



Christmas Dinner

First Course

Choice of one

Peanut Soup

Sherry Cream, Spiced Peanuts

Late Harvest Corn Chowder

House Smoked Lardons

Pate' Maison

Pickled Shallot, Plum Chutney, Grain Mustard

Manakintowne Greens

Roasted Beets, Blue Cheese, Truffle Vinaigrette

Second Course

Choice of one

Slow Roasted Duckling

Herb Potato Gratin, Cranberry Ginger Jus

Butter & Herb Crusted Chesapeake Flounder

Winter Beans, Kale, Country Ham, Champagne Butter

Herb & Garlic Slow Roasted Prime Rib of Beef

Herb Whipped Potato, Popover, Natural Au Jus, Horseradish

Winter Vegetable & Mushroom Pie

Roasted Butternut Squash, Porcini Mushroom, Leeks, Artichoke, Potato

Citrus Glazed Lamb Shank

Herb Potato Gratin, Rosemary Essence

Mrs. Vobe's Sweets

Choice of one

Meringue & Berries

Lemon Curd, Macerated Berries, Vanilla Cream

Jefferson's Bread Pudding

Bourbon Custard Sauce

American Heritage Flour-less Chocolate Torte

Dried Cherry Compote, Red Wine Syrup

18th Century Syllabub

Sweetened Cream, White Wine, Fresh Berries





YES, VIRGINIA, THERE WAS A SCROOGE!

AND, APPARENTLY, not just one! In 1739, a correspondent to the *Virginia Gazette* warned that “too many, who call themselves *Christians*, pass over this *holy Time*, without paying any Regard to it at all.” Of course there were others who observed Christmas “in a *pious Way* only”; they were to be “pardoned and Pitied.” The ideal Virginian celebrated the season “in a Mixture of *Piety* and *Licentiousness*.” On Christmas Day, families journeyed to the parish church for prayers and communion. Afterward they gave themselves over to jollity, socializing, and feasting.

Virginia has a long tradition of hospitality. An 18th-century visitor to the Tidewater pronounced it “the epicure’s Elysium and the very center of freedom and hospitality.” His observation was never more accurate than at year’s end. Winter months brought leisure to agricultural Virginia. Tobacco had been harvested, the winter wheat sown, and, from December through February, the planters were freed from everyday attention to their land. It was the season for visiting, marrying, catching up on gossip. In 1773, the tutor at Nomini Hall noted the household’s anticipation of gala events: “Nothing is now to be heard of in conversation, but the *Balls*, the Fox-hunts, the fine *entertainments*, and the *good fellowship*, which are to be exhibited at the approaching *Christmas*.” It was all for fun and fun for all. The correspondent to the *Virginia Gazette* was willing to wink at “the little Liberties of the old *Roman December*, which are taken by the Multitude.” These, he conceded, “ought to be over-looked and excused.”



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