

press information

shopping centre / urban design / retail architecture / opening / zagreb / croatia

a superlative shopping centre

WEST GATE Zagreb

- **Record construction time: A total built area of 227,000m² in just 15 months**
- **The largest shopping centre in Croatia: GLA 100.000 m²**
- A large volume with a façade reminiscent of barcodes wrapped in a red steel scarf (à la croate)
- No façade games, disciplined advertising signage
- Croatia as theme (façade, interior spaces)
- Interior spaces: absence of the colour white, very bright
- Mediterranean character
- „Dancing” shopfronts, oversized floor-to-floor heights
- „Unending triangular relationship” triangular, continuous racetrack mall with elliptical plazas
- No defined centre, no design or functional focus. Each point of the building is important.





about West Gate ...

As the first part of the “retail landscape” of Shopping City Zagreb, West Gate is a shopping centre of European dimensions. Few such centres have lettable areas of more than 70,000m² – which are required in order to be rated as “very large” by the International Council of Shopping Centers

Although it is located right at the entrance to Zagreb, West Gate is also a perfect representative of the “Shopping goes green” trend. For in addition to its dedicated motorway access for private cars, the complex has its own railway terminal, visible from the main Zagreb – Varazdin railway line, which makes West Gate the shopping centre in the Zagreb Area which is **integrated into the public transport network.**

In addition to being important in its own right, however, West Gate is also significant as the first element of a **retail landscape of European proportions**, with the approved Masterplan envisaging the phased development of an additional 500,000m² of retail space and related infrastructure. Do-it-yourself, furniture and car showrooms as well as all other operators in the retail park sector will be catered for in the retail park which has been conceived to be developed alongside West Gate, all of which will combine to make Shopping City Zagreb **a unique location on the European scale.**

In comparison with similar centres – such as Shopping City Süd in Vienna – which have become established over time via a more or less architecturally and functionally haphazard series of developments, this project represents a unique chance to create over one million square metres in a planned fashion.

As a focus for both retail and entertainment activities in the Northern part of the SEE region, the excellent transport connections (West Gate is just one hour from Ljubljana and 90 minutes from Graz) the centre will have a particularly strong effect in such neighbouring countries as Slovenia, Hungary and Austria. The result will be a shopping centre with European significance – a significance which can only increase as Croatia approaches EU entry.

*Christoph M. Achammer, Architect
CEO and Partner/Architecture, ATP Architects and Engineers
Professor in the Department for Industrial Building
and Interdisciplinary Construction Management, TU Vienna*

architectural concept

TASK

The conceptual design of West Gate, the central element of the future Shopping City Zagreb, began around three years ago. Our task was to develop "The Superlative Shopping Centre": the largest, most interesting and most functional shopping centre in the region.

TOPOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

The context and location of the centre between key regional roads and the Krapina River is marked by its hilly landscape. This highly specific and very exposed situation made it necessary to develop a subtle architectural and urban design vocabulary. Our aim was to design an object which, viewed from above, had something of the form of a spaceship but whose colours and form also established a strong horizontal presence and whose contemporary appearance created an identity for the surrounding area.

FUNCTIONALITY

A close examination of the functionality of the building raises the issue of formal functionalism. The eight different entrances are clearly articulated and easy to see. They render the building accessible from every side. The eastern part of the centre contains the five-storey parking garage which, together with the external areas, offers six thousand car parking spaces. In order to grant a sense of unity to the huge complex (total built area: 226,000m²), it is wrapped in a red "scarf" created from perforated steel sheet. In its role as a national symbol the scarf provides the link between the functionality and design of the centre and the context of Croatian tradition.

As well as being a symbol, this scarf has a specific function in that it is part of the logistics concept for the building. Deliveries are made to the centre of the complex which is reached via a 200m lorry tunnel.

PROGRAMME

The design of the building and of its interior reflects

the combination of a certain rhetorical and narrative approach with a functional and architectural task which is, in effect, somewhat minimalist. In this, the architectural design becomes an aesthetic reinterpretation of practical reality.

The spatial principles behind the building switch between the special and the commonplace as if switching between a shopping temple and a bazaar. A key tool here is functional integration, whereby shopping is mixed with sport (ice skating rink, bowling, etc.) and entertainment (indoor children's play centre).

MALL - 3 AREAS

Upon entering the building visitors immediately become engaged in a spatial "discussion", which allows them to instrumentalise the space in the sense of an urban shopping context. These urban shopping elements are separated into three mall areas, with each meeting point between malls being marked by a Plaza. The sensual urban form and detailed design of these plazas owe much to the interesting geometrical possibilities offered by the triple cone form.

Special attention was paid to the question of natural lighting. Long slots in the ceilings of the malls come together in the three glass roofs over the plazas.

The three mall areas take their themes from three distinct Croatian landscape types: coastline, mountains and the Pannonian plain. As well as improving orientation, the use of these three themes also helps to entertain and surprise – as well as enhance the shopping experience of – visitors and customers.

This integration into our architecture of the notions of TOPOS and MAN creates emotional added value in all phases of the design process.

*Dario Travas, Architect, Partner and Managing Director, ATP Zagreb
Studio Head - Architecture/Design ATP Vienna*



architecture

GENERAL

The building is located in the heart of a site of around 250,000m² and is part of Shopping City Zagreb which, with an area of over one million square metres, is the largest retail complex currently under construction in Croatia.

Developed by a consortium of Austrian investors led by Redserve GmbH and designed by ATP Vienna a new dimension of shopping centre – and with optimum transport connections (such as to the A2 and the toll gates) - is being developed. Vienna is three hours away by car and Graz less than 90 minutes.

The 250 shops have a total retail area of 100,000m². The total area – which corresponds to more than 1,200 single family houses - is being realised in a record time of 15 months with more than 1,500 workers currently active at West Gate and around 2,000 jobs being created in the new centre. The mix of outlets ranges from large retail chains such as Mercator, Peek & Cloppenburg, Marks & Spencer, Zara, C&A, New Yorker, Benetton, Lacoste, Nike, DM, Müller, Humanic, Stiefelkönig, Hervis, Pitarello and Intersport to carefully selected locally operated restaurants. An ice skating rink measuring 400m², an international scale bowling hall and a 3,500m² indoor playground combine to form the entertainment centre of the complex.

FAÇADE

The thermal skin of the façade reinterprets the bar-code - the symbol of the shopping experience - in the form of a two-dimensional surface. In line with an EAN code, such abstracted numbers traditionally contain birthdates or other important information. This bar-code façade is further filtered through a perforated steel band in the form of a scarf, the French translation of which - "cravatte" - is derived from the use of the phrase "à la croate" to describe a colourful knotted scarf wrapped

around the neck. This steel 21st century scarf is wound around the centre in much the same way as the soft historical original with the knots marking the entrances to the building.

INTERNAL SPACE

The internal circulation is conceived as a continuous triangular mall with elliptical plazas located at the corners of the triangle to aid orientation.

These plazas form sub-centres within the complex creating specific identities via the use of different colours and planting schemes and generous rooflights.

The ground and upper floors are linked together by these atriums, which allows the daylight falling from the rooflights to reach ground floor level.

In the stretches of mall linking the plazas, chill-out-zones with comfortable seating and greenery allow for periods of relaxation during or after the shopping experience. Fountains with horizontal and vertical water surfaces add identity to these zones and link the two levels.

The individual zoning of the internal spaces – and in particular of the beige stone floors and ceiling and appropriately dynamic greenery - creates something of a Mediterranean flavour. The choice of plants seeks to reinterpret the Croatian landscape within the artificial world of the shopping centre as a means of creating a natural and sympathetic internal environment.

*Andreas Schaller, Architect, Project Leader,
ATP Architects and Engineers, Vienna
Associate*

facts and figures

Project Name: West Gate

Address: Zapresic/Zagreb, HR
www.westgate.com.hr

Construction Start: July 2008
Completion: November 2009

Site Area: 250,000m²
Built Area: Approx. 87,000m²
Total Floor Area: 227,000m²
Retail Space: 100,000m²
2 Stories, 250 Shops
7,250 Parking Spaces, including 2,500 on the parking deck

Integrated design: ATP Architects and Engineers, Vienna

Design: Dario Travas

Project Leadership: Andreas Schaller

Text: © ATP Architects and Engineers, reproduction free of charge.

Visualisations: © ATP Architects and Engineers, Reproduction free of charge

ATP Press Office: Dr. Barbara Achammer
barbara.achammer@atp.ag, T: +43 699 1011 4921

