

## Some Enchanted Evening...

Since their launch in 2007, interior design supremoes **Evitavonni** have proved that glamour and good taste really *can* be excellent bedfellows. Spectacular furniture, exquisite interiors and breath-taking decorative features have made Evitavonni one of the most desirable and well-respected brands in the world of Home Design and Interiors. And if you were fortunate enough to attend their Annual Summer Garden Party, held at their breath-taking showroom in Chobham, Surrey, you would understand why.

Each year, Evitavonni opens its doors to some of the most discerning homeowners and design enthusiasts in the Southeast, inviting them to enjoy an evening of sunshine, fine wine and inspiration. The imagination and planning that goes into these events defies belief: the gardens and interiors are transformed into a spectacular wonderland; perfectly complimented with the very best in entertainment, music and food.

Our evening began in typically elegant style. Even the heavens themselves seemed to have been consulted: the sun's rays were still warm as we pulled up outside Evitavonni's glass-fronted foyer. Accepting a flute of chilled champagne, we handed our car keys to valet parking experts X-Mil... and, suspending all belief for the next few hours, we prepared to be dazzled as only Evitavonni know how.

The showroom had been transformed into an ultra-glamorous cocktail party. Silver trays bearing champagnes, wines and cocktails, all provided by *Imbibros* of Farnham, glided by; closely followed by mouth-watering arrays of canapés. Our eyes widened in awe as we moved through the maze of rooms – for here were some of the most incredible interiors sets and decorative features imaginable. Entire kitchen and bathroom installations, lounge settings, fantastical lighting and ornamental pieces greeted us at every turn: stunning creations in marble, stone, silver and gilt; from the baroque to the contemporary and the minimalist to the ornate... some decorated with glittering crystals and intricate mother-of-pearl mosaics; others a masterpiece in clean lines and pure symmetry.

Stepping through into the gardens, the Alice-like dream world continued. To our left was sited an enormous, fully-installed outdoor kitchen, manned by none other than Sophie Grigson and her team of sous-chefs, whose cookery demonstrations kept the gastronomes among us enthralled throughout the evening. To our right, meanwhile, was an authentic Italian *gelateria*, offering every conceivable flavour of ice-cream in perfect wafer cones. And, stretching away in front of us was Evitavonni's famous water walkway: a perfect catwalk around which the elegant guests mingled, chatted, and soaked up the atmosphere.

Strolling around the gardens revealed further delights. Exquisite pieces of garden furniture, plush outdoor cushions and breath-taking sculptures had been strategically arranged and artfully illuminated, drawing admiring glances from the guests. As the sun sank down toward the horizon, a Rhythm & Blues band began to play, adding an extra-special air of celebration to the occasion.

As the evening progressed, so too did our hosts' anticipation of our needs. From the depths of a discreet marquee, more and more trays of canapés began to appear: miniature croustades with smoked salmon, elegantly-piped mousses made from goat's cheese, and miniature Thai chicken bites; all expertly prepared by *Rhubarb & Spice*. For those with a larger appetite, a fully-staffed Wok Station was now serving up steaming bowls of Thai stew and spicy meat skewers. No less impressive was the range of liquid refreshments on offer – and the *Imbibros* team themselves were on-hand to provide information and advice on the drinks being served.



As the night deepened, the music picked up; and the air was filled with laughter and conversation. By now, some of the guests had discovered what is arguably the garden's *pièce de resistance*: a superbly-carved, sumptuously-furnished tree-house, lined with colourful cushions and beautiful ornaments. Other guests, meanwhile, had returned to brightly-lit rooms inside, keen to explore the stylish bedrooms and bathrooms located on the topmost floor.

Finally, and with tired eyes looking homeward, our valets delivered our cars back to the showroom entrance; ready for us to motor away into the night.

Gliding back through the lanes of Chobham, we were left with a uniquely peaceful, highly privileged feeling. It's not often that an evening invitation proves so magical and inspirational - and so much fun, too. But then, it's not often than one encounters a brand like Evitavonni. This is an *entirely different* way of life... and one which it would be tantalisingly easy to become used to.

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