# QUALITY COLORS.



# **Case Study**

ESO Hotel, Cerro Paranal, Chile

**COLORED** CONCRETE WORKS®

An initiative of LANXESS

**QUALITY WORKS.** 



# A BOARDING HOUSE ON MARS.



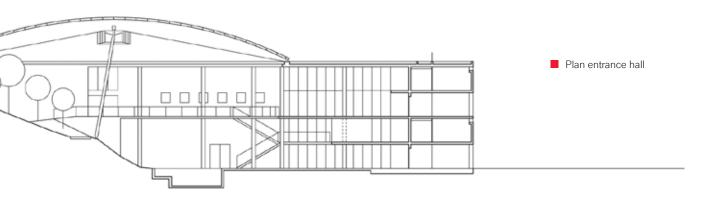




## Living and working in the desert.

The European Southern Observatory (ESO) is located 2,600 metres above sea level in the Cerro Paranal region of the Chilean Atacama desert. The ESO Hotel situated in direct proximity functions as a quest house for the scientists conducting research in the observatory for temporary periods. The building was designed by the Munich architectural firm Auer+Weber+Architekten. With its exposed concrete pigmented by iron oxide, the monolithic construction fits in perfectly with the desert backdrop, which is reminiscent of a Martian landscape. The thermally inert properties of the massive concrete structure have a favourable influence on the interior temperatures, since the extreme temperature variations between day and night can be buffered. In this way, the thermal energy stored by the concrete over the course of the day is transferred gradually to the inside rooms at night, creating a pleasant room temperature.

The concrete was colored with iron oxide pigments to reflect the reddish tones of the desert, allowing the highest degree of optical integration with the landscape.



# **COLOR AS PART OF THE**

# ARCHITECTURE.

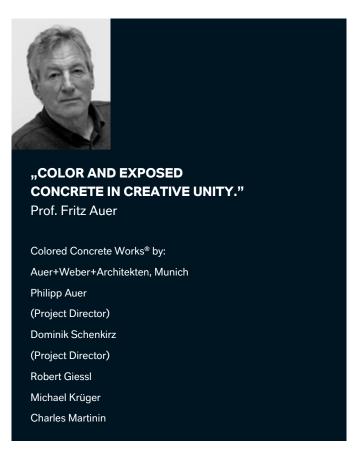


# The building – part of the landscape in the changing light.

In this desert wilderness shaped by strong gusts of wind, the building resembles a large plateau cleared by erosion. The structure has only one façade which faces the Pacific and the setting sun. It is here on the wind-sheltered side that all the hotel rooms and offices are situated. The intention of the architects was to create a location that appears to be free from the steady progression of technology, such as that observed in the neighbouring telescope facilities. After their arduous research work in the observatory, scientists are offered the necessary amenities and the opportunity to regenerate, in the sense of an oasis. The warm earth tones of the concrete underline this conceptual approach.

The color saturation of the structural elements strengthens the monolithic character of the building, enhanced by the fact that the interior wall surfaces were also left untreated.





■ Views from the hotel



# EXTREME CLIMATE CONDITIONS REQUIRE CLEVER SOLUTIONS.

# **BAYFERROX**<sup>®</sup> pigments – as if made specifically for the desert..

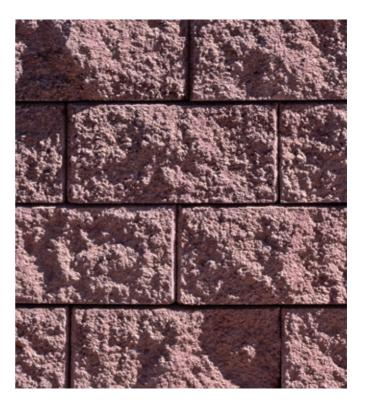
For the ESO Hotel project, pigmentation was undertaken directly on the construction site. A somewhat risky venture, since one could never be sure with the exposed concrete construction whether local pigmentation might cause unwanted color changes. Therefore, the high-quality outcome was all the more surprising: the very irregularities – initially the cause of concern – created pleasantly varying surfaces that harmonise with the changing hues of the desert.

In order to formally integrate the overall construction within the surrounding scenery, and even allow the building to appear like a piece of solidified landscape, colored concrete was used in stead of painted concrete. In this way, the reduced exterior appearance of the ESO Hotel could be supported by a perfect match to the environmental hues. And this with amazingly low construction costs of just 8.7 million euros. This relatively low contract price is attributable on the one hand to a superb feat of planning and logistics as a "work package" and on the other, to the construction concept – a "refined building shell".

The structure features exposed, site-mixed concrete throughout.







 Cast and colored concrete blocks against the adjacent soil background offer ideal thermal and optical attributes.



■ The building's rigorously structured exposed concrete façade faces the Pacific and stores up the thermal energy absorbed during the day. Due to the limited number of openings, it offers adequate protection from extreme sun radiation.

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# **PROJECT DATA**



#### **Address**

Cerro Paranal, Chile

## Client

ESO European Southern Observatory, Munich, Karl-Schwarzschild-Str. 2, 85748 Garching, Germany, Robert Fischer, Phone 089 32006-0

## **Overall planning**

Auer+Weber+Architekten, Munich Philipp Auer (Project Director) Dominik Schenkirz (Project Director) Robert Giessl, Michael Krüger, Charles Martin

## **Production time**

1998 - 2002

## **Gross floor space**

12,000 m<sup>2</sup>

### **Gross volume**

40,000 m<sup>3</sup>

#### **Net internal area**

8,000 m<sup>2</sup>

# **Pigment**

BAYFERROX® 600 N 2.3 %, by weight of cement

### Concrete

Compressive strength class C20/25 (B25) and C27/37 (B35)



BAYFERROX® 600 N 2.3 %, by weight of cement