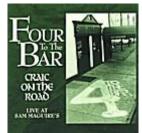
## Mp3 4 To The Bar - Craic On The Road



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New York in the mid-90s was a hotbed of Irish-American culture. Even in that atmosphere, 4 to the Bar's live shows were fabled This, my friends, is the band's ONLY authorised live recording. \*Limited quantities\* 11 MP3 Songs WORLD: Gaelic FOLK: Modernistic Folk Craic on the Road Songs Details: Four to the Bar, the band that Joannie Madden of Cherish the Ladies once named "one of the best industrious groups around," was composed of two Irishmen, David Yeates and Martin Kelleher, and two native New Yorkers, Keith O'Neill and Pat Clifford. Among them, they commanded an impressive arsenal of acoustic folk/Irish-traditional instruments including fiddle (O'Neill is a 1985 All-Ireland champion), flute, tin whistle, guitar, bouzouki, banjo, piano, bass, and bodhran (the hand-held goatskin drum). Four to the Bar performed throughout the Greater New York area during the early- to mid-1990s, with frequent excursions to places as far afield as St. Louis, Chicago, Cleveland, Boston, and Key West. The quartet's repertoire of classic and lesser-known folk songs and traditional ballads, often witty and always entertaining, as well as the strong songwriting talent that came to the fore on their most recent album, Another Son, gained them a fan base of formidable size, and their modern treatment of Celtic jigs and reels consistently brought crowds of hundreds and thousands to their feet. Four to the Bar performed on numerous live radio broadcasts; they played to crowds of thousands at events like the Chicago Irish Festival and the Irish Arts Center's Traditional Music Festival, where they have shared billing with acts such as the Kips Bay Ceili Band, Freddy White, Cherish the Ladies, and the Chanting House. In June 1992 the band earned the opening slot at one of Sharon Shannon's Boston shows, and at a 1994 benefit in honor of civil-rights activist Paul O'Dwyer, Four to the Bar had the distinction of performing on stage with folk-music legend Pete Seeger. Particular achievements include: being picked to appear at the 1995 Daytona International Music Festival, where other featured performers include country-music singer

Trisha Yearwood and the London Symphony Orchestra; and a standing-room-only crowd at the release misspent youth in New York City, I used to walk past a grungy-looking Irish pub named the Glocca Morra every day on my way to school. Turns out it's one of three bars that regularly host the Big Apple's latest up-and- coming Irish band, Four to the Bar. Although the pun in their name was stolen from a Welsh group, their style's their own. The four in guestion are David Yeates from Dunboyne, Co. Meath on vocals, bodhran, flute and whistle; Martin Kelleher from Cork on guitar and vocals, along with New Yorkers Keith O'Neill on fiddle and Pat Clifford on bass. Their album, Craic on the Road: Live at Sam Maguire's [FTB002 (1994)] also features percussionist Seamus Casey and accordion player Tony McQuillan. The songs and tunes they have chosen to perform are mostly sentimental old Irish songs with a clean-cut feel that appeals to the largely Irish and Irish-American crowd in the Bronx; I think you could find most of these songs, including "Muirshin Durkin," "The Galway Shawl," "The Black Velvet Band," "Mr. Maguire," and "I'll Tell Me Ma," on old Irish rovers and Clancy Brothers albums. Still, there's a bit of the Dubliners' irreverence and the Pogues' energy and abandon in their sound as well, making them more interesting than your average Irish bar band. The live atmosphere is nice, complete with cheering crowds and thumping feet, but as always in these situations, the sound suffers a bit. Indeed, O'Neill's fiddling, which won him an All-Ireland title in 1985, is hard to hear in many places. Even so, there's more than Voice: November 2, 1994 Though very well received all over the New York City area for the vibrant, homespun quality of its production, Four to the Bar's March 1993 cassette EP debut was consistently greeted with one criticism: It failed to capture the infectious energy of the band's performances, during which, it would seem, virtually anything can happen. Spontaneous, rhythmic hairpin turns will appear in the midst of a traditional Celtic jig or reel; lead singer David Yeates might take his bodhran out for an impromptu sprint atop the bar counter. Not surprisingly, like other artists who have built their reputation out of providing outstanding live entertainment. Four to the Bar was besieged by demand for a live recording. On June 16, 1994 at Sam Maguire's Pub in the Bronx, with the help of the 400-or-so fans in attendance, Four to the Bar addressed that demand. Craic on the Road is the result. The album's 11 tracks pay cheerful tribute to the rich musical heritage of Irish folk from which the band springs. The recurring themes that form the foundations of "Irish music" are all here--emigration and fortune-seeking

(on "Murshin Durkin"), the trials of courtship (on "Mr. Maguire"), and, of course, the culture's enduring fascination with drink (on just about everything else). On the more serious side, the haunting "Germany" is a widow's keening lament for the husband she has lost in another man's war, and serves as a dramatic preface to the album's most pleasant surprise, a inspired version of early-60s folk legend Phil Ochs' "I Ain't Marching Anymore," in which the band turns Ochs' defiant prophecy into an exuberant call for an end to all war.

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