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Tiny Taco Joint Closing After Landlord Hiked Monthly Rent to \$4K: Owner



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By Lisha Arino (//www.dnainfo.com/new-york/about-us/our-team/editorial-team/lisha-arino) on July 14, 2014 2:53pm

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A "Johnny Boy" a double-decker, open-faced tostada from Snack Dragon, which is closing its East Village location at the end of the month.

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Facebook/Snack Dragon

EAST VILLAGE — Taco joint Snack Dragon

(https://plus.google.com/114842923936534237341/about?gl=us&hl=en) is closing at the end of the month, after the landlord tripled the tiny restaurant's rent, the owner said.

Josephine Jansen said she had no choice but to close the eatery, at 199 E. Third St., after her landlord asked her to pay \$3,900 per month for the 100-square-foot space. The landlord, Steve Croman, refused to negotiate, she said.

"I don't know what business he thinks can survive in that place for that amount of money," Jansen said.

But Oren Goldman, the chief operating officer of 9300 Realty, one of Croman's real estate companies, said Jansen was the one who wouldn't negotiate.

Goldman said Jansen told the landlord she would pay just \$200 per month more than her current rent, which he said was "way under market rate."

The property is currently listed for \$4,495 a month on 9300 Realty's website (http://www.9300realty.com/index.cfm?page=details&id=6203).

The closure was first reported by EV Grieve

(http://evgrieve.com/2014/07/cromanated-east-village-snack-dragon.html)

and Bowery Boogie (http://www.boweryboogie.com/2014/07/snack-dragon-3rd-street-closing-steve-croman-tripled-rent/).

Jansen opened Snack Dragon (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Snack-Dragon/254267947930993>) nine years ago, and has since expanded with locations on the Lower East Side and in Williamsburg, serving freshly made tacos, tostadas and carnitas well into the night. Those locations will remain open, and Jansen plans to apply for a full liquor license for the Orchard Street spot so she can serve margaritas.

She called the hole-in-the-wall East Village eatery “a spot for the community to connect,” where customers could enjoy food, music and work by local artists.

Jansen, who has lived in the East Village for 23 years, said she was sad to close the restaurant.

“I love my place,” she said. “I’m going to miss it.”