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A Spicy • Design.

Casino Restaurant of Sinker
Cypress is a Spirited Taqueria.

alan gilbert 2014



When Caesars Entertainment brought its legendary Horseshoe Casino to Baltimore, Maryland, included was not only a great hotel, gaming opportunities and plenty of amenities, but also several fabulous restaurants. One of those restaurants was a collaboration between two old friends who happen to be world-class, James Beard Award-winning chefs – Johnny Besh and Aaron Sanchez.



HORSESHOE
CASINO • BALTIMORE

The pair first met when Sanchez began his career in Besh's hometown of New Orleans, and their bond grew stronger while competing against each other on Food Network's "Next Iron Chef." The two friends joined forces to open in the Horseshoe Casino, Johnny Sanchez, a spirited taqueria where they express their passions for culinary heritage and high quality, locally-sourced ingredients. In creating Johnny Sanchez, they collaborated on everything from the perfect tacos to the cocktails to the décor.

The casino restaurant spans 18,394 square feet and has seating for 222 including a 27-seat service bar, 64-seat lounge area, and 96-seat dining room.

Sizzling Style

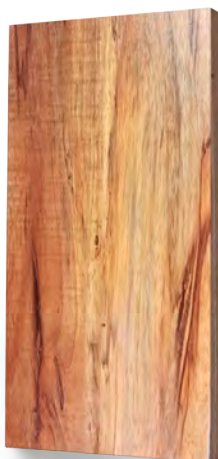
The décor was left in the able hands of the architectural firm of KA, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio, and the Friedmutter Group, an interior design firm located in Las Vegas, Nevada. Architectural woodwork for the restaurant was fabricated and installed by Allegheny Millwork, an AWI member firm from Lawrence, Pennsylvania. The reclaimed Cypress veneer and lumber for the project was supplied by Marwood, Inc., an AWI supplier member firm from Jeffersonville, Indiana, and Sieling and Jones, an AWI supplier member firm from New Freedom, Pennsylvania.

"In designing Johnny Sanchez, our objective was to create a unique special experience that complimented the style of cooking presented here," explains Suzanne Couture of the Friedmutter Group. "The style is contemporary, authentic and tactile, as well as rooted in tradition. The materials selected for the space were chosen to follow this program."

It was important to the design to reflect the heritage of both chefs, she continues, but still create a new setting that is inviting, fun and comfortable. Design nods to their traditions include a mural created by their tattoo artist, a sculptural celebration of the agave plant, the use of tactile, handcrafted materials and reclaimed tequila barrels featured throughout.

Reclaimed Wood

The woodworking firm fabricated and installed a bar, hostel desk, display table, banquette divider walls, sliding panels and wall panels for the restaurant.



CYPRESS

According to John Travers, executive vice president of Allegheny Millwork, the paneling was made of reclaimed Sinker Cypress obtained from Marwood in a diamond-matched pattern while the bar face was made of reclaimed Oak.

Sinker Cypress is pre-cut timber from rivers and lakes that has been naturally preserved for hundreds of years. These trees were lost during transit to saw mills and simply left behind. Most



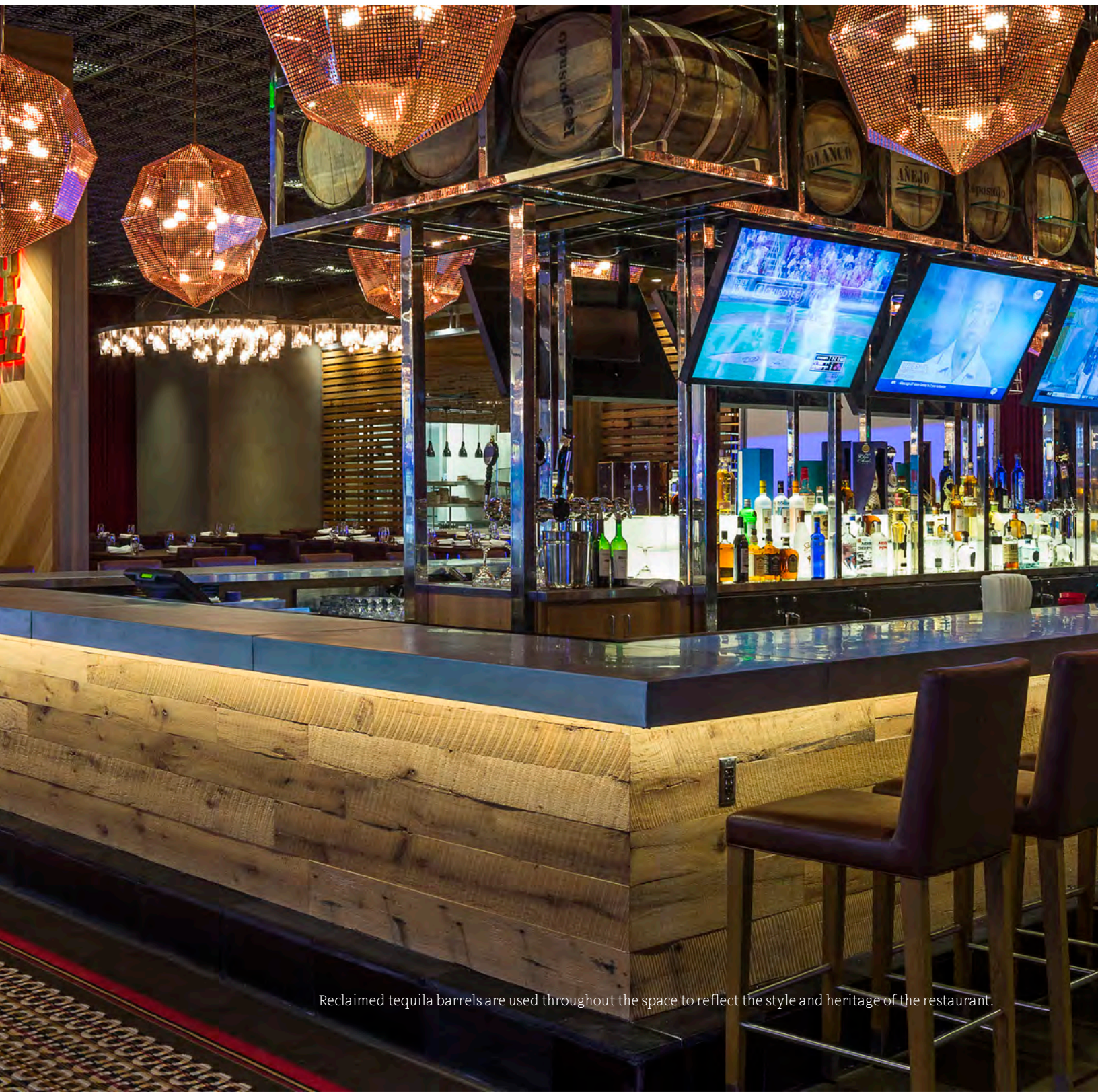
Cypress trees are native to the South, found primarily in wet, swampy areas along the Atlantic Coastal Plain and the Gulf Coast.

Marwood, Inc.'s Cypress for this project came from the Cape Fear River drainage system and the Pee Dee River drainage system in North and South Carolina. Some of the logs were originally

scheduled to be sawed into lumber at the Atlantic Coast Lumber mill, the largest mill in the country at the time.

This antique Cypress is salvaged and recycled, its beauty and significance

restored in decorative woodwork, versus being lost forever. The Seminole Indians called Cypress "wood everlasting" or "eternal wood". There are reports of Cypress shingles lasting more than 250 years.

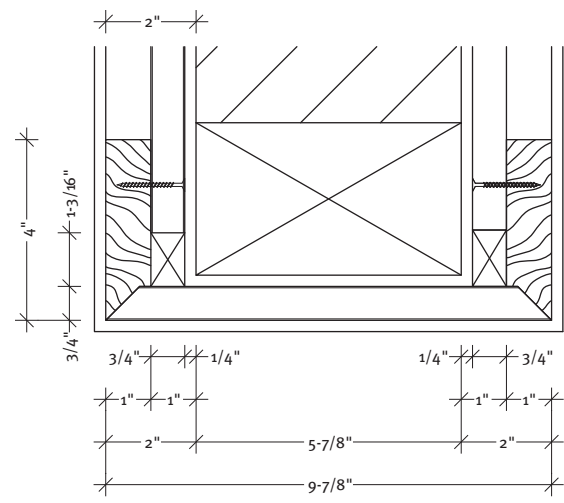


Reclaimed tequila barrels are used throughout the space to reflect the style and heritage of the restaurant.



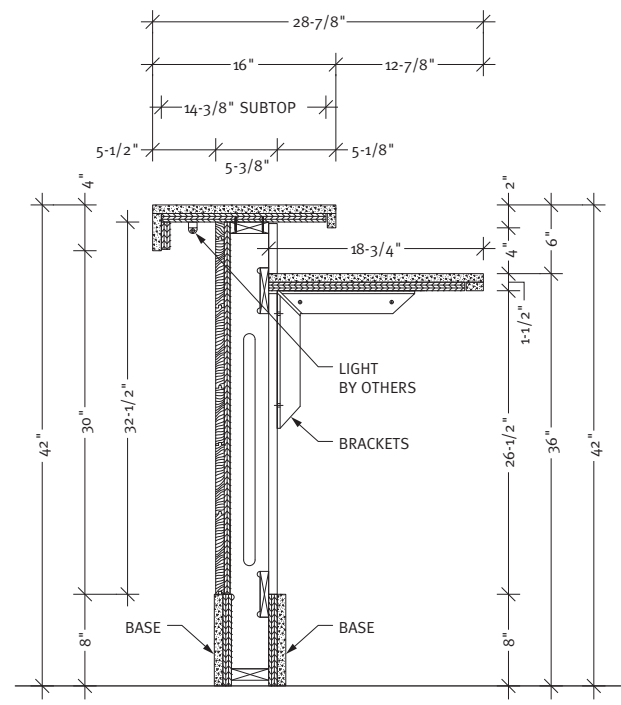
JOHNNY
SANCHEZ

HORSESHOE
CASINO - BALTIMORE



SECTION
@ Vertical Wall Cap

Reclaimed Sinker Cypress turns the restaurant into a work of art.



SECTION
@ Hostess Drink Niche





Cypress contains an oil called Cypressene which is what creates its incredible durability. Due to its own preservative oil, this heartwood is naturally resistant to insects, decay, chemical corrosion or other damaging elements.

Challenges


According to Couture and John Kaminiski of KA, Inc., the project schedule was expedited to meet the owners' requirements for a pre-Labor Day 2014 opening. The site was a Brownfield redevelopment site – set on an old manufacturing plant site within the City of Baltimore.

Most challenging, they agree, was creating a new design style that bridges the traditional Mexican atmosphere in a cutting-edge modern style while creating a fun and exciting environment.

Travers agrees that the tight finish schedule was extremely challenging. "We needed to work very closely with the general contractor and other trades to ensure completion was done on time," he says. "However," he adds, "we have a good relationship with the Friedmutter Group. Work of this type requires everyone to be onboard to pull it off successfully."

The Cypress panels are the most noteworthy element of the project – a consensus agreed by all parties. "The reclaimed Cypress was used on the project in a unique joined pattern, a 45-degree rotated and book matched subtly recalling an 'Ojo de Dios' (Eye of God), a traditional woven craft," points out Couture. The woodworking firm and the Cypress supplier "delivered and installed the materials with the same care and respect as we supply our clients."

"Construction of the Cypress panels in the restaurant bar required extensive layout to accomplish the outstanding installation," notes Greg Combs of Caesars Entertainment. "Marwood was a fine partner throughout the construction. They were professional and proactive."

Johnny Sanchez is a fabulous restaurant that is as lively and fun as the casino itself. The project achieved LEED Gold Certification from the U.S. Green Building Counsel. 

PROJECT:
Johnny Sanchez Restaurant
Baltimore, MD

PROJECT OWNER:
Horseshoe Casino Caesars Entertainment
Baltimore, MD

WOODWORKER:
Allegheny Millwork
Lawrence, PA

ARCHITECT:
KA, Inc.
Cleveland, OH

INTERIOR DESIGN:
Friedmutter Group
Cleveland, OH

GENERAL CONTRACTOR:
Whiting-Turner
Baltimore, MD

PHOTOGRAPHER:
Alan Gilbert
Baltimore, MD

SUPPLIERS:
Marwood, Inc.
and Sieling and Jones