

THE LONDON ESSENTIALS





Have we met before?

If you've come across The London Essentials, you're unlikely to forget the encounter any time soon. You might recall five debonair gentlemen arriving at your table and breaking into song, surprising you and your friends with their joyful energy, effortless musicianship and typically British charm. Well, you can count on seeing them again, because they'll be at any party worth attending for some years to come. Just ask George Clooney, Oprah, John Legend or Dr Phil. These are just some of the stars that The London Essentials have impressed over their whirlwind career.



The London Essentials Showreel



How it all began

Inspired by a stint in Nice (Europe's street music capital), actor and drummer Ben Matthews returned to the UK to form the group in 2010, setting out to transcend the way that music is traditionally performed at events. "I started looking for a certain type of musician; someone who could act, who really got it. I was inspired to try something different," says Ben. Namely, to do away with the formality of the stage and bring the music to the people, affording the spontaneity, dialogue and humour that makes The London Essentials experience what it is.

What we do



The band's repertoire reaches from the swing of the 1950s to the sass of modern-day pop, by way of a wealth of classics in between. With this range, they quickly found success on the road, making dance floors out of city streets, dining terraces and beaches, and gaining fans all the way. Now, with their popularity ever growing, The London Essentials are often required to play to thousands of guests, but they always preserve the intimacy of the performance. "The idea is still that it's a private concert where the audience is practically part of the band," says Ben.

Flying high



It's this personal quality that has accelerated the band's journey from accomplished London lads to international jetsetters, with word of mouth spreading to increasingly distant and exotic parts of the world. From Sydney to Moscow, LA to Singapore, music has taken The London Essentials on a global adventure. Along the way they've thrilled partygoers on the decks of superyachts, given an Emmy-nominated live TV performance, and serenaded the likes of Charlize Theron, Pharrell Williams, Sharon Stone and His Royal Highness Prince Charles. But as Ben says, "We're only just getting started!"



Oprah Winfrey at The David Foster Foundation

How we work



The band performs two, occasionally three, sets each 20 - 25 minutes in length, usually over the course of a sit down meal, but as long as guests have seating available and have had a drink (or two!), we can make it work. It's like a series of mini-concerts where the guys move around and interact with the guests as they serenade, are playful, flirtatious, high energy and above all, incredibly entertaining!



The London Essentials perform Bohemian Rhapsody



A little side note

Whilst we bring a massive amount of energy to the performances, it's best that we're not asked to lead guests as it just never really works. We need a captive audience where guests are seated and have had a drink, then we can create something special.

The show is a dinner show, around the tables between the courses. Typically after the mains and during dessert. We're not really the band for afterwards although of course we do regularly have guests up and dancing.

Your questions answered

“What are the absolute essentials?”

Anyone who's ever seen us will tell you that we make an impact, so it's best if everyone's seated, and had a drink or two before we start. Then we can really bring the fun! We don't generally provide background music as we're an interactive band.

“Do you play on a stage?”

Being interactive we don't play on a fixed stage. The magic happens when we play sets among the tables, between courses.

“How loud are The London Essentials?”

We don't follow a DJ, live band or loud amplified music. If there's background music before we perform it must be really light (that means not much bass) and turned right down five to ten mins before we start.

Turning the music off when we start doesn't work. People's ears get used to a certain volume and, as we're primarily acoustic, our impact will be seriously diminished if we follow loud music. We're a hard act to follow, but the upside is that whatever DJ or amplified band comes on after us will have volume on their side.

“Our event is very large, can you still perform?”

Yes, we have performed at events with up to 5,000 people. For events with over 80 guests it's generally best for us to use wireless headset microphones (tech rider on request). However, when we're mic'd at the beginning we still like to keep the intimacy of playing to tables whilst allowing other guests to talk. This also means there's room to increase the volume later in the evening when things get crazy!

“Do you need a sound check?”

We only need a soundcheck if we're being mic'd up - see previous question.

“How much space do you need?”

If a waiter can get there, so can we!

“Can we have your set list?”

We don't really have one! It's always good to know if you have a favourite style of music, and if it works with our line up, given notice we'll always be happy to learn a song, but because we move table to table we need to feel free to choose whatever song we think will work in the moment. We also take requests from guests on the night. I'm afraid you'll just need to trust us!

“Do you need to feed the band?”

With all the travelling we do, and the energy we put into every performance, we have to stay as healthy as possible so a good hot healthy meal will always guarantee a smiling band, and that our suits still fit! It's better if we eat beforehand. A chef will – quite rightly – want to serve the guests first and then us, but as we start performing while the guests are eating, that's impractical. We find that, if this is explained to them, chefs are fine with it.

“When's the best time for you to start play during the meal?”

The best scenario is when guests are seated and we start half way through the starter or main course.

“Can you round up the guests and lead them through to another room?”

We have tried to do this in the past and it just doesn't work. We suggest an official master of ceremonies for this job.

“Do you travel?”

Yes! We play at events worldwide on a regular basis. In fact we never leave home without our swimming trunks! :)

“When flying to an event can you bring all your instruments?”

It's difficult for us to transport a double bass to events involving flights, as airlines don't like an instrument that large! We usually ask that a double bass be supplied for us to use. It makes everybody's life easier. We bring all the other instruments with us.

“And finally...”

Although we appear to be very spontaneous (and trust us, we are), in order to achieve maximum impact a lot of planning and organisation goes on behind the scenes. The show may look improvised, but there is always the ideal time to perform. The more information we have prior to the event, the better it will be. We look forward to entertaining you.

Get
in touch



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