

# MARRIOTT DOWNTOWN HOTEL

**The renovation of a prestigious hotel in Chicago called for close cooperation between designers and floor-layers**

There are 1192 rooms in the 46-story Marriott Downtown Hotel in Chicago.

Bulley & Andrews, General Contractors, were recently called on to renovate the lobby and mezzanine level of this Marriott flagship hotel. The technicians from Bulley & Andrews were presented with an intricate and complicated job when it came to the replacement of the old marble floor in the lobby. Working with DTI (Dave's Tile of Illinois), they reviewed the architect's plans for renovation. The renderings called for a series of concentric ellipses to be executed in natural stone, marble and granite. Before the first tile could be laid, they surveyed the lobby area and mapped the ellipses to the spaces.

Over 70% of the 464 m<sup>2</sup> of the original marble was removed along with its mud bed setting. This work was performed in 12-15 small phases because the hotel was open during the renovation and the first floor was busy with people at all times. In addition, there were uneven floors throughout the huge lobby, which added to the

difficulties. However, the DTI crew was able to quickly level an area with MAPECEM 100 so that carpet could be laid evenly with the tile. After levelling, the crew treated the whole surface with PRIMER L and ULTRAPLAN EASY self-levelling compound.

The bar at one end of the lobby serves as the origin of the ellipses. A large vertical element rises from the center of the bar in the form of a torch, which is lit with changing colors. The primary color is red, and this hue is repeated in the Celador red granite ellipse surrounding the bar. All the primary colors are reflected in elliptical patterns in the carpet encircling the red granite. DTI installers installed this granite with ULTRACONTACT and grouted the joints with ULTRACOLOR. The red granite and the carpet were banded with Black Absolute Granite provided by Terrazzo & Marble Supply of Chicago (T&M). The ellipse enclosing the carpet is filled with Maras marble from Stone Design. This is a type of marble commonly called "Connecticut Pink" from the location where it was first quarried. The fourth ellipse is

composed of T&M's "Golden Sail" – a natural stone. These tiles were precisely cut to fit into the ellipse according to the map developed by the designers. The stone was also bonded with ULTRACONTACT and the joints grouted with ULTRACOLOR.

On the mezzanine level, the Marriott hosts guests at a casual dining restaurant. For the walls in this restaurant, the architect, VOA, specified a red and a white textured tile set in large blocks of color, following the research that suggests these two color combinations make people want to eat.

These tiles were supplied by American International. Two years earlier Mapei representative Heather Yario had introduced DTI to ULTRALITE light-weight cementitious mortar, and the installers used it to set the wall tiles in the restaurant. The tiles were then grouted with KERACOLOR U premixed, polymer-modified grout, with anti-mould protection ensured by BioBlock® technology. The Marriott and their designers decided to highlight special areas with mosaic glass tile from Virginia Tile. In a range of colors from yellow to



Photo 1.

White and red ceramic tiles were laid on the walls of the restaurant area. ULTRALITE light-weight mortar was used for the bonding and KERACOLOR U cementitious mortar for grouting the tile joints.

Photo 2.

After removing the original marble, the floor substrates in the lobby area were levelled with ULTRAPLAN EASY self-levelling compound.

Photos 3 and 4.

Red granite slabs were laid on the floor next to the bar with ULTRACONTACT; joints were grouted with ULTRACOLOR.

The same products were used for installing the natural stone slabs on the remaining sections of the ellipses and for grouting the joints.





**Mapei Products:** the products mentioned in this article (**Mapelastic 315, Mapecem 100, Primer L, Ultraplan Easy, Ultracontact, Adesilex P10, Ultralite, Ultracontact, Keracolor U, Ultracolor**) are manufactured and distributed in the American market by Mapei Corp. (USA). For further information please see the web site [www.mapei.com](http://www.mapei.com).

## SCHEDA TECNICA

**Marriott Downtown Hotel, Chicago (USA)**

**Year of Construction:** 1978

**Year of Intervention:** 2008

**Intervention by Mapei:** supplying products for laying screeds, levelling substrates in the lobby, for waterproofing the bathroom surfaces, for laying and grouting ceramic tiles and granite slabs on floorings and walls in the lobby, restaurant area and restrooms near the meeting rooms

**Designer:** VOA Associates

**Client:** Marriott Hotels

**Works Director:** Andy Johnson (Bulley & Andrews)

**Contractor:** Bulley & Andrews

**Laying Company:** DTI (Dave's Tile of Illinois)

**Laid Materials:** ceramic tiles and natural stone slabs

**Mapei Distributor:** MidAmerica Tile

**Mapei Co-ordinator:** Heather Yario, Mapei Corp. (USA)

gold to orange, the DTI team installed the glass tile on the entrance wall to the restaurant, the front of the concierge desk, a fireplace facing in the lounge and the front of all the serving stations in the restaurant.

A Starbucks shop located near the check-in counters also carries out a glass-tile theme, though the tiles are 5x5 cm rather than the mosaics used in other areas.

For these jobs, the installers used ADESILEX P10 mortar to enhance the

colors in the glass tile and then grouted with KERACOLOR U.

The public restrooms near the meeting rooms were set with 30.5 x30.5 cm ceramic tiles.

In this area DTI installers waterproofed the bathrooms with MAPELASTIC 315, then bonded the tile on the walls with ULTRALITE MORTAR and those on the floor with ULTRACONTACT. The joints of the wall tiles were grouted with KERACOLOR U, and the floor joints were grouted with ULTRACOLOR. The

Marriott Downtown on Magnificent Mile was a fast-track construction project that put significant pressure on DTI and Bulley & Andrews to perform the installation in a very short time. Work began in the restaurant in November 2007, and the project was completed by March 2008.

All the installations in the lobby were finished in just 11 weeks. This project showed what experienced floor-layers and professional products for installation can accomplish together. 