

The Party January 29

We spent the day touching up the apartment and preparing the food. We fussed over the way to set the food up. There were some items that needed preparation at the last minute, but we have put on lots of parties before and felt confident.

We had re-arranged the furniture and took out the area rug. Removing the rug had a dramatic effect of opening up the room.



After lots of discussion, we decided to turn the table around and have it jut out into the room. This allowed people to walk around the table to try dishes.



The white line through the photo is the pole of the floor lamp. I didn't notice it at all as I took the photo. It reminds me of a talk I once heard by a photographer who was showing slides of his photos. He said, "be sure to look around your object to see what else you are photographing." Then he showed a photo of a group standing in front of a boulder in a mountainous area. Above them, looking down was a mountain lion! He had not seen it because he was so intent on focusing the photo on his subjects. Of course, the white line is not as dramatic as a mountain lion, but it goes to show he was right.

Here is the table with the table cloth and plates of food covering most of the surface. Ernie likes this style,



which his Russian friends call zakuski (plates and plates of appetizers covering the surface of the table.)

On the north of the room, we put the beverage table, using the outdoor window sill as extra refrigerator space.



Thirteen people showed up. The neighbors from the 4th floor, Pascal LeJarre and Claire Tilbury, the couple from the 3rd floor Jose Santos Ramirez, his wife Florence Dyan and their 7 year old daughter Lou. Gerald Deconclois and Sally Davies, the two rental agents, my former college room mate Barbara Stickler and a friend named Tom Guenther, Christian and Emmanuelle Morel and Ernie and me. Here are a few photos of the guests. They didn't all come out because it was night and the lighting didn't always cooperate.



Florence talking to Tom, Lou offering a chip to her father Jose Ramirez.



Sally and Gérald. The flowers are the Azaleas Gérald had waiting for our arrival.



Christian and Ernie with a very blurred Emmanuelle in the back. You can see the deviled eggs, the breadsticks wrapped in prosciutto, the stack of plates that no one used, celery sticks spread with blue d'Auvergne cheese. It is interesting what gets eaten. The prosciutto and the deviled eggs went fast. The guacamole was well attended to but was quite hot so it didn't get finished.



The poached trout was not touched, although some of the shrimps were. The other white fish wasn't touched.



Ernie's special salami appetizers were popular but there were some left for us to finish off later.

Sally and Gérald each brought a bottle of champagne and supplemented our supply of champagne flutes and that added a nice sparkle to the evening.

I didn't get a photo of the beautiful bouquet of flowers Ramirez/Dyans brought. They were magenta poppy type flowers with a delicate pink flower filling out the bouquet. They were long stemmed and when I put them in a vase, they curved gracefully. They lasted a week and gave us both great pleasure.

Our guests seemed to greatly enjoy the evening and kept commenting how unusual it is for someone to host the neighbors in their apartment. We kept blaming it on being Americans and that it is a custom in our country.

My real motivation to wanting this party was to have an excuse to meet Mme. Favet, the old lady on the second floor. She is in her 90's, hard of hearing, is not very mobile and rarely goes out. We rang at her door but she didn't answer so we put a written invitation in her mail box. She called the following day and explained why she couldn't come but would welcome us in her apartment for coffee one day soon.

At her age, she must have experienced a lot of interesting events here in Paris. I hope to hear some of them.