

★★★ ★★★ CASAILE

The Hotel Casale in Colli del Tronto, Italy, is housed in a 17th century farm complex that was restored with a combination of traditional materials and the latest installation techniques.

by Francesco Stronati



Although Venice, Florence and Rome are enchanting places that no traveler should overlook on his or her Italian travel itinerary, these are not the only must-see destinations. Italy offers countless other opportunities for expanding one's horizons, magical places where visitors can lose themselves amidst beautiful, unspoiled landscapes for a privileged glimpse at a side of Italy most tourists never see.

Travelers looking for relaxing yet culturally rewarding vacations should not miss the Hotel Casale, a holiday hideaway and health resort located in central Italy near Ascoli Piceno, an area rich in history and hospitality. The hotel offer its guests luxurious accommodations in a carefully restored complex of farm buildings dating back to the 17th century, in an atmosphere that combines the rustic and the refined.

Modern comfort with traditional flavor

Proper installation methods and the right adhesives were required to install



PHOTO 1

the hotel's sumptuous floor and wall coverings. 15x30 cm (6"x12") and 7.5x30 cm (3"x12") terra cotta tiles were selected for the approx. 4,000 square meters (46,000 sq ft) of paths and patios in a warm shade that harmonizes perfectly with the Casale's 17th century architecture (Photo 1). After the sand and cement substrate was completely cured the terra cotta was installed over it with KERAFLOR® mixed with ISOLASTIC® diluted 1:1 with water. KERAFLOR is a cement-based adhesive that can be applied in thicknesses of up to 15 mm, so it ensures thorough transfer of the adhesive to the entire back of the tile, compensating for small irregularities in the substrate and on the



PHOTO 2

MAPESIL AC is an acetic silicone sealant whose flexibility enables it to absorb

deformations up to 20%. This makes it ideal for withstanding the movements caused by thermal expansion of the floor.

Interiors with inlaid accents

Terra-cotta was also used inside the hotel. It picks up the warm tones of the old buildings and provides continuity with the exterior (Photo 2).



PHOTO 3



PHOTO 4

The tiles were installed with KERAFLOOR mixed with water. Various natural stone inlays of Ascolano and Persian travertine, yellow Siena marble, red Verona marble and other stones were used to give the floor a richer look. GRANIRAPID, a fast-setting and hydrating adhesive system, was used for these special installations. It dries so fast that stone can be set without staining. Other types of marble were used in areas such as the hotel dining room which offers typical local cuisine (Photo 3). The room's Venetian pattern of Bianco di Carrara and Verde Alpi marble necessitated using two different types of adhesive. The Bianco di Carrara was set with GRANIRAPID*, while the Verde Alpi was installed with KERALASTIC*, a two-component polyurethane adhesive, because thin slabs of Verde Alpi warp very quickly in the presence of moisture, even the small amount contained in the adhesive before it has time to set. The result is a floor with small undulations that is not thoroughly bonded to the substrate. KERALASTIC contains no

tile back. Mixing KERAFLOOR with ISOLASTIC substituted for part of the mix water gives the adhesive the flexibility needed to absorb the various movements between the floor and the substrate caused, for example, by thermal shock.

The 8 mm joints were grouted with KERACOLOR LARGE GRAIN*, a factory-prepared cement-based grout that was applied over the entire surface of the tiles. This was done so it could penetrate evenly into the pores of the terra-cotta and not just fill the joints. Expansion joints were placed in a grid pattern of approximately 6x6 meters (19'x19') and sealed with MAPESIL AC* after first applying PRIMER FD* to the edges of the tiles.



PHOTO 5

water so it can be used to install moisture-sensitive stone without warping.

The hotel's beautiful location amid rolling green hills convinced its owners to open a multi-functional Beauty Farm on the site (Photo 4). Bianco di Carrara, Asiago and Verde Alpi marble was installed on the floors throughout the spa and in the bathrooms. GRANIRAPID was used for the Bianco di Carrara, and the Asiago, and KERALASTIC for the Verde Alpi, as in the hotel dining room.

GRANIRAPID was also used to install clinker flooring in the two meeting rooms of the hotel. The Ascoli travertine was set with KERABOND*, a powdered ceramic tile adhesive (Photo 5).

Waterproofing

Single-fired 20x20 cm (8"x8") and 10x10 cm (4"x4") ceramic tiles were used in the bathrooms of the hotel's 70 antique-furnished guest rooms. The tiles were installed with KERABOND and the 4 mm wide joints were grouted with KERACOLOR modified with FUGOLASTIC*, a water dispersion of synthetic latex polymers. When FUGOLASTIC is used instead of water to mix KERACOLOR, it makes grout more compact and more watertight while increasing its resistance to abrasion. The tiles were installed on the diagonal to form a subtly colored latticework pattern (Photos 6 and 7).

The outdoor Olympic pool (Photo 8) needed to be waterproofed before



PHOTO 6



PHOTO 7

installing ceramic tiles. After leveling the sides and bottom with a cementitious mortar, a 2 mm thick coat of MAPELASTIC*, a two-component flexible waterproofing mortar was applied with



PHOTO 8

fiberglass mesh reinforcing. When the MAPELASTIC was dry (4-5 days after application) GRANIRAPID was used to install 12x24 cm (4.5"x9.5") clinker tiles. These were then grouted with KERACOLOR mixed with FUGOLASTIC.

Expansion joints in the corners were primed with PRIMER FD, then sealed with MAPESIL AC. The indoor pool was also waterproofed with MAPELASTIC





PHOTO 9

before installing glass mosaic tiles with GRANIRAPID. The tiles were grouted with KERACOLOR+FUGOLASTIC (Photo 9).

Future tradition

Restoring these too often neglected relics of our agricultural past enables us to preserve them for future generations. These estates, handed down from father to son over the centuries, often contain a rich mixture of many different styles of architecture, as new buildings were built and old ones altered and added onto. Respecting their original rural character requires not only intelligent architectural planning but also the use of technologically advanced methods and products to achieve high performance results with traditional materials.

The Technical Data Sheets for the products mentioned in this article are contained in Mapei binder No. 1, "Ceramic Tile Installation Products".



TECNICAL DATA

Hotel Casale - Colli del Tronto (Ascoli Piceno), Italy

Built: 17th century

Restored: 1990-1995

Project manager: Nicola Tavoletti

Contractor: Pietro Vagnoni, Castel di Lana (Ascoli Piceno), Italy

Material used for the exterior floors:

15x30 cm and 7.5x30 cm Montecchi terracotta

Mapei products for installing the exterior terracotta*:

KERAFLOOR+ISOLASTIC

KERACOLOR LARGE GRAIN

Mapei products for the expansion joints*:

MAPESIL AC and PRIMER FD

Material used for the interior floors:

Smorlese terracotta, natural stone, clinker, Ascoli travertine

Mapei product for installing the terracotta in the interior*:

KERAFLOOR

For the natural stone and marble*:

GRANIRAPID

For the Verde Alpi marble*:

KERALASTIC

For the clinker*:

GRANIRAPID

For the Ascoli travertine*:

KERABOND

Material used for the bathrooms*:

Ragno 20x20 and 10x10 cm single-fired tiles

Mapei products for the bathroom installations*:

KERABOND

KERACOLOR+FUGOLASTIC

Material used for the outdoor pool:

12x24 cm Sire clinker

Mapei products for waterproofing, installation and expansion joints in the outdoor pool*:

MAPELASTIC

GRANIRAPID

KERACOLOR+FUGOLASTIC

MAPESIL AC and PRIMER FD

Material used for the indoor pool:

Bisazza glass mosaic

Mapei products for waterproofing and installation in the indoor pool*:

MAPELASTIC

GRANIRAPID

KERACOLOR+FUGOLASTIC

Mapei coordinator: Gianmarco Felicetti

*These products are manufactured by Mapei in Europe.

