

# Monticello Replica

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

MAPEI supplied surface-preparation products (as well as waterproofing and tile-and-stone-installation products) that were used in the construction of a mansion in Somers, Connecticut, that replicates Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States.



## PROJECT INFORMATION

<b>Project Category:</b>	Residential – Single-family home
<b>MAPEI Sales Rep:</b>	Mike Shay
<b>Project Owner:</b>	S. Prestley Blake
<b>MAPEI Distributor:</b>	Best Tile of Springfield, MA
<b>General Contractor:</b>	Laplante Construction, Inc.
<b>Installer Company:</b>	Marcus Tile
<b>Photographer:</b>	Meryl Tihanyi
<b>Project Size:</b>	10,000 sq. ft. (929 m <sup>2</sup> )



## MAPEI PRODUCTS USED

- Planicrete® AC
- 4 to 1™ Mud Mix
- ECO Prim Grip™
- Mapelastix™ AquaDefense
- Ultraflex™ 2 – white and gray
- Ultraflex LFT™ – white
- Kerabond/Keralastic™ System
- MAPEI Flexcolor™ CQ – pewter
- Keracolor™ U – white
- Ultracolor® Plus



# Monticello Replica – Somers, Connecticut

## Friendly's co-founder builds replica of Thomas Jefferson's home

S. Prestley Blake, co-founder of the Friendly's restaurant chain in the United States, has long been an admirer of Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the U.S. and principal author of the country's Declaration of Independence. As he approached his 100th birthday, Blake purchased property from a neighbor's estate in Somers, Connecticut, and set out to build a replica of Jefferson's home.

With the help of Bill Laplante of Laplante Construction, Inc., Blake obtained the complete plans for the original Monticello. Jefferson's home is 11,000 sq. ft. (1,022 m<sup>2</sup>) in size, while Blake's replica finished out at 10,000 sq. ft. (929 m<sup>2</sup>), including a modern three-car garage in the rear. While Laplante worked to recreate the exterior of the replica as nearly as possible in red brick, cement and limestone, the interior boasts up-to-the-minute modern fixtures and appliances to delight the new owners Blake plans to sell the home to.

While Jefferson's Monticello boasted five outdoor privies, Blake's Monticello has five luxurious indoor bathrooms and four half baths, all done in custom tile. The biggest challenge for installers from Marcus Tile was setting the many different shapes and sizes of porcelain and mosaic tiles and stone designed for each bathroom, including Best Tile's Almond Beige marble (Turkey), Spring Cloud limestone (Philippines), Sant Agostino tile (Italy), Jeffrey Court tile and mosaics (USA), Quemere crackle ceramics (USA), Ceramiche Caesar tile (Italy), Dom Ceramiche tile (Italy), Stonebridge At 59th stone and tile (USA), Cosa Marble (USA), Stonelmpressions patterned tile (USA), Onyx France stone and tile (USA), and Lunada Bay (formerly Stone and Pewter) handcrafted tiles (USA).

A different challenge arose outside on the second floor. In the space above the three-car garage, Marcus Tile installed a 1,300-sq.-ft. (121-m<sup>2</sup>) patio that overlooks the 10-acre (4,05-hectare) property. For this second-story deck, the construction code required a precisely pitched roof before the tiles could be installed.

### MAPEI products at work on the jobsite

From the exterior roof deck, through the elaborate detail of the interior and all the way to the tiled garage floor, MAPEI was the obvious choice for Ron Napolitan, owner of Marcus Tile. Ron used a variety of products to suit each application.

For the exterior patio above the garage, Marcus Tile crews first laid a drainage mat over the primary membrane, as well as 2" (5 cm) of **4 to 1 Mud Bed Mix** combined with **Planicrete AC** acrylic latex admixture to smoothly screed the surface to the proper pitch. **Mapelastic AquaDefense** membrane was applied next to waterproof the substrate. The installers then set 18" x 18" (46 x 46 cm) Ceramiche Caesar porcelain tile using the **Kerabond/Keralastic** mortar system. The

joints were grouted with **MAPEI Flexcolor CQ** pewter ready-to-use grout.

For the interior, all floors were prepped using 1/4" (6 mm) backer board over 3/4" (19 mm) plywood. The backer board was set in **Ultraflex 2** gray tile mortar and nailed according to specifications. **Mapelastic AquaDefense** was used as a cleavage membrane between the backer board and the marble that was installed on the floors.

The laser-cut marble in the master bathroom was installed over a heated floor mat set with **Ultraflex 2** white. **Kerabond/Keralastic** white was used to set the tiles on the shower floor, while all other tiles were set with **Ultraflex LFT** white tile mortar. The joints in the floor tiles were then grouted with **Ultracolor Plus** premium grout, which was the best solution for the marble used there. Wall tiles were grouted with **Keracolor U** unsanded grout.

Large-format tile in the other bathrooms were set using **Ultraflex LFT** white, and the joints were filled with **MAPEI Flexcolor CQ**. Napolitan says that he and his installers enjoy using **Ultraflex LFT** because of its tenacious grab.

The shower pans in the curbed walk-in showers used **4 to 1 Mud Bed Mix** screeded to pitch for the base. Backer boards installed on walls and shower floors were waterproofed using **Mapelastic AquaDefense**. (The curbless showers were also waterproofed with **Mapelastic AquaDefense**.) The tiles on the shower floors were set using **Kerabond/Keralastic** System. All tiles in these bathrooms were grouted with **MAPEI Flexcolor CQ**.

Porcelain and ceramic tiles and mosaics installed in the kitchen backsplash, as well as the antique wall tile in the downstairs powder room, were set using **Kerabond/Keralastic** System. The tile and mosaic surrounds of the seven fireplaces in the mansion were set with **Ultraflex LFT** white. These many different tiles were all grouted with **MAPEI Flexcolor CQ**.

In October 2014, S. Prestley Blake celebrated his 100th birthday at a reception in his Monticello replica. MAPEI is proud that its products helped make Mr. Blake's vision a reality.

