



NYP Home Real Estate Guide

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OUR CALENDAR OF EVENTS,
PHOTO GALLERIES & MORE

TANNED and smiling, chef Eduard Frauneder offers us a shot of rum after a steep climb to his third-story, 1,300-square-foot East Sixth Street apartment. It's 10 a.m., a bit early to start boozing, but Frauneder, recently back from vacation, is still on Belize time — and this is an expensive, top-notch Central American rum.

"I got a great deal on it there, but then I had to check my suitcase, so I ended up paying another \$40 anyway," he says, pouring the rum into paper cups and ushering us into the bright, south-facing living room.

Also, he informs us, one of his three kiteboards is still tied up in US customs. Yet, the 33-year-old Austrian seems unfazed by these travel hiccups. When you're running two restaurants, a private dining club and a catering service, you get used to the unpredictable.

Frauneder's first restaurant, Seasonal Restaurant & Weinbar, which he started with business partner and fellow chef Wolfgang Ban, opened a few weeks before 9/11. "We had no idea what would happen, but we ended up earning a Michelin star," he says of the Midtown spot that specializes in Austrian cuisine.

He brought that same determination to establishing their newest venture, Edi & the Wolf, which opened in late November in Alphabet City. (The name comes from the partners' nicknames, Edi, pronounced Eddie, and Wolf, for Wolfgang.)

"People were skeptical of Avenue C," Frauneder says. "But I knew it was going to fly. I had been living around the corner for two years. I passed by the space [formerly an Italian restaurant] many times and I loved it. I loved the back yard. So, I spoke with the landlord . . . and invited him to Seasonal to see what I did."

Initially, the landlord's demands were "outrageous," Frauneder says.

A deal seemed impossible. But one night, the landlord, with his father in tow, showed up at Seasonal. They became big fans of the restaurant. And they appreciated that Frauneder lived near their space. When their tenant, Mr. C's Italian Trattoria, went out of business that summer, the landlord negotiated and signed a lease with Frauneder and Ban.

But it wasn't easy transforming the space

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**EDUARD
FRAUNEDER**

ALPHABET SOUP

INSIDE CHEFS' SAUCY EAST VILLAGE DIGS

By JENNIFER CEASER
Photos by ZANDY MANGOLD

CHEFS STIR IT UP



FRAUNEDER from Page 39

into a *heuriger*, a traditional Austrian wine tavern.

After 10 weeks of construction — “I learned that the earlier the beer system is installed, the easier it is to keep the construction workers happy,” Frauneder says — the rustic neighborhood spot, with communal tables, a no-reservations policy and what he calls an “egalitarian spirit,” was born.

Though Frauneder spends most of his day at *Edi & the Wolf*, being so close to his job can be a bit unsettling. How close? Walk to the back of his railroad apartment, to the spacious open kitchen/

dining area, and you look right down onto the restaurant’s back yard.

“It’s a very European concept, to live on the same block as your restaurant,” Frauneder explains. “Considering the hours we keep, logistically it makes sense. Plus, I never would have found the place if I hadn’t been living here.”

He had to negotiate for his rental in much the same way as he did for the restaurant space — by proving himself worthy. The apartment’s owner was the daughter of a noted Austrian artist, Charles Keller, who’d used it as a studio. When he passed away in 2006, rather than putting his artwork in storage, she decided to leave his paintings (as well as some of her own) and find a suitable steward.

“She was looking for someone reliable,”

Frauneder says. “And I’m hardly ever at home. It’s the perfect arrangement.” (Of course, it likely helped that he was tall, handsome and Austrian.)

We believe him when he says he’s rarely at home: The kitchen cupboards are empty; the refrigerator contains nothing but wine and beer.

He also hasn’t had time to do much decorating. The large dining room table is from IKEA, as is much of the furniture in the front living room: a black leather couch (which he plans to replace soon), a white coffee table, an orange space-age chair.

There are a few pieces of furniture that he “recycled” from the streets of the East Village; other items, bookcases and small tables, were there when he moved in. (The bed — which occu-

pies a sort of middle room in the apartment — is a new purchase.)

The overall look is minimalist, which is exactly what Frauneder was after. But he also likes dressing up the apartment’s austere white walls with a rotating collection of the senior Keller’s paintings.

Two large works by Keller’s daughter, Marthe, a famous artist in her own right, are hung more permanently. Her colorful canvas, “Fautrice del Diletto,” made up of multiple squares, is in the dining room (“That took me three hours to hang correctly,” Frauneder notes); in the bedroom is the diptych “Sines of Life.” (“It’s super dreamy and I love waking up to it,” he says.)

But the artwork that’s now occupying most of Frauneder’s time are the sketches of the outdoor space at *Edi & the Wolf*. He hopes to turn the space into a 35-seat “wine garden” this spring, with special “hyper-seasonal” tasting menus to be offered Thursday to Saturday.

“That rustic feeling inside will translate into the back yard,” he says. As will the tenor of the restaurant — one based on the *heuriger*’s casual, all-embracing approach.

“That’s the spirit of the East Village, too,” Frauneder says. “Where the politician sits next to the truck driver. Where they can eat something simple but good.”

**EDUARD
FRAUNEDER'S
FAVORITE THINGS**

- Paintings by Charles Keller, the Austrian artist who lived in the apartment for decades
- An old trunk, also left by Keller, filled with sketches of nudes
 - His chef’s knife
 - His kiteboards; he spends weekends “competitive kite-cutting”
 - An English-language cookbook he got in Kyoto



ALPHA MALE: When not manning one of his three restaurants, Frauneder can be found kiteboarding (usually on Long Island Sound, not his dining room table). His sparsely decorated living room is supplemented by a rotating collection of paintings from a previous resident.

