

Multiculturalism is Key to Aberdeen Centre
MAPEI Insures Owner's Vision is Realized in Tile and Stone

Aberdeen Centre, named after Hong Kong's famous tourist port, was originally built in 1989 in Richmond, British Columbia. The shopping mall sported an Asian theme, designed to appeal to the burgeoning Pacific Rim population of the period. It was very successful, and the area around the centre became known as the Aberdeen District.

As the region developed Thomas Fung, CEO of the Fairchild Group, who owns Aberdeen Centre, redefined the vision of the six-acre property to include a wider multicultural appeal – a venue where East truly meets West. In May 2002 the old shopping centre was torn down completely, and a new shopping and entertainment complex three times the size of the original began taking shape in its place. By December 2003 everything was completed, and the brand new 380,000-square-foot Aberdeen Centre opened to the public.

Gracefully curving walkways showcasing more than 250 retail shops and eateries surround a central three-story galleria and give onto a large, amphitheatre-style court at the end of each of the three levels of the mall. Varying tints and types of glass used on the centre's façade reflect light and colors day and night in a unique lantern effect. Random skylights that shed natural light on all three floors provide an open-air ambiance.

Each level has a special focus. An open-air market and Asian arts and crafts highlight the first floor. The second level is given over to high tech electronics, and even includes a new automobiles showcase. On the third floor, patrons of Aberdeen Centre will find an intriguing social lifestyle area where they can relax at the Food Court and enjoy the entertainment in the Promo Court. There is also a special themed children's area planned for this level.

To insure that such an innovative cosmopolitan project lived up to its owner's vision, the contractor, Dominion-Fairmile Construction, selected MAPEI products for concrete surface preparation and tile installation. *Mapelastic™ SM* was chosen as the crack isolation membrane because it was so user friendly to construction traffic and easy for the tile setters to work on as they laid out their installation. Mapecem Premix was used on select areas of suspended floors to screed and level out the railings.

Large tiles (16" x 16") were being set, so Ultraplan 1 was applied in a variety of "low pocket" areas to prevent lippage and unevenness in the tile work. Ultracontact, with its unique formulation, was used to eliminate back-buttering of the tiles, providing excellent mortar coverage and speeding up the installation of the 165,000 square feet of porcelain tiles manufactured by Fabrica Marmi E Graniti and distributed by Savoia Canada Inc. Ultracolor grout was chosen for its color consistency to give the perfect finish.

The project went well, and the project managers were very pleased about the results achieved with MAPEI products. Luigi Federico, our local sales representative, was always on hand to help, visibly demonstrating our motto "MAPEI ... for you!"