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Everest

A French Feast for Both Your Eyes and Your Palate at the Midwest's Best

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EVEREST AT A GLANCE

This is a brief summary: Read the complete profile for details on the space, chef and menu, as well as insider tips designed to maximize your comfort. To continue, use the purple menu bar above.

Overview

- Sweeping city views from the 40th floor
- Showcases paintings and sculptures from four featured artists: sculptor Ivo Soldini, painter Adam Seigel, sculptor Cavalier Virginio L. Ferrari and painter Tim Anderson
- Dining room has 20 foot ceilings
- Six private dining rooms available
- Wine list has 1,700 bottles and includes a special Alsatian section

MAKE A RESERVATION

Chef/Menu

- Executive Chef: Jean Joho
- Authentically French food prepared with fresh American ingredients and modern twists
- Sample Dishes: Camaroli Risotto, Wild Mushrooms and Quail/Filet of Venison, Wild Huckleberries, Braised Pear and Alsace/Selection of Five Chocolate Tastes
- Glass of Wine \$14 - \$34/Pre-Theater Menu \$54/Degustation Menu \$130/Three-Course Menu \$89/Four-Course Menu \$98
- Reservations Required



Comfort

- Service: Seamless
- Acoustics: Light Jazz Music
- Lighting: Mood Lit
- Table Proximity: Amply Spaced

Lists

- Best Dining with a View

Location/Hours

Everest  
 One Financial Place  
 440 S. LaSalle St., 40th Floor  
 Chicago, IL 60605  
 Reservations: (312) 663-8920  
 Hours: Dinner 5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. (Tues - Thurs), 5:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. (Fri - Sat)  
 Dress Code: Jackets preferred for gentlemen, ties optional

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### Space



Although it was named for one of its original financial backers -- and not for the famous mountain -- Everest is without question located at Chicago's culinary summit, literally and figuratively. Founded in 1986 by Chef-Proprietor Jean Joho, it sits atop the Chicago Stock Exchange, 40 floors above the southern edge of Chicago's famed downtown business district, the Loop. It's a long way from Chef Joho's native Alsace, France, but right in the middle of his adopted home country, where he's lived and worked for more than 20 years. While Chef Joho's food is French, the building in which Everest is located -- One Financial Place -- is decidedly Chicago. Built in 1984, the building is a functional and simple addition to the city's otherwise ornate skyline. Home to offices for prominent financial companies like Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs and the National Stock Exchange, not to mention, one of Chicago's most exclusive health clubs, the Buckingham Athletic Club, it's the ideal location to enjoy food and scenery as rich as Everest's.

MAKE A RESERVATION

The building at One Financial Place is worth mentioning because it's where one's Everest dining experience begins. Upon arriving, you'll enter the building through the main entrance on the west side, where there's a large bronze horse by famed Italian sculptor Ludovico de Luigi. Placed there in 1986, the same year that Everest opened, it's a preview of the art you'll see inside, 40 floors up. Before you ascend those 40 floors, however, you must first check in with security in the lobby of the building, which looks like a typical marble lobby in a typical American office building. The only evidence of Five-Diamond dining here is a small sign marked "Everest" that points visitors to the elevators. Upon checking in, security will guide you to the elevators, which you must take to the very top, to the 39th floor, where you'll find a pair of inconspicuous black elevators -- one on the east and one on the west -- that are paneled in dark wood with gold trim. A small golden plaque that reads "Jean Joho, Grand Chef" tells you that you're in the right place.



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### Space



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The black elevators bearing Chef Joho's name will take you up one more floor, to Everest on the 40th. Upon emerging from them, you'll be in yet another lobby. This one, however, is more ornate than that on the first floor, which tells you that you're getting closer. Underfoot is parquet wood flooring and overhead is an arched white ceiling, with beech-colored wood-paneled walls in between, each lit by traditional candelabra-style wall sconces. In the center of the room, beneath an eight-candle candelabra chandelier, are a beige couch and two black upholstered wooden chairs on top of a red oriental rug, along with a wooden display cabinet in which are signature Everest tableware, a copy of Chef Joho's *Eiffel Tower Cookbook* and several awards, all encased in glass. On the north and west walls are large decorative mirrors. To the south, meanwhile, is the reception desk for the Buckingham Athletic Club, which shares the 40th floor with Everest. Where's the entrance to the restaurant, then? You'll find it on the opposite side of the room from the health club reception desk, beyond the elevators and the couch to the left of the mirror on the north wall. You won't see it until you walk right up to it, at which point the entrance -- a tall marble-framed doorway that's engraved with the restaurant's original name, "The Everest Room," in gold capital letters -- is unmistakable.

MAKE A RESERVATION

Upon passing through the marble doorway, you'll find yourself in a long hallway, nondescript if not for the black carpeting underfoot -- which is adorned with Chef Joho's personal emblem, a mirror image of two white Js -- and the distinctive Relais & Chateaux and Traditions & Qualite plaques on the wall to your left. Finally, at the end of this hallway, you'll find yourself in the heart of Everest, which is a large rectangular space that's divided into four distinct areas, each decorated in an Art Deco style that's evocative of a 1920s French club. First, at the end of the hallway, is the bar area. The host station is to your left and the bar itself -- a dark wooden bar that's sandwiched in between two large, ribbed white columns -- straight ahead, on a small landing above the dining room. Although there are no seats at the bar -- it's service only -- it remains a focal point of the room, adorned with greenery and lit with recessed lighting that highlights three luminescent shelves of sparkling glasses and bottles.



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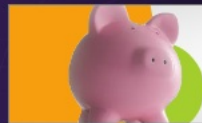
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Below the bar area, accessible by a small staircase of just a few steps, is the architectural main event at Everest, a square area known as the Everest Atrium. Home to four large round tables, one in each corner, the atrium sports a large round island in the center of the room that stores glassware below and a centerpiece consisting of spidery plants inside three tall cylindrical white vases on top. To each side of the atrium are gold railings and above are spectacular 20-foot ceilings that are draped with folds of white fabric above mirrored walls, which creates the illusion of an infinite fabric ceiling. Combined with the tall, ribbed white columns that surround the space, you feel as if you're dining inside a grand and elegant tent. Opposite the bar area, on the other side of the atrium and up another set of steps, is what's known as the Everest Terrace, a wheelchair-accessible landing where there are several tables for two beside a banquette that's upholstered in black fabric with white squiggles, a pattern that also appears in grander scale on the carpet in the atrium. Below, meanwhile, down another short series of steps from the atrium, is the largest dining area, the Everest lower level. Longer than it is wide, the lower level is elongated on either end by mirrored walls and consists of several large tables – both round and square – beside a series of floor-to-ceiling bay windows that offer spectacular western views of Chicago. These views, along with an abundance of original art – including paintings and sculptures that are discussed in more detail in our Appealing Highlights section – offer plenty of eye candy to enjoy as an appetizer to your meal.

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MAKE A RESERVATION

Past the Everest Terrace, and on the same level, are the restrooms, beyond which are six private dining rooms along the southern side of the 40th floor. Wheelchair accessible via a rear private dining entrance near the lobby elevators, the private dining rooms consist of Dining Rooms 1, 2, 3 and 4, which can be combined into one large space thanks to movable interior walls; the River Room, which features a long rectangular table for 14; and the more intimate Board Room, which sports romantic views of the nearby Sears Tower. Each of the private dining rooms is decorated simply, with very little ornamentation save for elegant crystal chandeliers that hang from the ceiling in all of them. The focus isn't on the rooms, therefore, but rather on the south-facing city views through the floor-to-ceiling bay windows – the same kind that appear in the Everest lower level. Like the views, table settings throughout the restaurant – in both the private and public dining rooms – are beautiful, consisting of crisp white tablecloths, white napkins, brass sculptural centerpieces, votive candles and fresh flowers, as well as signature dinner and bread plates bearing Chef Joh's unique double-J monogram. The finishing touch: a small white salt-and-pepper dish, complete with miniature serving spoon.



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Casco Bay Sea Scallop

A native of Alsace, France, Everest Chef-Proprietor Jean Joho moved to the United States in 1984 when he was offered a job at the long-gone Chicago location of Maxim's de Paris, a famous Parisian restaurant. Although he spoke no English, he could say everything he needed to say with the food that he put on his plates, which earned him the unique opportunity to open Everest in 1986 in Chicago's financial district, where the restaurant has been located ever since. Famous for authentically French food that's prepared with fresh American ingredients, Chef Joho's cuisine is at once old and new, as he likes to prepare classic Alsatian dishes from his childhood, but with newer, more modern American twists. It's no surprise, then, that he's been quoted as saying that his culinary philosophy is, "What's good today is not good enough tomorrow." He's always changing and always evolving, which means that the menu at Everest is always new and always exciting. So exciting, in fact, that it's led Chef Joho to countless new business opportunities. He's the co-founder of Corner Bakery, for instance, and has three other restaurants, including the Eiffel Tower Restaurant in Las Vegas, Brasserie Jo in Chicago and a second Brasserie Jo in Boston. He's also a cookbook author, having recently published his first culinary tome, the *Eiffel Tower Cookbook*. Ultimately, though, all roads lead back to the AAA Five-Diamond rated Everest. It's Chef Joho's first love, and his guests can tell, as he makes regular and frequent appearances to socialize with them in the dining room. When he's not there, he's in the kitchen, where he checks every plate for perfection. As a result, Everest is fine dining at its best: cultivated but comfortable, sophisticated but not at all stuffy. To read about our recent meal there – which was all that and more – check out our [Dining with Chefs](#) section, where we've cataloged our conversation with Chef Joho. Otherwise, continue reading for a sample dinner menu. (Please note: Everest offers several menu options, including a pre-theater menu at 5:30 p.m., for \$54; an evening degustation menu, for \$130; a three-course menu, for \$89; and a four-course menu, for \$98.)

MAKE A RESERVATION

House Smoked Salmon

Amuses Bouche: Cream of Michigan Chestnut Soup, Home Preserved Duck Confit; Roasted Maine Lobster in Alsace Gewurztraminer, Butter and Ginger; Smoked Roasted Arlic Char, Wasserstriwela, Paprika Chorizo Bouillon; Wild Pheasant Breast Wrapped and Braised in Cabbage, Alsace Style; Assortment of Small Midwestern Farmer's Cheese; Elder Flower Celery Papaya Gelee, Coconut Glacee; White Chocolate Caramel Bar, Glanduja Parfait, Nougat Glace; Mignardises and Petits Fours.

Meal Price Ranges:	Pre-theater Menu	\$54
	Evening Degustation Menu	\$130
	Three-Course Menu	\$89
	Four-Course Menu	\$98
	Glass of wine	\$14 - \$34



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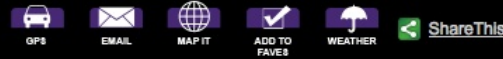


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## Meal



**Filet of Dover Sole**

Starters: House Smoked Salmon Choucroute Galette and Aigrelette; Maine Peekytoe Crab Cocktail, Cucumber, Black Sesame Seeds; Oysters, Horseradish, Cucumber Riesling Fleurette; Salad of Assorted Winter Greens, Crispy Shallots, Alsace Vinaigrette; Shirred Farm Egg, Alsace Gewurztraminer, Osetra Caviar; Imported Caspian Sea Caviar; Cream of Michigan Chestnut Soup, Home Preserved Duck Confit; Sauteed New York State Fole Gras, Compote of Pineapple and Gewurztraminer; Casco Bay Sea Scallop, Marinated Turnips, Alsace Style and Pinot Gris; Butter Poached King Crab Belly, Artichoke and Garden Greens; 24 KT Gold Vintage Camaroll Risotto; Roasted Maine Lobster in Alsace Gewurztraminer, Butter and Ginger.

MAKE A RESERVATION

**Colorado Rack of Lamb**

Main Course: Hazelnut Crusted Skate Wing, Brown Butter Caper Emulsion; Baked Filet of Striped Bass Backaofa, Alsace Style; Slow Roasted Salmon Medium Rare, Compote of Winter Vegetables and Topinambours; Filet of Dover Sole, Petite Grenobloise, Lemon and Caper; Braised Winter Vegetables "en Cocotte," Herb Bouillon; Colorado Rack of Lamb, Sweet Garlic Flan, Vegetable Gratin, Jus Natural; Filet of Veal Tenderloin, White Cracked Corn, Wild Forest Mushrooms; Sauteed Beef Tenderloin, Butternut Squash Tatin, Cabernet Reduction; Filet of Venison, Wild Huckleberries, Braised Pear, Alsace Knepfia; Dry Aged New York Steak, Celery Heart, Sauce Choron, Alsace Potato Gnocchi; Wild Pheasant Breast Wrapped and Braised in Cabbage, Alsace Style.



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## Meal



### Filet of Venison

Dessert (complemented with petits fours and mignardises service): Everest Souffle (Grand Marnier with orange coulis, or chocolate with vanilla mint sauce); Fromage Blanc (fromage blanc, guava parfait, sesame coulis, Key lime gelee); Hazelnut (Oregon hazelnut cake, Ovaltine glacee, preserved Michigan cherries); Alsace Vacherin (crispy meringue, chocolate and pear glace, vanilla coulis); Chocolate (selection of five chocolate tastes); Creme Caramel (sheep's milk creme caramel, exotic fruit compote, mango coulis); Winter Vegetable (composition of winter root vegetables, brown butter "fleur de sel" Ice cream); Banana (terrine of chocolate crepe and banana brulee, maple cap mushroom syrup).

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Chocolate - selection of five chocolate tastes



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### Appealing Highlights



#### Eye Candy: Art and Views

Although it's the food that brings people to Everest, there's plenty there for your eyes to snack on, too – starting with the gorgeous 40th-floor views of the Chicago cityscape. When Chef Jean Joho designed the restaurant in 1986, he deliberately located it on the west side of the building. Although the east side offers views of Lake Michigan during the day, those views at night are nothing but empty black space. Chicago's west and south sides, however, are brightly aglow with lights during Everest's dinner service, perfectly visible through the floor-to-ceiling bay windows in the lower level dining room and in the private dining rooms. Inside, though, the view is even better, as Chef Joho is an avid art enthusiast who's turned the Everest interior into a veritable art gallery. In fact, the dining room is brimming with both paintings and sculptures from four featured artists: sculptor Ivo Soldini, painter Adam Seigel, sculptor Cavalier Virginio L. Ferrari and painter Tim Anderson. Perhaps the most dramatic piece in the restaurant is Ferrari's golden sculpture, a man-sized series of upright recilinear bars that resembles an abstract grouping of people, standing and conversing in front of a column on the staircase that separates the atrium from the lower level. In the lower level you'll find two large paintings by Seigel that feature abstract floral designs against a blue and amber background. Near the restrooms, meanwhile, you'll find a signature painting by Anderson that looks like an abstract boat that's been cut into a series of small, swirly squares. Finally, the art follows you right to your tabletop, where small bronze sculptures – human figures by Soldini – serve as both attractive centerpieces and dramatic conversation pieces. Long after you're full, your eyes will be busy binging on Everest's museum-like atmosphere.

[MAKE A RESERVATION](#)

#### Alsace Wine List

Because he's so interested in art, it should come as no surprise that Chef Joho approaches his preparations as a painter would a painting. That is to say, deliberately and artfully. His palette isn't just food, however. It's also wine, as Chef Joho sees the interplay between food and wine as an integral part of the fine-dining experience. That's why he's assembled an award-winning collection of 1,700 hand-selected wines in Everest's temperature- and humidity-controlled wine cellar, which is located on the 39th floor of One Financial Place, below the restaurant. The collection includes bottles from classic French regions such as Bordeaux, Rhone Valley and Burgundy; from countries such as Spain, Australia, Italy and Argentina; and from American states like California, Oregon and Washington. The highlight, however, is the list of more than 350 wines from Chef Joho's native Alsace, France, which is known for its white wines, particularly its sweet Rieslings. It's said to be the world's largest collection of Alsatian wines and therefore represents a unique opportunity to sample your chef's roots alongside his most delicious culinary fruits.



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Comfort Zone



Billed as one of the best restaurants in Chicago, the Midwest, the United States and, indeed, the world, Everest is not surprisingly a popular dinner destination for Chicago locals and visitors alike. You're therefore guaranteed to have an enjoyable meal. To make it even more enjoyable, however, continue reading for tips that will help you maximize your comfort and minimize your confusion.

**Reservations**

Reservations are strongly recommended, especially on weekends, and can be made in advance by calling the restaurant directly, or online via OpenTable.

**Seating**

Seating at Everest is simple and comfortable, as the 75-seat dining room has several options from which to choose. In the lower level dining room, for instance, there are both round and square tables. Especially large, the round tables are approximately 48 inches in diameter and set for between two and six diners. If you're a party of two, these tables will be more than enough room to spread out for multiple courses, and even if you're a party of six there will be a good 12 inches between you and your neighbor. Square tables, meanwhile, are approximately 36 inches and perfect for pairs that don't need quite so much space. While there are four more large rounds in the atrium, the rectangular tables on the Everest Terrace are smaller, at approximately 24 inches wide and 36 inches long, as they're designed for two diners who'll sit side by side on one side of the table. Tables throughout the restaurant are amply spaced, with several feet in between you and the next table in the atrium and at least 12 inches on the lower level. Seating throughout is in simple wood side chairs with upholstered backs and slender arms; at approximately 18 inches in diameter, they're perfectly comfortable. If you prefer booth seating to chairs, ask to be seated in the Everest Terrace, where the aforementioned rectangular tables for two are at an upholstered banquette along the south wall.

**Atmosphere**

Although the atmosphere at Everest is refined, it's more social than stuffy. Jazz quietly plays in the background and the din of other diners in the dining room is low enough that you can easily enjoy conversation with your dining companions. And thanks to the restaurant's ample supply of art and city views, there's plenty to talk about. Of course, if you need more privacy, you can book one of Everest's six private dining rooms. Either way, look for the jovial Chef Joho, who makes regular appearances in the dining room, adding further to the restaurant's sophisticated yet social appeal.

**Restrooms**

Restrooms at Everest are located just beyond the Everest Terrace and on the same level, up a short set of steps from the Everest Atrium. If you can't climb the steps, the restrooms and the Terrace both are wheelchair accessible through the rear private dining entrance.

MAKE A RESERVATION

**Dress Code**

Jackets are preferred for gentlemen, although ties are optional.

**Parking**

Complimentary valet parking is available at Everest in its private underground parking garage, located beneath One Financial Place, on the west side of 440 S. LaSalle St. between Congress and Van Buren. Taxis are readily available in downtown Chicago and Everest also offers a luxury town car service that will pick up diners and drop them off at the locations of their choice -- anywhere within a 15-mile radius of the restaurant -- for just \$15 per hour.

**Awards**

Both Everest and Chef Jean Joho have won numerous awards. A member of the prestigious Relais & Chateaux/Relais Gourmand and Traditions & Qualite restaurant collections, Everest has earned a Five-Diamond Award from AAA as well as Mobil, not to mention top ratings from Zagat. Locally it's received four stars each from the *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun-Times* and *Chicago* magazine. Other awards include: "Best Restaurant for Business Dining," *Gourmet* magazine, 2003; and "Best Restaurant in Chicago," *Chicago* magazine, 2003. Chef Joho, meanwhile, has previously been named "Best American Chef: Midwest" by the James Beard Foundation and has been nominated for several other James Beard award categories, including "Best Outstanding Restaurant," "Best Service," "Best Wine Service" and "Who's Who." He's also been honored as *Bon Appetit's* "Best Chef of the Year" and with the Robert Mondavi "Culinary Award of Excellence."

\*Please note that the restaurants featured at TravelsinTaste.com may have changed their personnel, menu, pricing, decor, hours of operation, etc., since our last visit. The competitive and creative nature of the fine dining scene virtually assures that changes will occur on a frequent basis in order to make diners happier, meals more pleasurable and visits more frequent. Given their frequent fluctuations, most restaurants welcome inquiries about their current hours, menu and more.

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