

Gourmet 'Camp Cooking'

by KIMBERLY CHOU

The Wythe Hotel appeared on a yet-uncrowded block of Williamsburg last spring, a new venture tied to Brooklyn restaurateur Andrew Tarlow (Diner, Roman's). At night, its vertical "HOTEL" sign glows red like a lure for today's north Brooklynites, perhaps not unlike the neon of the Odeon for Jay McInerney's 1980s alter egos, or the green light for that other, fictional Jay.

Given Mr. Tarlow's commitment to sustainability and well-edited rusticism, it shouldn't come as a surprise that the four-story sign is made of recycled materials, the animals and vegetables sourced for the hotel restaurant, Reynard, come from local farms, and that the food at said restaurant is very, very good.

At Reynard, there's a regular menu of easy-at-the-bar items (wood-roasted olives, \$3; burger, \$14) available all day. But what chef Sean Rembold serves at lunch, brunch and dinner changes frequently. Dishes during recent visits have included smoked squash soup with yogurt (\$8), striped bass with radicchio and crisp red rice (\$25) and an arugula salad with shaved squash and smoked caper dressing (\$12).

The kitchen is making heavy use of its wood oven. "We've wood-fired everything," said Mr. Tarlow, who notes smoked duck breast as a recent favorite: salt-cured, put over the fire, then finished on the grill. "We've also been able to grill things you wouldn't expect, [like] smoking milk. It's basically very rustic camp cooking, but done with a fine-dining technique."

The restaurant takes its name from the French fable, where the titular fox has a love-hate relationship with farmers. In naming the place, Mr. Tarlow said he liked the mythology of Reynard "having smarts, having a certain amount of wit. The story spoke to me." He's on decidedly better terms with his suppliers, though.

"I have a love-love relationship with farmers," Mr. Tarlow said. "I totally do."

Reynard is inside the Wythe Hotel at 80 Wythe Ave. between N. 11th and N. 12th streets in Brooklyn; lunch is served daily between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.; 718-460-8000.



Sous chef Ben Jackson in the kitchen at Reynard in Williamsburg.