

Project: The Oceanaire® Seafood Room
Location: Houston, Texas
Architect: 20 Below Studio and GHA Architecture/Development
Product: Pilkington Profilit™ translucent channel glass system



Pilkington Profilit™ is Key Design Feature in Houston's The Oceanaire® Seafood Room

Famous for its high-end department stores, specialty shopping and quality restaurants, the Galleria Mall in Houston, Texas, is the city's top shopping and tourist destination, attracting more than 24 million visitors each year.

In a city with many world-class eating establishments, capturing the attention of diners is critical for a restaurant's success. When the Oceanaire® Seafood Room decided to open in the Galleria, they recognized that exceptional architecture goes with exceptional food in creating a memorable dining experience.

The challenge facing the project architects was to create a dramatic presence and a focal point for the restaurant on the outside corner of a very large shopping mall. This was made more difficult by the restaurant's surroundings – a large expanse of building with a flat, plain façade.

To create a light and open feel for the restaurant and to draw patrons toward the entry, the restaurant's design architects, 20 Below Studio, Minneapolis, Minnesota, chose Pilkington Profilit™ channel glass (architect of record was GHA Architecture/Development, Dallas, Texas). The 20 Below Studio design team used the structural glass channels to form a sweeping, three-tiered oval structure approximately 35 feet high that curves around the corner of the restaurant. The translucent glass softens the corner of the building, without obscuring it, eliciting a watery effect that complements the restaurant's seafood theme.

"Structural channel glass provides many options and we've used Pilkington Profilit for a number of projects," says Betsy Vohs, project designer with the 20 Below Studio. "It has the ability to hold light, but also diffuse it, which creates an evocative quality."

Pilkington Profilit's "U"-shaped, linear cast-glass channels are self-supporting and mounted in an extruded metal perimeter frame to provide a truly distinctive architectural feature. The glass is available in a variety of colors and textures with varying translucency, allowing for the passage of natural light without loss of privacy. This very versatile product can be installed vertically or horizontally and is available in lengths up to 23 feet, with either tempering or filming options available to meet impact safety requirements.

Because of the shape of the glazing system, it can achieve very tight radiuses or can be used in serpentine applications. Intermediate vertical mullions are generally not required for vertical installations. Additional benefits include strong thermal performance, sound transmission control and adaptability to seismic code requirements.

"For the Oceanaire, we liked that channel glass is structurally stable and can be used to redefine how light plays into a space," says Vohs. "It's a really special material."

For more information on Pilkington Profilit, along with TGP's other specialty glass and framing systems, visit Technical Glass Products online at www.tgpamerica.com or call (888) 397-3473.

