

But not since Marie Antoinette was supposed to have leaned from a Versailles palace window and suggested that the breadless peasants eat cake can leaders have demonstrated such insensitivity to daily hardship than at the luxury Windsor hotel on the Japanese island of Hokkaido.

They have told their people to tighten their belts for lean times ahead, but you feared for presidential and prime ministerial girdles after the chance to tuck into further dishes including milk-fed lamb, roasted lamb with cepes, and black truffle with emulsion sauce. Finally there was a "fantasy" dessert, a special cheese selection accompanied by lavender honey and caramelised nuts, while coffee came with candied fruits and vegetables.

Leaders cleverly skated around global water shortages by choosing from five different wines and liqueurs.

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