



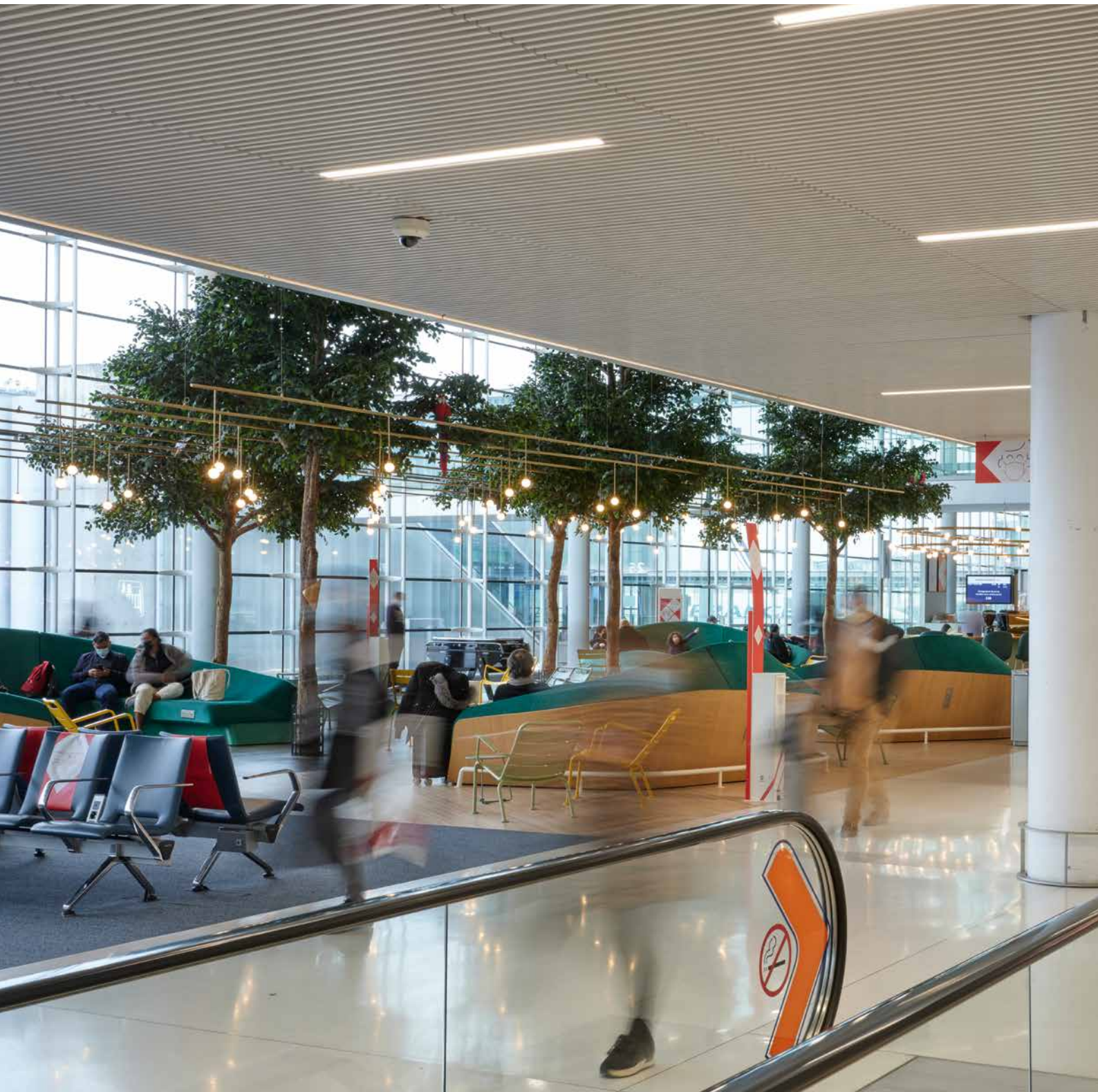
How it's Made

Charles de Gaulle Airport



# Background

The Charles de Gaulle airport is one of the world's biggest airports when it comes to freight transport and ranks 9th in the world for busiest airports. In addition, it is the largest airport of France. To ensure and safeguard the highest level of quality, the airport made significant investments to renovate and extend its terminals in the last decade. This is done in phases and is an ongoing process. In collaboration with our sales unit Hunter Douglas France, Derako has already produced and supplied in excess of 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> of Grill Pro-line in different variants for this beautiful airport.





# Design and implementation

The design of various components at the airport was done by the ADP Group. Karine Droit-Mijoule, Agency Relations Architect for the ADP Group, explains: “An airport is a living organism: the use, the expectations of users and the standards to which it is designed are constantly evolving. Its architecture therefore still remains a topic of discussion.”



## Focus on aesthetics

The goal of the design was, essentially, to provide customers with a space that is better aligned to the new standards and with a general vision for the next decade. The implemented changes have resulted in a true transformation: improvement of the readability of the route, revitalising and tidying up the boarding area and improving the experience. The design was mainly focused on aesthetics, but the practical aspects were also a major component. Access to the plenum played a major part in this, so that access to the technical installation for maintenance purposes is still possible.

## Aimed at attracting luxury brands

In 2016, the shopping area Hall K was completely renovated: “We sought to develop the area and to innovate. Moreover, the image had become old fashioned: it had nothing to do with the luxury shopping brands we wanted to attract”, Marc Angély, interior designer and agency director at Groupe ADP, explains. “Work had to be done to recompose the space and the atmosphere to create a setting where luxury brands, such as Cartier, Hermès, Chanel, Dior, Tiffany or Gucci, could express themselves with respect for their own concepts.”

## Use of ceilings and walls

In the design, the choice was made for:

- Derako solid wood grill panels with a white colour finish, for a soothing and light effect.
- The wood type African Ayous. Lightweight and natural in appearance.
- Adding of safety and maintenance features. More than 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> in special access hatches was worked into the project.
- Quality and delivery reliability. All wood systems were produced in a consistent flow and quality and delivered in phases.



## Specifications

Architect: ADP Group

Wood type: African Ayous

Dimensions: Grill Pro-line 7 - 37 - 19,8 - 42

Finish: In colour and transparent



### **Advantages of solid wood**

The architects of the ADP Group chose wood for its indisputable advantages. Firstly in the area of aesthetics and acoustics. Wood is renowned for the warmth and comfort it radiates. “It is a very engaging material that fits into any interior”, Marc Angély says. In addition, wood also offers great mechanical advantages. In particular, the strength of the material. “Knowing that the ceilings will be subjected to many maintenance operations, which means that it might be frequently assembled and disassembled. Wood is a stronger material for this than, for example, aluminium, which ensures no warping occurs.”



### **Very environmentally friendly**

The environmental question also played a part in the choice of solutions. Karine Droit-Mijoule explains: “This is the major challenge the RE2020 is facing. We have been seriously looking at all of this for some years now, but it is certain that the environmental issue is becoming more important. Marc Angély confirms: “Groupe ADP has set itself the target of zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2050. Environmental standards all play a part. Therefore, our suppliers must offer handmade solutions.” The wooden ceilings, which naturally store CO<sub>2</sub>, were therefore a perfect choice for this futureproof, sustainable renovation plan.



### **Collaboration with Derako and Hunter Douglas**

Karine Droit-Miljoule and Marc Angély are both very satisfied with the collaboration. Thanks to the offering of samples and prototypes. Marc Angély confirms this: “We were given the opportunity to choose for ourselves what works for this project.” For example, the supplier organised a visit to the Netherlands, enabling the designer to choose from different wood types to subsequently reserve the required quantities in advance. For Karine Droit-Miljoule and Marc Angély, Hunter Douglas and Derako were able to demonstrate their knowledge and their experience with these projects. The interior designer explains: “Due to the broad product range, we were able to find solutions with which we could create a layout and atmosphere of the highest quality.”



## Technical challenges

Where the aesthetic aspect was essential in the choice for the solid wood ceiling, the practical aspect was also very important. For various halls, easy access to the plenum was required, for safety and maintenance purposes. The number of technical installations in the plenum behind the grill ceilings at this location is substantial. In addition, the preference was for an open ceiling structure, so that any developing smoke could be extracted through the joints.





### **Deadlines and continuity**

In these types of projects, the existing technical limitations are taken into account. Given the strict deadlines and the continuous business operations at the airport, primary structures, in a specific frame size, had to be reused. These provide support for the new suspended ceiling in hall L. Through the use of 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> of made-to-size hatches in the wooden grill ceiling, the safety and maintenance of all technical installations is safeguarded. Previously, the hatches were manufactured from steel and aluminium. That made them too heavy and unwieldy for the regular maintenance. The new hatches are a lot lighter and are outlined in multiple rows. This way, the technical staff can conveniently perform its maintenance duties.

The scale of this project was also a challenge. Due to our industrial production process and experience with the purchasing of wood, after the years terminal 2E in hall L is completely renovated to a consistent quality standard. During this phase, we phased in 1-year timeframes and designed, manufactured and delivered the solid wood grill panels according to schedule. In doing so, the accessibility of the terminals was maintained, so that the continuity of flights could be maintained.



# Result

The solid wood grill system has definitely resulted in a transformation. Halls L and K were previously very dark and stuffy, with a lot of steel and dark carpet. By using wood in a white colour finish, combined with white cast concrete floor panels with light-reflecting parts, the whole place now has a much fresher and lighter look.



## First shop Louis Vuitton after renovation

It is clear to Karine Droit-Mijoule that the hard work has achieved its goal: “The entire atmosphere has been renewed: looking at the interior design and the new materials, it has changed completely. After the renovation, the luxury department store Louis Vuitton opened its first shop in this area of the airport. This demonstrates the success of this project and the quality it exudes.” Karine Droit-Mijoule concludes: “The result for both projects is completely in line with the qualitative challenges we anticipated.”

While in 2019 Charles de Gaulle airport ranked 30th in the Skytrax ranking of best airports in the world, ADP achieved another goal. In 2022, Paris-Charles de Gaulle achieved 6th place in the ranking. It has also been proclaimed the best European airport for customer-oriented products and services. A beautiful result for the hard work and efforts of all parties.



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