wife glared around the room. Hired waiters carried heavy trays overloaded with cocktail snacks. The bar table was perfectly stocked as the bartenders poured drinks into ice-filled glasses.

"Give up?"

"Wait a minute. Are those bartenders only serving soda water?"

"You're getting warm."

"Please! Tell me already!" Her patience was exhausted. She grabbed a low-cal crudite.

"OK, but first of all I should explain that The Diplomat's Diet is not to be confused with the Home Leave Diet, the Christmas Diet or the Visitors Diet."

"I have never heard of any of those. Are they published somewhere?"

"No, they are word of mouth."

"If nothing is written down, then how does anyone know how to follow the diet? Are there special meal plans?"

"No."

"Special foods to eat?"

"No."

"Are there no foods on this diet at all?"

"Bingo! You simply don't eat at all at parties! Or drink! That's The Diplomat's Diet. You stay entirely neutral by favouring neither food nor drink. Isn't it brilliant?"

The wife with the appetite tried to digest this information. Was nobody eating? Or drinking? Could people actually attend a mind-numbing official function without feeling the need to stuff their face with booze and food?

Time dragged on. Conversation began to sound more forced if that was possible. Guests were starting to look at their watches. They also began eyeing the waiters. A few people walked over to the bar and noticeably ordered spirits, not soda.

The eating wife turned to her non-eating companion just in time to see her quietly pop something resembling food into her mouth.

“You’re eating! I saw you!”

“ — — — — ” came the response, garbled by the food in her mouth.

“What did you say?”

“I never claimed it actually worked,” she repeated, clearly now, taking a glass of wine from a wandering waiter with one hand and spearing a meat ball with her other.

“Excuse me?”

“All right already. I confess! I’ve gained five pounds since I started The Diplomat’s Diet!”

“Waiter?” both women called out in unison. They clearly had to make up for lost time. Just then, another diplomatic wife ambled over. She eyed the two woman in patronizing disgust.

“I’ve been watching you two. Do you know how many calories you ladies have just consumed?” Wanting to be helpful, she said: “You know, there’s a great diet you should hear about...”

“ — — — — ” garbled the women.

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