Celebrity chef busted for trying to poison neighbor's tree

A celebrity chef with an apparently phony penchant for environmentalism was arrested for allegedly trying to poison a neighbor’s silver maple tree because, ironically, it was blocking his solar panels.

Adam Harvey, 33, a New York native, former contestant on *Top Chef: Boston* and chef/owner of the Gowanus eatery Bar Salumi was arrested back in May, the *New York Daily News* first reported. He was arraigned on misdemeanor charges of criminal mischief and criminal trespass.

Adam Harvey, the chef and owner of a Gowanus restaurant and former *Top Chef* contestant | Photo courtesy Bravo TV

Harvey was allegedly spotted entering the neighbor’s enclosed backyard wearing a mask and gloves and holding a cup of unspecified liquid, according to the criminal complaint obtained by Inman. He is then accused of using a hand drill to drill holes into the tree in question, the complaint continues. The defendant later observed a wet substance on the tree and its leaves.

Since the April 30 incident described in the complaint, the defendant reported to the *Daily News* that the half of the leaves have wilted on the 60-year-old maple tree.

“Why would you have solar panels and try to take down a tree?” the unidentified owner of the tree told the *Daily News*. “That, to me, is the linchpin of everything. It says a lot.”

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Prior to the incident, Harvey had allegedly complained about the tree to neighbors and even went as far as hiring a team of arborists to remove some limbs, according to the *New York Daily News*.

The Brooklyn District Attorney's Office confirmed that Harvey is due back in court on Friday.

Meanwhile, Bar Salumi's Facebook page — which has now been deleted — has seen a few recent commenters react to the controversy with trademark New York sarcasm:

"I had the maple aged 60 years," one commenter said. "Was still alive, but tasted a little poisony to me. I can't quite put my finger on it … it might have been the poison the entitled jerk of a chef used to kill a living maple tree so he can have more sunlight. Absolutely disgusting."

Email Patrick Kearns

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