

AD

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

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Kelly Wearstler Creates a Jaw-Dropping Mosaic for Her New Hotel

The AD100 designer assembled a trove of Portuguese tiles at the new Austin Proper



"Tiles look beautiful on a fireplace in a living room, on the walls of a kitchen, in a vestibule," reflects Kelly Wearstler. "You could skin an entire room. There are truly no limitations with such gorgeous material." Except, perhaps, when demand exceeds supply. On a trip to Lisbon, the

AD100 designer fell in love with a collection of vintage Portuguese tiles at the family-run boutique Cortiço & Netos. But because each of the azulejos was available only in limited quantity—barely enough for a backsplash, let alone a whole wall—she had to get creative. “Many patterns had only 10 tiles,” recalls Wearstler, who set about assembling the array into a floor-to-ceiling mosaic at The Peacock, a restaurant at Proper Hotel’s new Austin outpost. First using digital modeling, then working hand in hand with an artisan, she juxtaposed the various motifs (some floral, others geometric) into a rhythmic patchwork of color and texture. The wall now serves as a graphic backdrop to the Mediterranean menu, not to mention a source of local pride. Notes Wearstler: “The layered, individualistic look mines a tradition of artistry and craftsmanship distinct to Austin.” properhotel.com

