



HARD ROCK HOTEL & CASINO ATLANTIC CITY ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.

Part I of II - Collaboration helps meet an accelerated schedule

By: Amanda Gibney Weko

CASE STUDY

AGI Glazier

CMS Strauss Glass Co.

Atlantic City, N.J.

Team

Owner: Hard Rock Atlantic City

GC: Exterior Scope: JINGOLI

GC: Interior Scope: TN Ward

Architect: SOSH Architects

Scope

Ornamental metal, mirrors, and decorative glass; storefronts, railings, display cases, shelving

Completion

June 2018



Combined decorative metalwork and mirror in the Hard Rock Cafe lobby; all photos © Joe Garvin

INTRODUCTION

The Hard Rock brand is recognized around the globe – not only for its ubiquitous t-shirts and merchandise but also for its cafes, hotels, music venues, and vast collections of memorabilia. For its newest location in Atlantic City, N.J., the brand called upon an extensive team of design and construction professionals to transform the former Taj Mahal into the new Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City. Two AGI member glazing contractors figured prominently in the design and installation of glass throughout the 2,000-room hotel and its 15 food and beverage offerings.

Be sure to read the [Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City Case Study II on the work of Guthrie Glass & Mirror, Inc.](#)

CMS GLASS SCOPE

CMS Strauss Glass Co. has provided glass, mirror, and decorative metal products to businesses in Atlantic City for more than 30 years. Owned and operated by Stephen and Ellen Strauss, CMS

has become known for intricate and customized applications. When the company began in 1985, metal seemed to be part of most project requests. Beginning with brass, the company evolved to specialize in many other types of metal. Today, ornamental metal work comprises approximately 45 percent of the business. Hard Rock Atlantic City displays the company's skillsets in both glass and metal. The design included elaborate combinations of stainless steel, blackened brass, and bronze plus mirrored, painted, etched, and silk-screened glass.

The Hard Rock Atlantic City project involved a gut renovation of the casino lobby and all public spaces. The extremely accelerated schedule meant there was little time for the traditional shop drawing process. Instead, many items were purchased before final design was complete, necessitating additional layers of complexity and making open and frequent communication among all teammates a priority.

The CMS scope of work included all railings on the casino floor, custom metal and glass casino cashiers' stations, the Art Deco-inspired brass and painted steel in the Legends VIP Lounge, ornamental cages and doors in the simulcast betting area, the Rock Shop® retail portal entrance and mirrored ceiling, freestanding brass and laminated glass features in the VIP check-in area, and mirrors and decorative glass throughout the lobby.

FINE DINING

Each of the hotel's food and beverage venues features a component by CMS, from custom-fabricated handrails to display cases and decorative elements, including the mirror glass and metal screen that welcomes guests to the Hard Rock Café.

In Kuro, the property's new style Japanese restaurant, 11-foot-tall panels reminiscent of paper screens were fabricated in brass with etched and painted glass. The panels layer around 100 feet of the restaurant, dividing it from the adjacent high-limit area of the casino. For the restaurant's dramatic storefront entry, CMS created blackened bronze tubing and trellises with custom wavy cutouts and silkscreen glass.

In Robert's Steakhouse, custom stainless steel and glass shelving hangs above the bar, providing storage for glassware and bottles; CMS fabricated the shelving and performed all of the structural reinforcement work in the ceiling.

DESIGN COLLABORATION

CMS worked closely with SOSH Architects and interior designer Jeffrey Beers International. "Because the schedule was so accelerated, lead times forced us to make some substitutions," Stephen Strauss explained. "We searched all over to find what would work best with the designers' lead times, and we provided A and B options." He added that this research and dialogue ensured design intent and realistic delivery went hand-in-hand. CMS then fabricated all of the metal used on its scope of the project.

TIGHT SCHEDULE

The project's tight schedule required CMS to come on-site in March 2018 in anticipation of a June opening. According to Strauss, his team worked seven-day weeks for 21 straight weeks. He personally worked every day in the office ensuring his crew in the field had the materials and manpower needed. Project Manager and Foreman Joe Restuccio ran the project, fielding repeated requests to add more to the scope and coordinating with the other trades working at the same pace to accomplish their tasks. "It was a good project, and everyone worked well together," Strauss added. "It was a challenging job, but it all came together in the end."

Top to bottom: metal railing detail on the casino floor, ornamental metal detail at the Legends VIP Lounge, glass and metal in the interior of the Kuro Japanese restaurant, storefront entry to Kuro, custom stainless steel and glass display shelves in Robert's Steakhouse

