

**Ryan Lachaine**  
**Executive Chef and Co-Owner, Riel**

One of Houston's most talked about chefs, Ryan was born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Lachaine's culinary education began at the apron strings of his Ukrainian mother and grandmother as they turned out pierogies, cabbage rolls and other treasured family recipes. However, Ryan did not set out to become a cook; rather he followed his wife to Houston where he enrolled in the University of Houston's business program. After only a few semesters, Ryan felt a pull towards his first love—cooking—and left business school to enroll in The Art Institute of Houston. Following the completion of his culinary arts degree, Ryan jumped head first into Houston's trailblazing food scene at **Gravitas** before working under **Chef Bryan Caswell** at **Stella Sola**. Lachaine discovered a mentor and teacher in Caswell, following the Houston chef to **Reef**, where Lachaine honed his skills in the high-pressure, fast-paced restaurant.

Lachaine then left Houston to further his 'on the job' culinary education by staging at some of the country's top restaurants, including **Husk** (Charleston, SC), **Herbsaint Restaurant** (New Orleans, LA), **COI** (San Francisco, CA) and **Animal** (Los Angeles, CA). Following his travels, Lachaine returned to Houston and took on the role of Chef de Cuisine at Underbelly where he was inducted into **Eater's 2013 class of Young Guns**. Ryan then went back to Reef, continuing to learn under mentor Brian Caswell before deciding to take a year off from the kitchen to plan Riel. Over the year, Lachaine continued his culinary travels, seeking out some of the best restaurants in Canada and the United States, while also spending time with his wife and twin sons. Through his travels and culinary soul searching, Lachaine focused his vision on what Riel would become; an articulation of his culinary point of view.

Riel's namesake is Louis Riel, the founder of Manitoba and leader of the Métis community, a group of both French and Native American heritage. Riel was executed for treason after taking part in a Métis resistance movement fighting for preservation of the group's native lands, culture and languages. Remaining a controversial character in Canadian culture, Lachaine chose Riel to represent his own Canadian heritage and the many cultures that Riel sought to bring together, something Chef Ryan Lachaine hopes to do on the plates of his restaurant.