

wisconsin remodeler awards

Disaster Restoration, Fire | Historic Building

Bourbon & Tunns Tavern | Milwaukee, WI



 **PAUL DAVIS**
Restoration & Remodeling

Wisconsin Remodeler Awards
customer

Bourbon & Tunns Tavern is located in the Historic Third Ward in Milwaukee, WI and pride ourselves in being one of the top restaurants, bars and banquet halls in Southeast, WI. We recently rebranded our restaurant and established a high end menu and whisky tasting theme in a relaxed and comfortable environment. Not long after our rebranding this story starts....

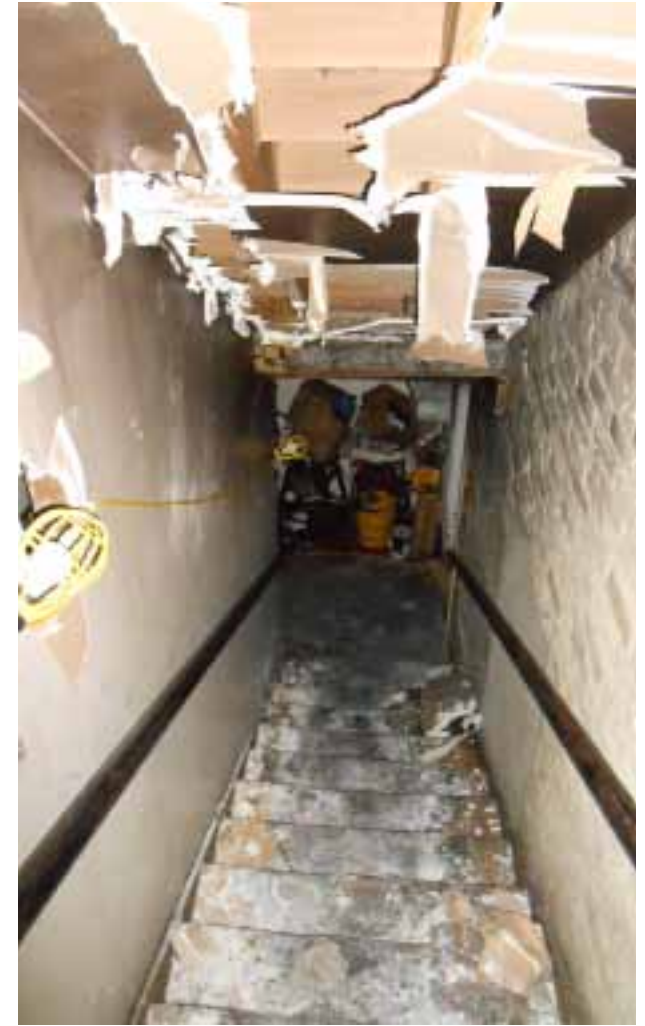
- Owner, Bourbon & Tunns Tavern



The Damage:

The three-story bar, restaurant, banquet hall, kitchen and basement of the Bourbon & Tunns Tavern located in a historic 1895 cream city brick building was severely damaged by a late night chemical fire in the basement.

This fire burned for 30 minutes, an extremely long time. There was not a source of ventilation created in the structure so the fire smoldered throughout the 7,860 square foot building making the smoke odor removal more complex, especially given the age of the property.





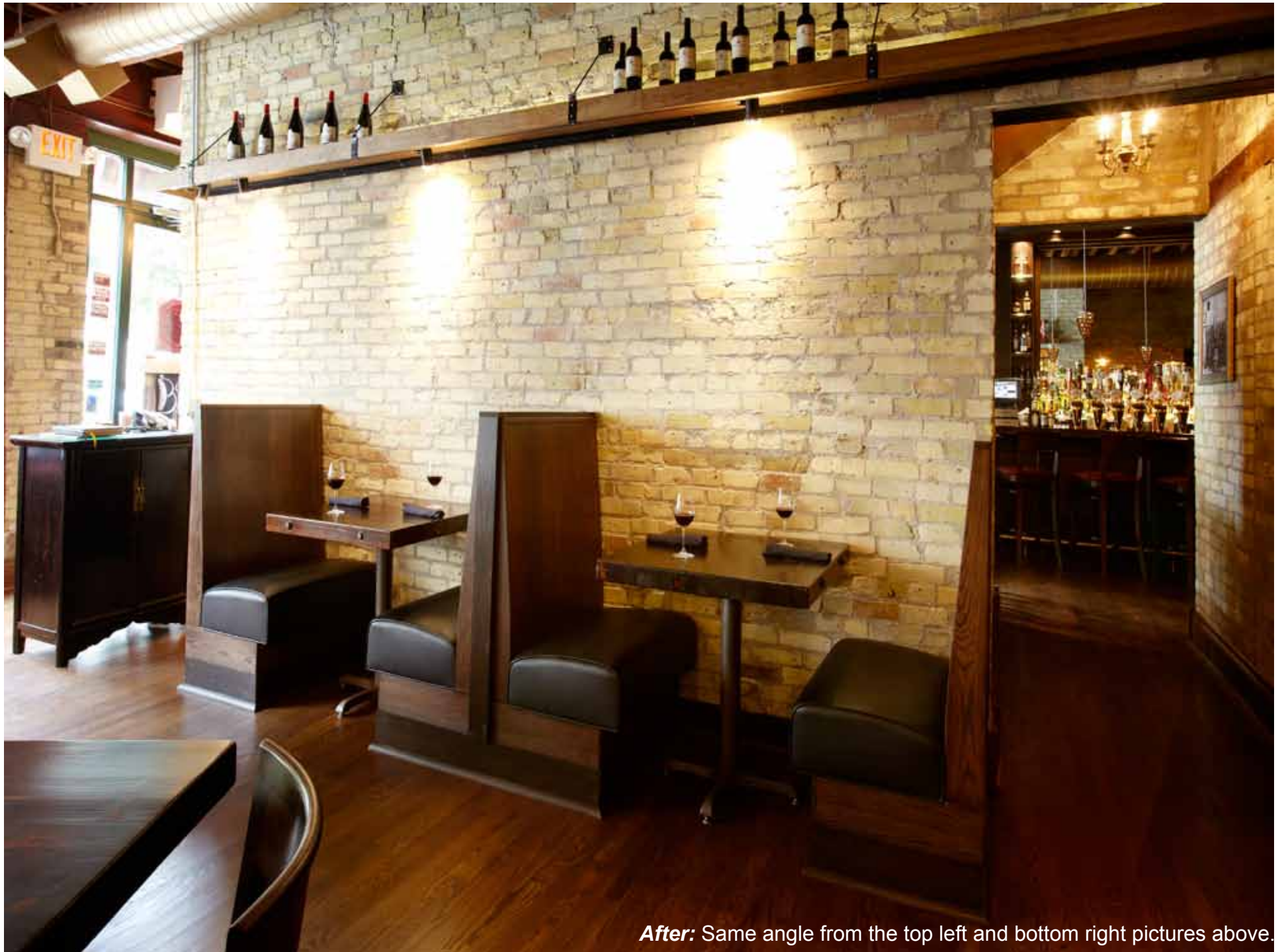
Dining Room:

Two layers of sub floor starting with a maple layer, then finished with oak, helped prevent the flames from jumping to the first floor. The two floors above the basement were heavily damaged by soot and odor traveling through the HVAC system.

The fire severely compromised the dining room floor joists. Notice the extremely charred joists, 32 in total, that were impacted by the fire.

The hole pictured to the right was creatively used to lower the new 20 ft steel I-beam and floor joists down so we could systematically replace joist by joist. Schedule considerations were important throughout the project, especially with beams and joists that were trailored in on the MLK holiday to avoid downtown traffic and pedestrians in this historic business district.





After: Same angle from the top left and bottom right pictures above.



Dining Room:

Detail and custom craftsmanship were important to the owner and add to the aesthetics and function of the dining room.

- Lighting and crown molding were added to the floating “clouds” above the dining tables.
- Track lighting was incorporated on wall shelves to highlight an expansive wine collection.
- Decorative trim was scribed to avoid gaps in the booths.
- Shoe molding and mop rails were added to ease cleaning and for health reasons.
- Oak flooring was seamlessly matched to original quality and not show any sign of replacement or fire damage maintaining 19th century charm.



After



Before

Bar and Casual Dining:

The bar cabinetry and 8 ft high built in custom cabinets behind the bar proved to be a challenge. There was an uncanny air space behind so all cabinetry needed to be removed to address the smoke odor. Once carefully removed, we used baking soda to blast then sealed the brick and backside of the cabinetry. Restor-A Finish was applied over the existing espresso oak finish to return luster and rich charm.

Adding to the design and function, we integrated in top upper cabinetry can lights, audio visual equipment and automated lightning controls for the entire first floor. There were many electrical and code challenges associated with the updates and upgrades, but the Master Electrician was able to efficiently address and modernize the space to achieve the ambiance that was desired through custom lighting and music requests. A favorite of the bar staff are the glass beaded pendant lights, which are now on dimmers.



Before



After

Bar and Casual Dining:

Soot puffs covered the beautiful cream city brick walls throughout the first floor dining room and bar area. Cream city brick is very porous and absorbs odors more than other construction materials producing a challenge to restore. These walls, and all other surfaces, required regimented and rigorous cleaning including soda blasting and special hand cleaning of all surfaces, visible and not. A careful approach was observed as not to compromise the very soft facade of the brick. This same attention and care was given to all contents from kitchen goods to dining chairs to restaurant linens.

A custom display shelf with lightning was added to compliment matching pieces in the formal dining room.





After

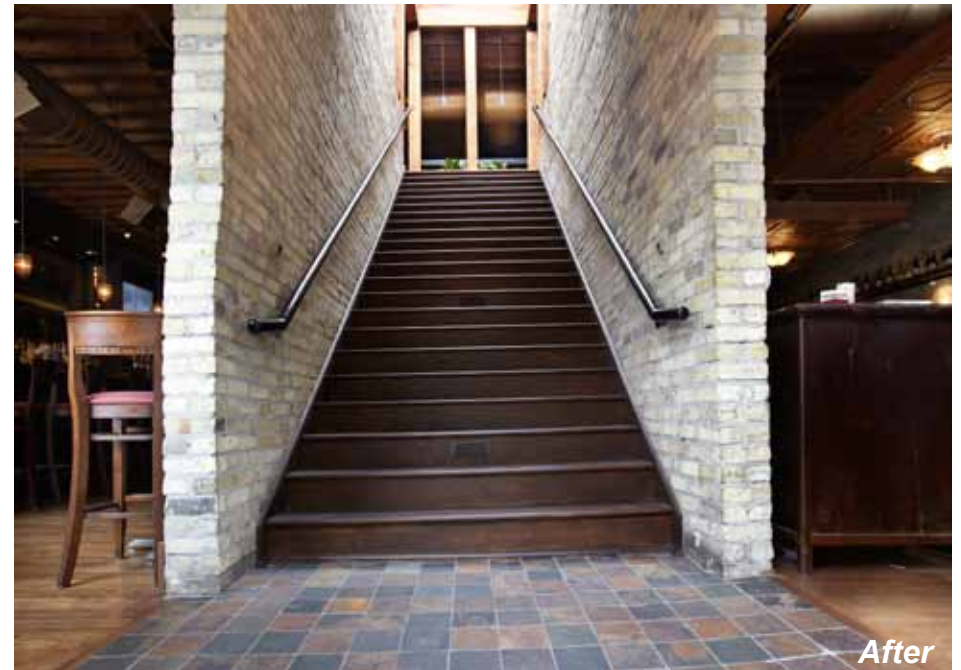
Foyer:

Tile was removed and reinforced beneath an existing structural condition that was discovered. In doing so, the new slate floor was gradually pitched making it safer for arriving patrons and staff as this is a high traffic corridor between the bar and dining room. The slate tile was a challenge as each piece required spalling to gain a consistent surface and lay appropriately in the pitch while observing ADA considerations.



Grand Staircase:

A 10 foot wide staircase with atrium creates an impressive entrance, but also proved to be a challenge cleaning the expansive space with 14 foot ceilings from the second floor above the open stairwell. The right wall is an interior partition wall to the dining room and the left wall to the bar. Soot was particularly heavy due to the fire origin being below this space. The beautiful timber beams were cleaned and resealed with clear shellac.





Before



After

Structural Shoring:

The dining room floor joists were structurally compromised. Original 19th century construction pocketed them into the brick. They were cut flush and we established a ledger to attach new joists which are additionally supported by five new I-beams.

Basement:

The dining room had a drop ranging from a half inch to two and a half inches across the existing I-beam. Shims were innovatively used to correct the slope, see red boxes below.

In the basement, sealant was used to encapsulate any additional odor and refresh the space. The electrical system was updated throughout addressing both code and convenience factors.



Wisconsin Remodeler Awards
the result



414.383.3131
www.pdwisconsin.com

 **PAUL DAVIS**
Restoration & Remodeling