

I am the owner of a Berlin old apartment in a hip downtown district. After almost 30 years of renting, I decided to use the property myself and refurbish it from the ground up before moving in. This was easier said than done, as the building is subject to conservation guidelines, especially breakthroughs and room reorganizations, require prior regulatory approval.

The rooms on the raised ground floor are particularly high and still have the historic wooden doors in the rooms facing the street side. All this was to be considered in advance. I knew Ray Dragiew as a type of business trust manager who had worked in the building with a variety of contractors. What could be more obvious than to involve him in the planning and to entrust the organization and direction of the work.

Refurbishment of old buildings is a test of patience, since conversions in the long-term have mostly not been documented and war damage has only been concealed in a makeshift manner, so that the problems will become apparent only decades later; so it was in my 120 square meter apartment. This can only be achieved if you have a flexible partner who can once again rely on flexible employees and subcontractors, both in terms of the work to be carried out and the timeframe set; nothing really happens the way you originally planned it. Without the efforts of Ray Dragiew and his staff and subcontractors, the work would never have come to a successful conclusion.

Often it was also a matter of preliminary questions, such as how to assess efflorescence or moisture damage and only then to select the technical solutions. This places high demands on all involved! This is also one of the strengths of Ray Dragiew and his people, whom I can only praise. But it's also about aesthetics and the right choice of materials: here Ray Dragiew was always of great help. Now I live in a completely renovated apartment, which leaves nothing to be desired in terms of comfort and modernity, but nevertheless has not lost its old charme. The old-building character is excellently emphasized by careful renovation and disclosure of historical elements. All this is due to Ray Dragiew and his network.

**Gerard Eischen**  
Retired lawyer  
Customer