

When the Chips Are Down . . .

MAPEI Holds the Winning Hand at Ontario Casino

Today, residents of Detroit, Michigan, can take a quick bus ride across the border to Ontario and enjoy the fun and games at Windsor Casino. When they get hungry, the Market Buffet downstairs offers an elegant respite. Gem Campbell Terrazzo & Tile, Inc. beautified the dining and serving area with 11 different types and styles of tile, all installed with MAPEI adhesives and grouts for lasting reliability.

As part of an extensive renovation, the Ontario Lottery & Gaming Authority contracted for a brand-new permanent buffet on the lower level of the casino. Gem Campbell was asked to complete the complex 40,000-square-foot (3 716 m²) installation in only ten weeks. With all trades working in the area at one time, the installers were pressed to let others back onto the floors as quickly as possible. The *Granirapid*[®] System came to the rescue. Flavio Ellero, the project manager, had his team install Schluter Ditra uncoupling membrane with *Granirapid* and then fill the top side waffle patterned voids with *Granirapid*. As soon as the *Granirapid* dried, the other trades could get back on the floor until the tile installers came back to set the tile, also with *Granirapid*. (MAPEI consulted with Schluter regarding this application; and the two companies agreed that, given the time constraints and job conditions, this particular application of the Schluter Ditra uncoupling membrane with *Granirapid* was the best solution to accommodate all the tradesmen's needs.)

In the main food preparation areas and the kitchen area, employees cleaned the walls regularly to prevent buildup of grease and food spatter. Their diligence led to water being absorbed into the old drywall, rotting the walls. During the renovation, these walls were replaced. Before tiling these areas, Gem Campbell waterproofed the walls with *Mapelastic*[™] 315. All the wall tiles in these areas were set with *Type 1*[™] and were grouted with *Kerapoxy*[®] to prevent staining.

Myriad different tiles were used to create the relaxing, yet cosmopolitan, effect the Windsor Casino wanted to achieve. As guests come down the stairs to enter the Market Buffet, they pass by a giant mosaic abstract on the wall, in a red, yellow and blue motif. The pattern is repeated on the floor in the dessert area. One-foot (0,30 m) squares of the ½" x ½" (12x12 mm) ceramic mosaic tiles from Ciot, in a style called *Appiani*, were installed from the center outward in a spiral layout on the floor, using the *Granirapid*® System mortar, while the wall pattern was installed with *Type 1*™. "The mesh-mounted squares were pre-numbered, and we installed them according to a drawing sent to us by the factory in Italy," said Ellero. "The floor pattern had to be carefully matched because we were spreading out from the center in a circle."

On the floor in the vicinity of the bar, Ellero's team installed *Xilo Black* porcelain tile from Stone Tile to define the area and give it a contemporary look. Abutting this spot, they set a charcoal black porcelain tile called *Shabui* from Centura. A blend of *Shabui* in various sizes and shapes was used throughout all parts of the serving areas. These tiles were set with *Granirapid* and grouted with *Ultracolor*® for a fast-drying installation.

In the dining space, the *Xilo Black* tiles were repeated in a horizontal pattern on the walls. Here they were installed using *Type 1* and *Ultracolor* grout. Continuing the theme of checkered bands running throughout the millwork, Gem Campbell installed 2" x 2" (5x5 cm) *Interstyle Mosaic Blend* glass tiles from Vitro Ceram above the expanse of banquette seats in the center of the room. It closely matched the tiles installed in columns by the millworkers and complemented the checkered tile themes in many of the serving counters. The floors around all the serving stations were tiled with Ciot's *Uti Inni* porcelain tiles in two shades – 12" x 12" (30x30 cm) squares of Grigio and 6" x 18" (15x46 cm) rectangles in the Tobacco Line Brush hue. Of course, *Granirapid* mortar and *Ultracolor* grout were used here, too.

As is usual with all buffets, variously themed stations present diners with a wide selection of foods. At the Market Buffet, each station and its surrounding quarters boast unique tiles that

contribute to the ambience. Across from the “Little Italy” food station, Ellero’s team installed *Prism Caramel* 3” x 6” (7,5x15 cm) glazed ceramic tiles from Olympia. They set the orange tiles vertically in a brickwork pattern using *Type 1*. On the opposite wall, Metro’s *Zen Narrow Beige* and *Zen Narrow Bianco* formed a horizontal pattern, with a wide band of *Zen Narrow Maroon* bisecting the pattern mid way up the wall. Behind the server station at “Little Italy,” the installers used *Type 1* again to apply a combination wood and mosaic marble tile called “Petras” from Italian manufacturer Casablanca.

Diners can change from Italian to Oriental in just a few steps. On the walls of the “Asian Flair” food station, Ellero’s group installed a high-gloss ceramic tile from the *Mosa* line by Holten Impex. The mixture of colored 6” x 6” (15x15cm) tiles, applied with *Type 1* and grouted with *Ultracolor*, give a very different visual flavor to the fresh-cooked foods.

The seafood station went nautical with lighted “portholes” set amidst moss green and medium blue tiles from the Olympia *Merit* series. “This part of the installation took us longer than we expected,” said Ellero. “The 2” x 4” (5x10 cm) tiles came on one-foot (0,30 m) square sheets, but we had to peel each tile off and set it individually with MAPEI’s *Type 1* to achieve the mixed-colors effect. We grouted the walls with *Kerapoxy* in this area for stain resistance and easy cleaning.” The floor of the seafood station, as well as the floor of “Asian Flair” were set with Daltile’s 4” x 8” (10x20 cm) *Mountain Quarry* tile in a shade called Brush Fire. *Granirapid* mortar and *Ultracolor* grout were used on these floors.

Because Gem Campbell had only 10 weeks to complete the entire installation, they worked with upwards of 25 men on the job at all times during two shifts that stretched from 7:00 a.m. in the morning to as late as 1:00 or 2:00 a.m. in the night. They even worked Saturdays and Sundays. “Our biggest challenge was working around the other trades,” said Ellero. “We had to jump around a lot, and our greatest concern was to make sure patterns that started from opposite sides of a layout met seamlessly in the middle. We always use MAPEI’s surface preparation and tile

installation products, so we had no worries from that angle.” He concluded, “When it was all finished, I think we held a winning hand! We’ve been selected to start work on a second level of the casino this August, and we’ll be using MAPEI to make the job run smoothly.”