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THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2010

Irish pub makes a welcome, timely return

When I was a kid, there was this series of ads for Reese's Peanut Butter Cups that used the slogan "Two great tastes that taste great together."

I would like to make a motion to bring that tagline back, but instead attach it to my favorite Irish meal: the Beef and Guinness Stew at the newly refurbished Rí Rá in uptown Charlotte.

The pub's signature dish – chunks of meat simmered in the dry stout beer, with carrots, pearl onions and mashed potatoes – is just as rich and flavorful as it was before a fire last May did \$1 million damage and shut down the spot on Tryon Street for more than 10 months. Rí Rá reopened March 1.

Originally, the owners had hoped to reopen late last summer, but still, their timing is impeccable: Next Wednesday is St. Patrick's Day. And where do partiers want to hang out on St. Patrick's Day? Somewhere that feels Irish.

Few places feel more authentically Irish than Rí Rá, which was one of the first Irish bars in uptown when it opened in 1997 and has been fully restored with its etched glass panels from the 1800s, its St. Patrick statue thought to be more than a century old, and its beautiful, original 19th century Victorian Dublin bar.

The pub will begin its St. Patrick's Day celebration when it opens at 9 a.m. Saturday; it'll also have a float in the parade along Tryon Street at 11 a.m. Then on Wednesday, Rí Rá will open at 8 a.m. and beginning at 2 p.m. will host nearly 12 hours of live music, including a "traditional Irish session" in the afternoon and modern alt-rock covers by U-Phonik from 10 p.m. till last call.

If you go, do try the Beef and Guinness Stew. Or, if you're a vegetarian, ask your server to hold the beef and the stew, and put what's left in a pint glass.

Rí Rá is at 208 N. Tryon St. Hours are 11:30 a.m.-2 a.m. daily. 704-333-5554.

POSTED BY THEODEN JANES AT 10:32 AM 

ABOUT THIS BLOG

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