

# Industrial Revolution Eatery & Grille salutes the hard work that made this nation great

From the life-size statues of ironworkers adorning the roof to the model train circling the dining area, Industrial Revolution Eatery & Grill in Valparaiso has spared no expense to give diners an amazing and inspiring experience.

Industrial Revolution, which salutes the freedom, progress, innovation and hard work that made this nation great, has been a popular gathering place ever since opening on U.S. 30 in 2010.

The restaurant is designed to look like a building under construction in the early 1900s -- when industry was booming and innovations were providing Americans a better life.

Owner Mike Leeson said the idea for the restaurant came from his love of industry and this country.

"I always wanted to create a restaurant that paid tribute to those things," Leeson said.

The Industrial Revolution experience begins before one steps inside the restaurant. Perched atop the restaurant's roof are statues -- inspired by the famous 1932 photo "Lunchtime on Top of a Skyscraper" -- depicting ironworkers taking a lunch break while seated on a beam during construction of the Rockefeller Center in New York City.

The statues, created by artist Sergio Furnari, were displayed at the site of the former World Trade Center as a tribute to the workers involved in recovery efforts following the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

Inside the restaurant's doors, the dining area gets an authentic industrial-age look from 100-year-old brick, cast iron railing and flooring made from reclaimed wood. A model train travels along a track mounted near the ceiling.

Black and white photographs decorate the walls and the restaurant's televisions play biographies of famous leaders and stories of how America was built.

"The minute you walk in, it's like nothing else in this area," said restaurant General Manager Jennifer Brooks, adding they have drawn visitors from Boston to California.

Each week they salute one great American -- whether it be someone of national prominence like Henry Ford or Thomas Edison, or someone local like war hero Jim Butz or fire-fighting nozzle pioneer Clyde McMillan.

Leeson, who has been in the steel fabrication and distribution business for years, said his restaurant salutes the people who work hard each day -- many in difficult or dangerous occupations -- to create better lives for their families.

The food's even got a traditional American theme. They offer plenty of traditional American meals that you've grown up on, but with a gourmet twist -- like their Mom's Double Shift Pot Roast (made the way Leeson's mother made it every Sunday when Leeson was a kid), their popular perch tacos, their legendary meatloaf and their mac & cheese.

They're also known for their brick oven pizzas and



**The Risktaker Burger, only at Industrial Revolution Eatery.**

their burgers -- including the Risk-Taker Burger (which has four patties totaling two pounds, layered with American, pepper jack, cheddar and provolone cheese, as well as lettuce, onion strings, special sauce and a miniature American flag). And be sure to save room for their Red, White and Blue Cheesecake.

"Everything is homemade," Brooks said.

Leeson said Industrial Revolution expects the restaurant's casual new menu and the addition of a license to sell hard liquor to make the restaurant even more popular.

They offer discounts daily to police officers, firefighters, medics and military members. And they offer discounts to tradesmen who show their union card on Tuesdays.

The folks at Industrial Revolution hope their customers leave full -- and full of inspiration about this country's industrial roots.

"It's nice to have someone come in for the first time or 20th time and be blown away by the experience," Brooks said.

She said there's always an interesting decoration or inspiring quote to discover on the restaurant's walls, or another great American to learn about.

Leeson's goal is to take Industrial Revolution nationwide, with each location tailored to reflect the industry in that community.

Industrial Revolution is located at 1084 Linwood (at Linwood and U.S. 30) in Valparaiso. Call 219-465-1801 or visit [www.industrialrevolutioneatery.com](http://www.industrialrevolutioneatery.com) for more information.