



## Ceramic Tiles of Italy

### **CERAMIC TILES OF ITALY 2008 SPRING PREVIEW Trendsetting Tiles Set to Launch at Coverings 2008**

(Spring, 2008) The Italian pavilion at Coverings is the premier place to see the top new tile introductions under one roof. From metallic colors to glamorous patterns to innovative formats that are either extremely large or quite small, the space will be a showcase for trendsetting new products from Italy. Year in and year out, American buyers count on Italian tile manufacturers to come up with design solutions that are fresh and fashion-forward.

#### **Organic Solutions**

Sustainability and a green lifestyle are top of mind for today's architects, designers and even end-consumers. In itself, tile is an innately sustainable surface and therefore an ideal choice. Furthermore, Italian manufacturers adhere to strict production guidelines and many are recipients of the prestigious European Eco-label, EMAS and ISO 14001 certifications. Tiles that are made in Italy combine outstanding technical benefits with appealing aesthetics. One of the most popular options available on the market is a faux bois tile, which will not only last forever but also help to preserve the outdoors. These tiles are available in elongated planks, squares and chevrons. The offerings also include basket-weave textures, knotty pines mixed with metallic and wood replicas in any hue from the color chart.

The Italians are also sponsoring seminars across the country to spread the message about the benefits of using tile for ventilated wall facades. This is a cost-effective and energy saving answer to exterior cladding.

#### **Luxe Appeal**

In this style-driven market, Italian tile collections are on the A-list with designs that mirror this season's top runway and ready-to-wear looks. With a sea of new introductions in this category, there has never been a better time to dress up an interior. Thanks to continuous advances in technology, visitors to the Italian pavilion at Coverings 2008 will be treated to a new and notable selection of herringbone, hounds-tooth, damask and floral patterns. Whether shown in an oversized format or a small mosaic, these luxe looks will make a grand statement in the marketplace.

#### **Much More Metallic**

This ubiquitous trend is taking hold of the US market. It is evident in all sectors of high-end design, especially the world of Italian tile. One great example of this move towards metallic is the Ceramic Tiles of Italy booth, which was designed using silver and gold tiles from close to 20 different Italian manufacturers. From silver and gold to platinum and bronze, the list of shimmering colors increases each season and the finishes just get better and better. Many Italian companies are infusing glazes with metals to capture true iridescent qualities. Metallic pieces can be used as accents, but nowadays architects and designers are installing large format ceramic and porcelain tile for entire floor and wall applications. These sleek and shiny surfaces will be presented in all shapes, sizes and patterns. Be on the lookout for edgy designs that are embossed or in bas-relief.

#### **Color Wheel**

Black, white and shades of gray topped the charts at all the major shows this year and promise to continue their dominance at Coverings. Italian manufacturers will show off collections in this classic

color scheme. Just like the dresses worn by the top actresses on Oscar Night, red is also a hot color in the design scene. This bold color looks great either mixed with black and white or as an accent. Other rich colors including grey-plum, mustard, marigold, emerald and cobalt will be seen throughout the Italian pavilion.

### **Like a Rolling Stone**

Thanks to advances in technology and state-of-the-art manufacturing techniques, Italian manufacturers can recreate the chromatic shades and natural veining of the finest stones including marble and onyx. Fabulous textures, rich colors and polished finishes make these porcelains look so much like the original material that it is impossible to differentiate between the two. Plus their outstanding and unrivaled technical features, makes Italian tiles even more appealing.

### **Graphic Design**

Fabulous florals, optical illusions and geometric forms are just a few of the surface images that will make headlines at Coverings. Designers agree that pattern is on the top of everyone's list this season. From a subtle, tone-on-tone damask print to vivacious circles cast in bright colors, the Italians are taking this trend to new levels to ensure that there is a tile for every style.

For more information on Ceramic Tiles of Italy visit the new gateway [www.italiantiles.com](http://www.italiantiles.com) - with links to four key industry sites: [www.italiatiles.com](http://www.italiatiles.com) (the official website of Confindustria Ceramica), [www.italytile.com](http://www.italytile.com) (the official website for the Ceramic Tile Department of the Italian Trade Commission), [www.s-tiles.it](http://www.s-tiles.it) (a tool that tracks the Italian tile industry's commitment to sustainable design) and [www.tilecompetition.com](http://www.tilecompetition.com) (a digital guide to the Ceramic Tiles of Italy Design Competition).

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