



BEST EXTERIOR

Industrial Revolution Eatery & Grille

The design of the Industrial Revolution Eatery & Grille in Valparaiso was so unique that owner Mike Leeson had to soothe the concerns of city planning officials about what might be done if the restaurant ever closed. Celebrating the industrial heritage of both Northwest Indiana and the nation overall, the restaurant's exterior features 100-year-old clinker brick and steel girders that have been given a rusted appearance through a process Leeson developed at his other company, Synergy Steel Structures. The outdoor patio is floored with 200-year-old reclaimed granite cobblestone and surrounded by a cast-iron railing. But the most striking features are the steel sculptures based on Charles Ebbets' iconic 1932 photo, "Lunch Atop a Skyscraper." The men in that shot were replicated in steel by sculptor Sergio Furnari, and the group of statues spent six months at Ground Zero in New York as a tribute to those who built the Twin Towers and cleaned up the damage. Those sculptures are now perched atop the restaurant and Leeson commissioned others for use both inside and outside the building.

