

HELEN SCHWAB

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S NEW, WHAT'S GOOD AND WHAT'S WORTH YOUR DINING DOLLAR IN CHARLOTTE AND BEYOND

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Ri Ra reopens

Ri Ra, the uptown Irish pub damaged by fire in May 2009, has reopened, with new and refurbished furnishings.

"It's been a long, arduous, but ultimately rewarding process restoring the pub," David Kelly, co-founder and -owner, said in a press release. "My partner, Ciaran Sheehan, and his master Irish craftsmen have meticulously refurbished every piece of our antique furnishings."

The Victorian bar, built in the early 1800s according to its owners (both raised in Dublin), is newly free from layers of soot, as are the place's Guinness mirror, etched glass panels from the 1800s and a St. Patrick statue estimated to be more than a century old.

New: the foyer's hardwood parquet floor, salvaged from the Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast. (Sound vaguely familiar? It's where the Titanic was built.)

The kitchen was renovated, too, and chef Tom LaFauci offers a menu of both traditional Irish dishes (house-brined corned beef, soda bread, beef and Guinness stew, Irish breakfast served at lunch and dinner) and more contemporary fare (mussels in whiskey garlic butter, broiled haddock with lemon crumb topping, and more).

The pub's sandwich bar on Hearst Plaza has reopened as well. Hours at Ri Ra, which opened in 1997 and whose name means uproar or hubbub, are 11:30 a.m.-2 a.m. daily, with lunch and dinner and Irish-style brunch on weekends. 208 N. Tryon St.; 704-333-5554.



ABOUT THIS BLOG

Tapas to tacos, foie gras to fries, **Helen Schwab** has written about food in and around Charlotte for more than 20 years. Her related experience includes traveling (pizza in Naples to pizza in New York), waitressing (she understands about tipping from both sides), journalism (a B.S. from Northwestern University), and cooking at home, the less said about which the better.

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