

sponsor spotlight

RICHARD SHAPLEY

Ely's Restaurant And Bar

By Mary Payne Gilbert, staff writer



Richard Shapley with wife, Katie, and sons, Mitch (6) and Joseph (4).



Wall inside Ely's features family images of Shapleys, Dampiers, and Tuminellos.



Wine wall inside of Ely's

Ely's Restaurant and Bar owner, Richard Shapley

Richard Shapley, the owner of Ely's in Ridgeland, is a Mississippi native who grew up with the restaurant industry in his blood. Richard was born in Jackson and grew up in Clinton, attending Clinton High School. Both of Richard's great grandfathers were in the food industry and Richard's aunt and uncle, Mary and Mark Shapley, founded Shapley's in Jackson in 1985. Continuing the family tradition, his aunt, Melanie Flowers, opened Shapley's in the Delta in 1998 and his uncle, Bob Dampier, is an award-winning barbecuer!

It's no surprise that six years after he graduated from Mississippi State, Richard found himself longing to leave his solid pharmaceutical sales job to take a leap of faith and look for a position in the restaurant industry. In 2006, he left his job, and after applying all over Birmingham, he landed a position as a food runner at Ruth's Chris Steakhouse. He soaked in all aspects of the business and loved every minute! After several months at Ruth's Chris, he sold his house in Birmingham and moved back to Mississippi to focus on opening Ely's, which he named after his grandfather, Elias ("Ely"). Ely's opened its doors in February 2008 and has been a favorite in Ridgeland ever since.

Ely's prides itself on its loyal staff with some staff being with Ely's for five, eight or 10 years. As anyone who has dined at Ely's knows, the restaurant consistently serves up delicious food and high-quality wines and spirits. The restaurant is known for its prime beef and Gulf seafood, such as sauteed crab claws. Richard says, "We start with the best ingredients we can get and let them speak for themselves. You know what you are going to get when you eat here, and I think you will love it!"

When entertaining at home, Richard says the best tactic is to prepare the day before so you can enjoy your guests when they arrive. "Don't worry if a new dish doesn't come out perfectly. Some of the best-tasting food can not look how you intended and some of the most beautiful dishes are not worth a second bite," says Richard. He says "Great times with family and friends is what you will remember, not a slightly overdone burger or a lopsided cake! At the end of the day, food is just a great excuse to be with the ones you love." Richard credits his wife, Katie, for "understanding the strange schedule of a restaurateur," and when he is not at Ely's, you will find him spending time at the ball fields with his two sons, Mitch (6) and Joseph (4).

We encourage you to try Ely's if you haven't already. This cozy Ridgeland restaurant is the perfect spot to unwind and enjoy a delicious meal!

Ely's Restaurant & Bar
115 West Jackson Street, Suite 2E (Upstairs)
Ridgeland, MS 39157
www.elysrestaurant.com
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Cashew chocolate pie



The Pineapple Ely