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Reservations:
Required

Special Features:
Party Space

Website:
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Price Details:
Entrees, \$57 to \$65 (includes appetizer and dessert).

No. 33: L'Auberge Chez Francois

If rainbow-colored Christmas lights and doilies aren't your idea of French countryside dining, this Tudor cottage done up with embroidered linens and stained-glass windows might not be for you. But it is for legions of Washingtonians out to celebrate. Reservations are taken a month in advance, and each table seems to be toasting something—an anniversary, a birthday, the holidays.

You'll think you're flipping through a copy of *Larousse Gastronomique* as you scan the menu, filled with such Continental mainstays as Dover sole meunière, *côte de boeuf*, veal scallopine, and a lovely split lobster with Sauternes-scented beurre blanc. All are good, but what the kitchen excels at is the heartier, German-influenced fare of owner François Haeringer's native Alsace. Ever wanted to try antelope? Here's your chance. The seared medallions come bathed in Roebuck sauce, a flavorful blend of deer stock, red-wine vinegar, and red currants. The kitchen prepares beautiful pâtés, terrines, and rillettes. And the delicious choucroute garni is a feast of pork, goose confit, and foie gras atop a bed of excellent sauerkraut.

If the \$60-plus entrée prices give you sticker shock, consider that each includes an appetizer, salad, and dessert, plus little treats such as crudités with herbed cottage cheese, a welcome nibble of quiche, and a palate cleanser of sorbet with candied violets. That, and a lot of good cheer.