



Ludwig van
6., Laimgrubengasse 22
Tue-Fri 18:00-0:00
Ludwig van Mamsell's
Mittagstisch:
Mon-Fri 11:30-14:30
(01) 587 13 20
ludwigvan.wien

restaurant

Variations on a Theme

Ludwig van interprets culinary classics while adding new notes under the auspicious roof of one of Beethoven's former dwellings

by Julia Zimmerman

Finding Ludwig van is easy: Beethoven's face scowls from a block away, encircled by a ring of green neon light. The prominent sign, fusing veneration for the old with a playful openness to the new is a telling indicator of what to expect: A new take on the traditional Austrian *Wirtshaus* (tavern), on hallowed musical ground. The dates when the maestro resided in the historic building are etched in stone above the doorway (a notorious deadbeat tenant, there is quite a list of Beethoven's residences in Vienna).

HITTING THE RIGHT NOTES

Stepping in, you find yourself enveloped in the cozy embrace of nostalgia, sprinkled with nods to contemporary aesthetics: Wooden floors, Biedermeier-styled decorations and furniture are offset with reservations quaintly spelled out in wooden scrabble letters and bread presented in brown paper bags, adding splashes of modernity to an otherwise traditionalist ambiance.

The marriage of old and new continues with the food, the waft of familiar aromas mingling with the tantalizing scent of the unexpected. Ludwig van offers four, five, and six course menus – €43, €52, and €60

respectively. When ordering à la carte, expect mains ranging from €20 to €30.

Opting for the four-course variation, I began with the *Karotte* (carrots), served on vintage china with a dollop of cold goat yogurt and a warm barley malt sauce. For the second course, my partner went with *Alt Wiener Backfleisch* (traditional Viennese breaded beef) while I chose the *Oktopus*, braised with mushrooms to bring it its savory goodness.

For the main course, we ordered the *Mangalitza*, an especially flavorful and extra-fatty variety of pork and the *Taube* (pigeon). Served in a rich sauce with pureed peas and cranberries, my bird was one part braised, the other roasted, so incredibly tender it almost melted in my mouth. My dining partner fared equally well, his roast pork garnished with cumin, radish and buckwheat; he wiped his plate clean with a crust of bread.

We finished on a high note with the *Schokolade* cake, served with red beet, horseradish and mascarpone cream: This unusual combination proved a decadent final movement to an indulgent evening of relaxed dining.

A TALENTED ENSEMBLE

Oliver Jauk, the manager and all-around renaissance man behind Ludwig van, greets diners with an apron tied around his waist, eager to support his dedicated staff. The restaurant buzzes with collaborative energy, something Jauk emphasizes he is passionate about cultivating.

Leading the way, the young head chef and culinary conductor Walter Leidenfrost foregoes traditional fine-dining pretensions, opting for unconventional combinations that speak for themselves. His counterpart, wine consultant Robert Stark ensures that vintages harmonize with each course, emphasizing lesser-known Austrian wines. Both change regularly, compelled by Leidenfrost's inspirations.

Ludwig van stands apart thanks to its passionate collaborators, a gastronomic orchestra worthy of a standing ovation. In addition to the dinner service, you can swing by for the *Mittagstisch* (lunch special) served by chef Nora Kreimeyer, otherwise known by her nickname "Mamsell." Her menu changes daily, featuring hearty, more conventional Austrian fare at reasonable prices (€11.50-€13.50). 