



**Globally Proven
Construction Solutions**

Semi-Precious Stone Mosaics Pool Project Spotlight: September 2012



LOCATION:
Private Residence, CA

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER:
Juan Pablo Molyneux & Skip Phillips
Escondido, CA

TILE CONTRACTOR:
Rock Solid Tile, Inc.
Los Angeles, CA

LATICRETE DISTRIBUTOR:
Bonanza Trade & Supply
North Hollywood, CA

Semi-Precious Stone Mosaics Pool

by Ron Treister

Throughout history, Lapis Azul has been described as a gemstone that might have come straight out of the Arabian Nights. Characterized by a deep blue color, its body has golden inclusions of pyrites which shimmer like little stars. When Alexander the Great first showcased it throughout Europe, this distinctive color was referred to as ultramarine, which indicated "from beyond the sea."

Fast forward to modern times, where recently Lapis Azul was used "besides the sea" in one of the most outstanding pool installations one could imagine. It is located at a private residence, facing the beach alongside the Pacific Ocean.

Rock Solid Tile, Inc. of Los Angeles, California, is an elite tile contractor which over the years has taken the process of installing tile for swimming pools to the ultimate level. With a resume including some of the most unique and immediately recognizable water feature projects worldwide, owner/president Jimmy Reed, not surprisingly, approaches every job in a very unique way. "Step One is to connect with the owner or the designer, the person who leads the team," he states. "Step two is to make sure we can provide above and beyond what is the client's expectation."

"Most people," continued Reed, "are not familiar with what entails a high-end swimming pool. Their image is to just 'tile the pool' and after that, the job is done. From our standpoint, that really isn't the case, as a high-end swimming pool is a completely different animal; it's much

more than just adhering tile to a water feature surface. Rather, it's actually a very structured, complex process which consists of very detailed steps that result in building a stunning piece of art for the environment." Reed went on to state that when working on any pool project, his firm's job doesn't begin or end with the visuals. "As far as we're concerned, it has to be a bulletproof installation which lasts a lifetime. Any failures occurring after the tile installation are not an option."

Rock Solid Tile's Lapis Azul pool installation is a good example of that.

Designed for an ultra-private seaside California home, this relatively small pool was built for owners who only spend a couple of weeks per year at that residence. In particular, they wanted a pool big enough to enjoy when they were together with family and friends on its surrounding stone deck living area.

"We used The LATICRETE® System for the entire project," commented Reed. This included LATICRETE 254 Platinum (grey) for the initial bond coat, followed by LATICRETE 3701 Fortified Mortar Bed for all of the leveling that was required. For the waterproofing aspect, there is no substitute for LATICRETE Hydro Ban®. From there we used LATICRETE 254 Platinum again as the adhesive to adhere the tiles. Then finally we used LATICRETE SpectraLOCK® PRO Premium Grout* to finish it off."

As with all of their projects, throughout the installation, whenever necessary, Reed and his team were in contact with the technical



department of LATICRETE, under the direction of Arthur Mintie. "LATICRETE supports us at all times. It's good to know we always have direct access to top professionals such as Art and his staff."

LATICRETE® 254 Platinum was the logical thin-set to be used for this Rock Solid Tile project; in particular, because it works at optimal levels for underwater applications. LATICRETE 3701 Fortified Mortar Bed was selected because it has superior working and physical properties when compared to site mixed leveling mortars. And for every water feature, LATICRETE Hydro Ban® is the waterproofing membrane of choice. Reed chose this single component, self-curing liquid rubber polymer because it forms a flexible, seamless waterproofing membrane and bonds directly to a wide variety of substrates.

"The Lapis Azul was stone material, not a translucent glass tile. As a result, there was not the need to illuminate the glass by using white thin-set beneath it. That's why we opted for LATICRETE 254 Platinum in grey rather than white," added Reed.

The deck area surrounding the pool was clad with beautiful natural travertine tile. Solid 1/4 inch plates of stainless steel were mounted around the deck's periphery as to support the coping detail for the Lautner Edge. From there, 2-1/2 inch thick travertine coping was adhered to these plates using LATAPOXY® 300 Adhesive, which not only offers an incredibly strong bond, it also prevents curling on moisture-sensitive stone material. Additionally, it will not stain lighter colored stones such as travertine.

"There are two strong reasons why we enjoy working with firms such as Rock Solid Tile," said

Arthur Mintie, LATICRETE Director of Technical Services. "First of all, the visuals which result from his company's work are always awesome, cutting-edge designs. Secondly, we know that when we work with Jimmy Reed on a pool project, he not only clearly understands the importance of tile being installed correctly; he's open for technical advice and very responsive to it. When he says he wants his company's tile installations to be 'bulletproof,' he obviously means it!"

Reed concluded, "We specialize in luxury tile installations for swimming pools, spas and other water features. Working with designers, architects and owners who appreciate and focus on quality and detail, our goal is always to satisfy our clients and walk away from each and every project knowing that we were an integral part of creating a thing of beauty that will last a lifetime.

"To accomplish this, we depend on LATICRETE products. We know they are easy to install, we know they are long-lasting... and, we know that whatever support we need will always be immediately available."

