



## Playa del Mar Condominiums

### Landmark 1970s Beachfront Property Gets Long-overdue Restoration

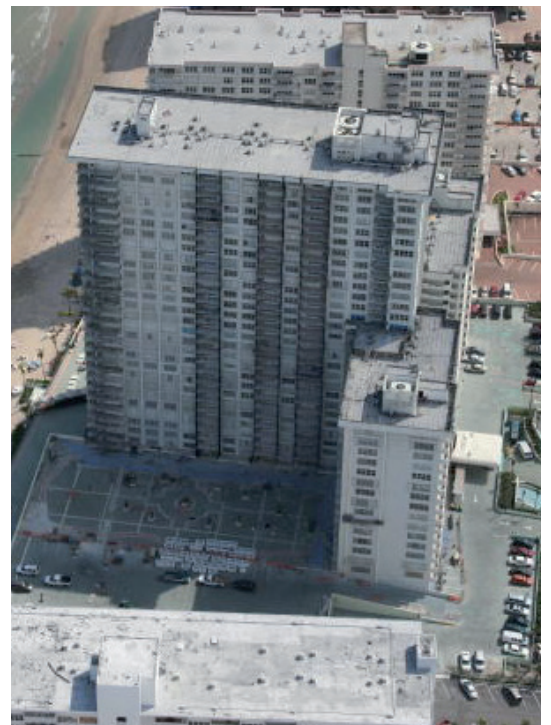
Playa del Mar was showing its age. Built in 1973 on the beach on Ft. Lauderdale's internationally famous Galt Ocean Mile, the popular 370-unit property on the water had fallen prey to the water. Years of water intrusion and neglect had taken their toll, with all the balconies of the main 27-story tower and two 16-story wings showing moderate to extensive corrosion damage.

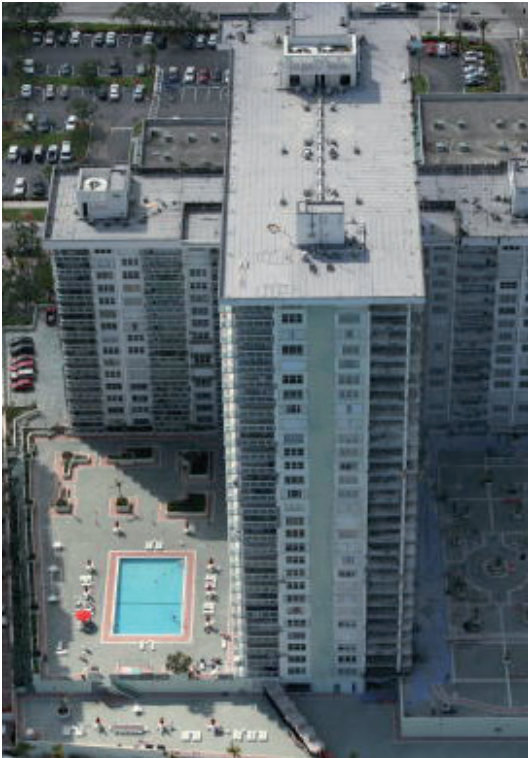
Ed Napalatano, long-time resident, and association president at the time of the restoration, remembers: "This was a neglected property. It hadn't been painted in 14 years, and in addition to the sad state of the balconies, the facade of the main tower was cracked, had significant water damage as well, and needed painting. The residents were grumbling, and some loudly."

- Read more on the next page! -

Sto Products: - StoCoat® Lotusan®  
- Sto Decocoat®  
- StoPowerwall® Stucco

Applicator: -  
Contractor: Structural Preservation Systems  
Engineer: Sri Consulting Engineers  
Contact information: [www.stocorp.com](http://www.stocorp.com)





Sri Consulting Engineers of Boca Raton, Florida was brought in to do a structural survey, using ground-penetrating radar on each balcony to determine the extent of the damage. Rajpathak, owner of Sri, put the project out to bid, and with 10 to 12 years of experience with Sto products, specified Sto products that were ultimately tapped for the work.

Sto Extended Full-Depth Repair Mortar (CR311CIX), Sto Full-Depth Repair Mortar CI (CR311CI), and Sto Overhead Mortar (CR702CI) were all to be used in the balcony restoration. Decocoat, Sto's sprayable decorative coating, was used for the balcony surfaces, StoCoat® Lotusan® paint, named for the moisture-shedding properties of the plant, was specified for the main tower facade, and StoPowerwall® stucco got the nod for the preliminary repairs to the same.

Tomas Hernandez was about to get his first exposure to the Sto product line. Hernandez was the project engineer/project manager for Structural Preservation Systems (SPS) of Pompano Beach, Florida, the contractor chosen for the project. Hernandez said, "For Playa del Mar, given the scope and nature of the work, we felt that the well-documented water-proofing properties of several of the specified products were a good call in this case."

Raj also cited the "shrinkage-compensation" factor for his satisfaction with Sto's mortar line. As he observes, "Many products claim they're shrinkage-compensated, but cracks show up over time." Raj concedes that while that could be an installation problem, "If I see the problem showing up consistently, I'll stick to a product I know historically performs better. We only had one or two 're-dos' out of 340 balconies. That says something about the product itself."

The balcony restoration lasted two years, with several stops and starts for hurricane activity. Work began with the removal of all tiling. Many residents had laid tile on their balconies, and water seepage through the grouting had been a main cause of the extensive corrosion.

Tiling removal was followed by mortar repairs, using both Sto Full-Depth Repair Mortar and Sto Extended Full-Depth Repair Mortar for all full- and partial-depth repairs, along with Sto Overhead Mortar for the underside of all partial-repair balconies. Corrosion inhibitor was laid down, and then Sto Decocoat® – applied in a three-step process: primer, coating, and sealant.

Hernandez and his crews found Sto Decocoat® to be user-friendly: "When you're working on balconies close to windows, doors and walls, overspray can be an issue. But because of the low pressure used in the application process, and the fact that Sto Decocoat® itself is stickier, and more likely to adhere – not disperse – it makes for minimal overspray."

Raj found his own reasons to like Sto Decocoat®: "Not only does it give me a choice of colors, but I can create patterns on its surface. A lot of people like to tile their balconies, and I can create the effect of tiling on the surface." In addition, Raj noted Decocoat's excellent adhesion properties, explaining: "Because it adheres so well to the concrete, there's very little surface area between the coating and the concrete where penetrating water can accumulate and corrode the concrete, like it does with actual tile."

The main facade of the 27-story tower featured a textured surface with small stones imbedded into the facade, many of which, over time, had come loose and actually become





projectiles. The holes the stones left behind plus many additional cracks become entry points for water and eventual spalling. Sto's lightweight Powerwall® stucco was used to make the repairs to the facade, whose textured finish was replaced with a smoother one. Powerwall® can be applied at half the thickness – and hence, more rapidly and cost-effectively – than traditional stucco. After the facade repairs, StoCoat® Lotusan® was applied.

Hernandez summed up his initial exposure to Sto products: "Because of my positive experiences with them here and elsewhere, I'm more likely to spec them in the future."

Ed Napalatano, when asked what the residents think of the work, replied, "Everyone seems to love their balconies, especially the floor patterns in the Sto Decocoat®. A very high percentage of folks absolutely love what was done. We had about nine hurricanes during this process, including a few bad ones, and that dragged the job out longer than it might have been, but it was all worth it, and we got a more than our money's worth. If I had to do it all over again, I'd do it with the same people and the same products."

