

MAPEI COMES UP A WINNER AT NIAGARA FALLSVIEW CASINO RESORT



Several years ago, Niagara Falls, Ontario, began building a new future for its tourist-oriented community. The Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLGC) and Falls Management Company (FMC) began construction of the Fallsview Casino Resort, which would overlook the Horseshoe Falls (Canadian) and American Falls. Today, the \$1-billion (Canadian) entertainment complex houses a 200,000-square-foot casino, a 30-story luxury hotel with 368 rooms and suites, a 15,000-square-foot health and fitness spa, and an extensive shopping center. Ten different dining venues and a 1,500-seat ballroom/theater

enhance the amenities available to guests of the resort.

Architects from the Zeidler Partnership and Bregman and Hamann developed the facilities with a “belle époque” theme, reflecting the cultural refinement, social elegance and general prosperity and security of the last decades of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th prior to World War I. Wood, stone and other materials native to Canada were used whenever possible, and glass domes and floor-to-ceiling windows provide large amounts of natural light.

MAPEI products were used throughout the resort to bring a winning solution to many of the floor-covering installations. The Belluz Group, under the direction of Frank Belluz, put down 18,000 yards of carpet in the Avalon Ballroom. The Avalon is a state-of-the-art theater with 1,500 seats on three sides of a large stage area, a special VIP viewing area and balcony. Belluz used MAPEI’s *Ultrabond ECO™ 185* carpet adhesive to install the Indonesian wool/nylon-blend carpet selected by FMC. Belluz says, “We always use MAPEI adhesives, because we have no problems and no callbacks. When we talked to the carpet supplier, they recommended a premium adhesive and were quite satisfied when we suggested *ECO 185*.”

The Belluz Group also installed granite and marble tiles in the entrances to the casino, as well as in the gaming-floor bathrooms and the Grand Buffet inside the casino. For these areas, they used *Mapelastic™ L*, *Ultracontact™*, *Ultraflex® 2*, and *Keracolor™ S*. Belluz said, “Overall, the greatest challenge was the construction schedule. By the time the flooring was due to be installed, the project was behind schedule, but we had no worries because we could rely on the MAPEI products. We knew they would work right the first time, every time.”

The Gateway area encompasses all the public space that surrounds the casino and features a magnificent fountain element, which periodically erupts in a display of color and light. A shopping mall winds through the main floor of the complex, hosting an array of luxury boutiques. GEM

Campbell Inc. installed the 60,000 sq. ft. of flooring in this area, which consisted of five different types of stone – one granite, two different marbles and two different limestones. Project manager Flavio Ellero commented, “The complexity of the design was the most difficult aspect of this job. All the types of stone were individually cut using a water-jetting technique in order to follow the designs of the developers. All the cutting had to be completed off-site. Then, the stones were delivered to the project, sorted, ordered and installed according to the pattern.” The floor-covering installation flowed up to and around the fountain element, so GEM Campbell workers used *Mapelastix 315* with mesh for waterproofing. The stones were set with *Ultracontact* and *Ultraflex 2* and then grouted with *Keracolor S* in white. Ellero praised MAPEI quality: “At GEM Campbell, we use only MAPEI installation products. They work fine, and we never have a problem. The technical personnel are great and are always there to back us up. The MAPEI warranties are solid, too.”

MAPEI also came up a winner for York Marble, who installed Botticino Royale marble in the bathrooms of the 368 hotel rooms. York project manager Glen Pestrin was especially pleased with the waterproofing work in the bathrooms. “In addition to a rubber liner, we used *Mapelastix 315*. It made the installation doubly secure.” York’s installers used *KerTM 121* professional-grade mortar to set the marble in the bathrooms and grouted with *Keracolor U* and Kerapoxy[®] grouts. York Marble covered all the column bases in the Gateway area and throughout the casino using *Ultraflex 2*. They installed the granite bench around the fountain element with MAPEI’s *KerabondTM /KeralasticTM* system. Pestrin also put his trust in MAPEI. “The level of quality required and the time constraints, as well as the intricacy of design, presented a formidable challenge. It was nice not to have to worry about our setting materials. We consulted with the MAPEI technical personnel before we began the project, and we got excellent support.”

On June 10, 2004, the Niagara Fallsview Casino Resort opened to rave reviews. It is now averaging about 25,000 visitors a day. It has helped put Niagara Falls back on the map as a major tourist destination and has enriched the provincial government of Ontario, which owns the resort. Fallsview is holding a winning hand, and MAPEI is one of the high cards.