

The dinner is announced by the chief waiter, who stands at the entrance to the drawing-room which opens toward the dining-room, and bows to the host. The latter is alert, anticipating the information. He offers his left arm to the lady-in-chief for this particular occasion. She may be the wife of the eldest gentleman, or the especially honored guest, as before explained. He proceeds first, and his guests follow him to the dining-room, his wife entering last with the gentleman entitled to most consideration. Each pair find their assigned position by the card which awaits them, assisted by the information previously furnished by the host in regard to the side of the table chosen for them. This is done as quietly as possible, as nothing is less elegant than a bustling manner.

When the dinner is over the hostess bows to the lady at the right of the host, rises, and the guests rise also. The gentlemen either stand until the ladies leave, or conduct them to the door, and return. It is good form, but not incumbent to escort the ladies to the drawing-room. The gentlemen smoke in the dining-room, or in an apartment provided for the purpose, not remaining long from the drawing-room.

Coffee is served at table after the dessert, or in the drawing-room half an hour later. In the latter case the hostess usually sits by the coffee-urn, and the gentlemen may carry the coffee-cups to the ladies, followed by a servant, who bears a tray, upon which are sugar, cream, and often a handsome, low cut-glass caraffe of brandy.

Guests may leave after coffee, and should not in any event linger more than two hours. A person desiring to leave before the rest should inform the hostess beforehand, and then leave without formal adieux.

Etiquette requires a call on the hostess within a week after