

Dinner at [44](#) (one-star Michelin, 18 points GaultMillau and three cutlery) in Berlin, with the evolutionary cuisine of Executive Chef Tim Raue, Germany's Chef of the Year 2007.

The restaurant 44 features the innovative cuisine of Executive Chef Tim Raue in a contemporary setting with paintings by the renowned artist Markus Lupertz on the terracotta and creamy walls, white sheer fabric frames the curved sweep of floor to ceiling windows overlooking Kufürstendamm, recessed lighting, tropical plants, and low ambient music add to the overall interest of the room.

Round tables dramatically draped with floor-length white linens, accessorized with tall white vases with votive candles, white deco vases with red anthuriums, 44 charger plates signed by Chef Raue, and creamy leather chairs create a sophisticated, yet comfortable atmosphere.

Edward F. Nesta and I had dinner at 44 in March 2007, where we went on a culinary exploration with Chef Raue via his Menu Evolution. We began the "exploration" with an aperitif of Veuve Cliquot champagne, because we are firm believers in always celebrating the moment.



Chef Raue began our Menu Evolution dinner with an Amuse Bouche of Lobster Bisque with Thai Mango and Ginger served in a cup, and a tiny square of passion fruit jelly, with mango cream and tiny coriander leaves on a bed of lobster presented on a white Oriental spoon. The bisque was sweet hot, and from the first spoon, Chef Raue captured my attention. The ginger woke up my taste buds and the sweet mango was a delicious foil against the succulent lobster. Served with four types of breads including paper-thin bread sprinkled with cumin, sesame, and poppy seeds, and an accompaniment of two butters and green olives presented in a peapod shaped bowl, I savored each sip of the Amuse Bouche.



We began with a first course of Scampi with Wild Carrots, Tarragon and Star Anise and Bell Pepper paired with a 2005 Riesling R QbA Trocken, Weingut Dreissigacker Rheinhessen, Germany, with a slightly sweet nose, medium body, and stone peaches on the palate. The scampi was presented with a tarragon foam reduction of bell pepper, wild carrots, blood orange jelly, and star anise meringue ball on halved baby carrots. Fortunately, there were two of these on my plate, or I might have stolen one off Edward's plate when he was not looking.

Created by: Debra C. Argen



For our second course, Chef Raue created Pike with Curry, Fennel and Tangerines with Orange Flower Jelly, which clearly showcased his culinary style using three elements: sweet, sour, and spicy, which create a culinary harmony of flavor. This course was paired with a 2005 Grüner Veltliner Am Berg, Bernhard Ott Donauland, Austria with mineral notes on the nose and green apple, pear, and a slightly spicy finish. This course was presented as square pike perch with pike caviar on tangerine, orange flower and fennel jelly, with a crescent of blood orange and tangerine sauce, and a salad of sliced fennel fronds, which presented interesting textures and flavors. What I loved about this course is how it worked inside my mouth with the caviar popping, the fennel seeds crunching, and the sweet, sour, and spicy elements.



Edward continued with a third course of Tartar of Duck and Cooked Duck GIBLETS, with Beetroot, Leek Tips and Herring Caviar paired with a 2004 Chassagne-Montrachet, Domaine Michel Niellon, Bordeaux, France. This course was presented as a round disk of duck tartar topped with sour cream, and a decadent amount of herring caviar, with a circle of beetroot paste, four pieces of foie gras, and garnished with chive spears.



I continued with Braised Scallops with a Salad of Melon, Bell Pepper, Celery, Lamb's Lettuce presented on a teardrop-shaped plate with a crescent of orange flower jelly paired with a 2005 Ott Sauvignon Blanc with an aromatic nose of white peaches and honeydew, with melon and white peaches on the palate with a dry, crisp finish.



For Edward's fourth course, he had Deer Heart Roasted with Bay Leaf, with a Salad of Green Beans, Coriander and Truffle with Cinnamon-Raisin Toast and Fig Jelly paired with a 2005 Portugieser Alte Reben, Weingut Markus Schneider Ellerstadt, Pfalz, Germany. This course was presented as deer in a rich pool of fig jelly with cinnamon-raisin toast croutons.

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For my fourth course, I had Char with Tomato and Seed Crust, with Paprika and Bell Pepper Reduction and Grapefruit Foam with Pickled Cucumber paired with a 2005 Dreissigacker Silvaner Bechtheimer Trocken, Germany with mineral notes on the nose, and stone fruit, citrus, ash, and mineral notes on the palate. Mustard seeds added an interesting crunch appeal and the pickle added a definite kick to this course.



Edward continued with Shoulder of Suckling Pig with Chinese Barbecue Sauce, Purée and Pickled Pumpkin, Red Onions and Pomegranate paired with a 2003 Gevrey Chambertin Les Champs, Domaine Oliviér Guyot, Bourgogne, France. This course was gorgeously presented with a large square of pork with a nice crisp crust, placed on a pool of Chinese barbecue sauce with a spicy kick, and an extra measure of a sauce crown, with chives lines on one side of the pork and a line of thinly sliced radishes, diced pickled pumpkin, thinly sliced red onions, and pomegranates, and garnished with mint leaves on the other side.



I continued with Marble Carp, a fabulous dish with curry leaves, and curry juice, with a variety of rich sauces paired with a 2003 Gevrey Chambertin Les Champs, Domaine Oliviér Guyot, Bourgogne, France, a powerful, aromatic wine with a heady, spicy, peppery, earthy nose with pepper, tobacco, and heavy tannins on the palate that gave the wine structure and hinted at the promise of an excellent future.



As a pre-dessert palate cleanser, Chef Raue sent us lemon sorbet with mint oil and white chocolate presented on an Oriental spoon, again keeping with his signature of combining sweet, sour, and spic elements.

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For the dessert course, Chef Raue created Feuille of Sao Tomé Chocolate with Blood Orange Sorbet, Salad of Kumquat stuffed with Sage, Almond Milk and Pistachio paired with a 2005 Moscato de Noto, Planeta Sicilia, Italy with a rich medley of ripe fruit on the palate without being overly sweet. The dessert was presented as a Sao Tomé chocolate base, with blood orange sorbet, four chocolate "flags" and three kumquat halves filled with pistachios and tiny sage leaves. The chocolate had a peppery finish and together with the blood orange sorbet, this was a fantasy pairing of savory and sweet, a scrumptious yin and yang.



Just as we thought that the evolution could not get any better, Chef Raue sent us a plate of homemade chocolates filled with cassis, Earl Grey tea, and passion fruit, and to ensure that our chocolate addiction was met, included round chocolate brownies filled with orange liqueur and dusted with confectionary sugar.

44 is open for Lunch from 12:00 pm - 2:30 pm, and Dinner from 6:00 pm - 10:30 pm. The restaurant is closed on Sunday.

Read about **44** in the **Chefs' Recipes** where **Executive Chef Raue** shares his creative recipes.

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