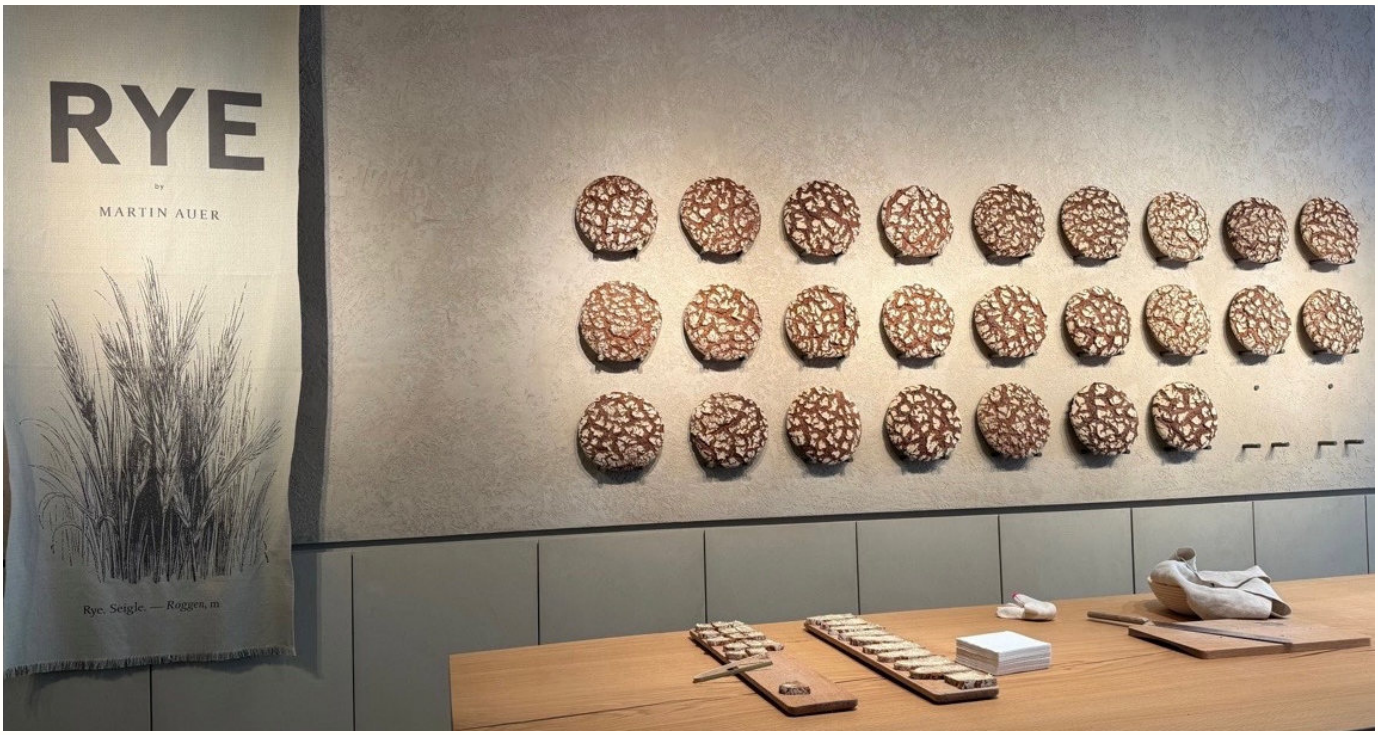
CULINARY DISCOVERIES / MEMBER CONTRIBUTION

Give Bread a New Stage

An Austrian tradition finds a new audience in SoHo

BY ULI CUTTER · CHAMBELLAN PROVINCIAL



Inside RYE by Martin Auer in SoHo · © ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA USA

Who would have imagined that a bakery selling just one kind of bread could become one of New York City's most talked-about new culinary attractions?

That is precisely what has happened on Lafayette Street in SoHo, where Austrian baker Martin Auer has opened RYE, an extraordinary little enterprise devoted entirely to rye sourdough bread.

A recent feature by Anna Danninger and Sophie Haas for ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA caught my attention. Their story describes an Austrian family bringing generations of baking experience to New York with a remarkably simple concept: one product, rye sourdough, made exceptionally well.

The bakery opened on September 10, 2026, and has already generated considerable publicity, partly because its substantial three-pound loaf sells for $60. Fortunately, customers can purchase halves or quarters, making it possible to explore the bread without committing to an entire loaf.

What makes the undertaking particularly interesting is the extraordinary care devoted to something as familiar as bread.

THE PEOPLE AND THE CRAFT

One loaf. A long history.



The rye loaf · RYE by Martin Auer

WHAT GOES INTO THE LOAF

Ingredients, keeping and family craft

The ingredients are simple: 100% organic rye flour imported from Austria, water, salt and a sourdough starter maintained for more than fifty years. There is no commercial baker's yeast, and the dough is allowed to ferment for up to 24 hours before baking.

The result is a dense, flavorful bread with a dark crust that can remain fresh for as long as ten days when properly stored. The bakers recommend keeping it in linen, paper or a suitable bread container rather than refrigerating it.

Martin Auer's family has been baking in Graz, Austria, for generations. His grandfather made rye bread, and the family continued developing its craft through the decades. Bringing that tradition to America represents both a commercial adventure and the fulfillment of a family dream.

According to the ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA article, Auer's grandmother always dreamed of visiting New York. Although she never made the journey, her portrait now hangs in the SoHo bakery.

There is something rather touching about that.

The shop itself has been designed to allow visitors to watch the bakers at work. Everything revolves around the bread, from mixing the dough to displaying the finished loaves.

Linda Spann, RYE's chief operating officer, told ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA that New York's restaurant scene and enthusiasm for new experiences made it an especially attractive place to introduce the concept.

Beyond selling the bread itself, RYE offers a selection of open-faced sandwiches with toppings that will be familiar to many Europeans. Smoked salmon with cream cheese, seeded honey and the traditional Austrian Liptauer spread are among the offerings.

Liptauer particularly caught my attention.

For those unfamiliar with it, Liptauer is a wonderfully flavorful Central European cheese spread, traditionally seasoned with paprika and other ingredients. It is especially delicious on good rye bread.

My friend, the celebrated Viennese chef Ewald Plachutta, has developed an excellent Liptauer recipe, including a few special ingredients. I would be delighted to share it with anyone interested. Just write to me at ulrikecutter@gmail.com.

AN INVITATION TO THE TABLE

A tradition worth sharing



Rye dough in the making · RYE by Martin Auer visual campaign

Beyond the novelty of a $60 loaf, I find the larger idea behind RYE appealing. The bakery is inviting Americans to discover an important part of Austrian food culture and to appreciate the craftsmanship, patience and history behind a product that is so easily taken for granted.

Bread has always had a special place at the family table. Sharing a loaf and breaking bread together remain among the simplest expressions of hospitality.

For members of the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, who appreciate culinary traditions and the people who preserve them, RYE offers an interesting example of how an old craft can find an enthusiastic new audience.

And if your travels take you to New York, you can find RYE by Martin Auer at **285 Lafayette Street in SoHo**.

Vive la Chaîne!

SOURCE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Original reporting: Anna Danninger and Sophie Haas · ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA · Sept. 22, 2026

RYE by Martin Auer · 285 Lafayette Street, SoHo, New York

Photographs: RYE by Martin Auer; bakery interior © ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA USA.