

MATERA

2019 EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

TOGETHER WITH THE BULGARIAN CITY
OF PLOVDIV



After obtaining a total of 7 votes out of 13, Matera (Southern Italy) has been officially announced as the 2019 European Capital of Culture, together with the Bulgarian city of Plovdiv, beating off competition from the other five Italian finalists: Ravenna, Cagliari, Lecce, Perugia and Siena.

This title was first awarded in 1985 to promote a better knowledge and understanding of the historical-artistic and cultural heritage of nations belonging to the European Union. The first city to earn this accolade was Athens. Nowadays, two nations from the European Union are jointly selected: this year's winners were Leeuwarden (Netherlands) and La Valletta (Malta).

The Italian Minister of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism, Dario Franceschini, stated that "this has been a wonderful experience for the six Italian cities taking part and extremely

important for Italy".

The cultural programme being drawn up for 2019, involving an overall investment of approximately 52 million Euros, is in the hands of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation. According to its president Aurelia Sole, "we are wasting no time in drawing up the programme and we are the first regional capital to have already come up with 50% of its content one year ahead of schedule. We are working all over the territory on joint-ventures to create a European-scale project. From creative industries to Basilicata University, from associations to institutions, everybody is working hard to be ready for an event we hope will leave a real legacy for Matera and southern Italy".

The slogan Matera chose for its bid was "Open Future": indeed, according to the promotion committee, "we are all ob-





sessed by the eternal present in which we are immersed. But an ancient city like Matera is not afraid to think about the times that lie ahead. It has already reinvented itself many times and always successfully overcome the challenge posed by time". The organisational machinery is already in motion and the city is giving itself a makeover, since this event is rightly considered to be a wonderful opportunity to promote the tourism industry and culture of the city and the entire surrounding area, with all its traditions, historical-artistic heritage and beautiful natural environment. Some experts claim that the economic impact of being awarded this accolade is worth approximately 30 million Euros to the entire area.

Matera will be in the spotlight for a year, but the city is already internationally famous mainly for its Stones that are renowned

all over the world. Any trip to Matera is bound to include a visit to the Stones, which became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993, the first place in southern Italy to achieve this status. Matera's Stones look like a city built directly in the rocks, complete with underground entrances, churches constructed in caves and other monuments. Matera's ancient dwellings have been carved directly into the rock face and for centuries have formed the city's urban agglomeration. They are divided into three main zones: Sasso Barisano to the north, Sasso Caveoso to the south and the Civita, situated centrally, where the Cathedral dating back to 1270 stands. The old city centre's paving had to be repaired not just to make the city streets more inhabitable, but also to make Matera more welcoming for all the visitors expected next year, as you can read in the next article.



PROJECTS **INSTALLING ROAD SURFACES IN STONE**



NEW ROAD SURFACES FOR MATERA

IN PREPARATION FOR 2019, WHEN MATERA IS SET TO BECOME THE CAPITAL OF CULTURE, THE STREETS IN THE OLD CITY HAVE BEEN RENOVATED

Renovation of the road surfaces in the old part of Matera started with a project that identified the areas with a strategic value and carefully analysed their position, their significance and the technical problems affecting them. A number of streets and piazzas were chosen from within a limited area in order to maintain the right level of quality and, at the same time, remain within the economic constraints of the intervention.

The new surfaces were designed so as to conserve the historical significance of the existing roads – by maintaining their overall layout – in a natural continuation of materials, colours and construction methods.

Where more radical interventions were not required to keep the streets in a good state of conservation, only general maintenance work was carried out.

The piazzas and streets where the intervention was carried out (Via delle Beccherie, Piazza Sedile, Via del Corso, Via San Francesco, Via San Biagio and Piazza San Giovanni Battista) are situated in the central part of the old city and are those most frequented by the local inhabitants and tourists.

THE GENESIS OF THE PROJECT AND PLANNED INTERVENTIONS

The main aim of the project was to give a new lease of life to the streets in the old city centre without overlooking its centuries-old history, while also taking into consideration its new requirements in terms of functionality, aesthetics and safety.

Even though the streets selected for the intervention are bor-

dered by buildings no more than one hundred years old, the roads were completely resurfaced using traditional techniques, that is, with a kind of flagstone called "basola" made of local Trani or Apricena stone. It was not uncommon to find basalt inserts, which were probably installed to replace broken flagstones or work carried out on the substrate.

The project also included an overhaul of the various plant systems and underground systems to avoid carrying out further work in the future. The new plant systems were designed so that they could be extended at a later date and also to be more flexible, by providing more connections and installing larger mains, and to simplify maintenance work as much as possible by including manhole covers and inspection chambers.

Going into detail, the paving stones along Via delle Beccherie were removed and the ones in good condition were reused, while the damaged ones, or those with an irregular shape, were discarded. They were then re-worked so they had the same thickness, taking them from 25-40 cm down to 15 cm. This made the old paving stones compatible with the flat, reinforced concrete substrates and will prevent differential subsidence in the road surface.

Work was then carried out in Via del Corso, where the entire road surface was renovated by replacing the old concrete bricks with Apricena paving stones and demolishing, removing and rebuilding the old plant systems and underground systems. The surface of the roadway running from Piazza Vittorio Veneto up to the former Upim building was completely

LEFT.

A view of the new road surfaces in the old city centre of Matera. A number of streets and piazzas were renovated maintaining the right level of quality, colours and construction methods.

RIGHT.

The first phase of the intervention included removing the old paving stones and cleaning the substrate.



PROJECTS INSTALLING ROAD SURFACES IN STONE



IN THE SPOTLIGHT
MAPESTONE TFB 60
 It is a pre-mixed, ready-to-use powder mortar for the grouting of joints of external natural stone paving and road finishes suitable for vehicular use. It is part of the MAPESTONE SYSTEM, which allows to create architectural stone paving with high durability even in environments subject

to rain, to freeze-thaw cycles in the presence of de-icing salts and seawater (exposure classes XF3, XF4 and XS3). MAPESTONE TFB 60 is used to make installation screeds for natural stone architectural flooring suitable for squares, roads, pavements, parking lots, pedestrian crossings, roundabouts and speed humps.




PHOTOS 1 and 2. Installing the paving stones on an installation screed made from MAPESTONE TFB 60.

PHOTO 3. The intervention was completed by grouting the joints with MAPESTONE PFS 2 VISCO ready-mixed mortar.

replaced and the road itself was raised to the same level as the pavement, and in this case, too, the old paving stones that had been removed were reused after taking them all down to the same thickness. Via San Biagio, the first part of Via Stigliani and Piazza San Giovanni Battista were all renovated with a road surface made from new paving stones.

To complete this first list of works, an intervention was carried out along the short stretch of Vico Conche by completely renovating the road surface and plant systems.

MAPEI SOLUTIONS FOR OLD ROAD SURFACES

The first intervention proposed by the designers was to renovate the paved road surface in Via delle Beccherie, the street which was the historical home of the city's various food and grocery shops. To install the paving stones, Mapei technicians proposed using the MAPESTONE system, specifically developed for installing stone road surfaces at a lower cost and with

numerous advantages.

The MAPESTONE system includes products in exposure class XF4 and complies with the requirements of EN 206-1 standards to guarantee the durability of any work carried out.

Stone road surfaces installed using this system will only require maintenance work after a number of years because they are resistant to freeze-thaw cycles, de-icing salts and rain and the mortars used do not tend to crumble and remain unchanged over the years. They also have the capacity to absorb mechanical loads and stresses caused by the passage of vehicles, including heavy goods vehicles, and dangerous hollows due to structural subsidence do not appear.

To install the large paving stones, which on average were around 7 cm thick, the product used was MAPESTONE TFB 60 pre-mixed, ready-to-use mortar, while the joints (15/20 mm wide on average) were filled with MAPESTONE PFS2 VISCO low-viscosity ready-mixed mortar.

TECHNICAL DATA

Old city streets, Matera (Italy)

Year of the intervention: 2017

Intervention by Mapei: supplying products to renovate the stone roads

Design: Sergio Lamacchia Acito, Maria Teresa Fasano, Massimo Bocchi, Nicola Fortunato

Client: Matera City Council

Works direction: Biagio Ferrara, Federico Lorusso

Site direction: Renzo

Loiudice, Luigi Baldassare

Installation company: Edil Co. Srl

Mapei coordinators:

Francesco Dragone, Carlo Vitulli, Mirko Malvasi, Giovanni Villani, Marcello Deganutti, Achille Carcagni, Mapei SpA

MAPEI PRODUCTS

Installation of stone floorings: Mapestone TFB 60

Grouting and sealing joints: Mapestone PFS2 Visco

For further information on products visit www.mapei.com