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Food & Drink: [Three-Course Spiel](#)

3 questions with Ciaran Sheehan, restaurateur

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After temporarily closing its doors in May 2009 due to a fire, Ri Ra, Charlotte's very own authentic Irish pub, has reopened recently. Whether you're in the mood for a pint, house-brined corn beef or to shoot the breeze with a couple of pals, Ri Ra is the place to be. Co-owner Ciaran Sheehan, born in Dublin, Ireland, originally opened the city-based pub on his birthday, March 14, back in 2007. Ri Ra has won numerous *CL* Best of Charlotte awards due to its friendly atmosphere and delicious meals.

***Creative Loafing:* What made you choose Charlotte as a home for an authentic Irish refurbishment?**

Ciaran Sheehan: When we first visited Charlotte 14 years ago, we found a vibrant city with an impressive skyline, a perfect location for an Irish pub. Thankfully, we were well-received and were blessed with a loyal following. As a result, when the fire occurred it never entered our minds not to rebuild.

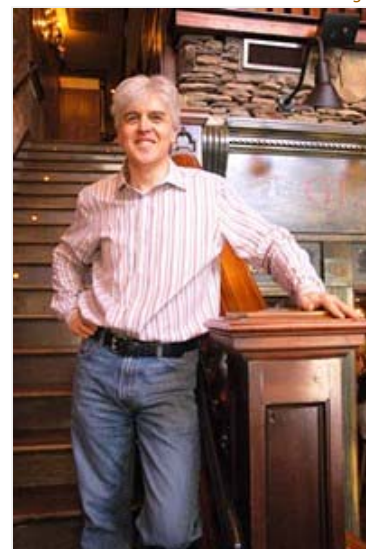
What was going through your mind when you found out about the fire at Ri Ra?

The first thought was, "Is everyone safe?" The material items can and have been replaced. We never considered not reopening. The people of Charlotte have been wonderfully supportive, and the pub is part of that community.

What is your favorite item on the menu?

It is difficult to narrow it to one item. It would be one of three items. One, our fish and chips featuring fresh beer-battered haddock and the kitchen's hand-cut potato chips. Our house-brined corn beef that makes the ultimate reuben. Finally, our burgers that are made with house-ground beef and cooked to order.

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