

Brazil's Tile Industry Gets its Fashion Week. 30,000 Expected

Contributed by Marina Sarruf
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The Brazilian ceramic tile industry exported last year a total of US\$ 429.7 million to 129 countries, an increase of 14.3% over 2005. Shipment totaled 114.3 million square meters. Of the total sold abroad last year, 45.8% was turned to North America, which purchased US\$ 196.9 million in tiles from Brazil.

To drum up even more business to the sector, Brazil is promoting the Brazilian Tile and Stone Exhibition (Revestir), which began yesterday, March 13, and will continue up to Friday, March 16, in São Paulo in southeastern Brazil.

The Brazilian civil construction industry considers Revestir the "fashion week" in the sector. Over 30,000 visitors are expected, among architects, decorators and interior designers at the event, where 150 exhibitors will be present. The fair organizers hope to receive 1,000 foreign buyers from 70 countries.

Revestir exhibitors are going to show the visitors at the fair the latest news in laminates, ceramic tiles, mosaics, special pieces and other covering materials and covering system products.

Among the companies showing their stuff you will find Gytoku, Porto Ferreira and Portobello, makers of ceramic tiles. The expectation of exhibitors is to generate US\$ 120 million in business at the fair.

Among the foreign exhibitors is a company from Lebanon, Phoenician Arts, leader in the development of handmade mosaics and marble produced with the same characteristics as those used by the Greek, Romans and Byzantine. Companies from Turkey, Spain, Italy, India and Peru are also going to exhibit at the fair.

In the sidelines of the fair there will be the 5th International Architecture and Construction Forum, to count on the participation of Greg Sang, project manager for the construction of Burj Dubai, in the Emirates.

He will give a talk on Thursday (15) about the construction of the tower that is expected to be the tallest in the world, at 700 meters.

The invitation to the engineer from Emaar Properties, the company responsible for the project, is an initiative by the Brazilian Association of Ceramic Tile Manufacturers (Anfacer) in partnership with the Arab Brazilian Chamber.

The Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce is going to have a stand to provide assistance to the Arabs and clarify doubts of Arab businessmen interested in doing business with the Arab market.

"The Arab Brazilian Chamber has been trying to provide support to Arab businessmen in the main events in Brazil. Our idea is to have people prepared to help and guide Arab and Brazilian businessmen interested in trade with the Arab market," stated Arab Chamber president Antonio Sarkis Jr.

This is going to be the first time that the Chamber participates in Revestir. "The construction sector is of great potential for the Arab world. It is a sector that we must bet on," stated the secretary general at the organization, Michel Alaby.

According to him, the Chamber is already participating actively in Big 5, the construction material fair in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, and is also promoting sector missions to the Arabian Gulf region.

According to Alaby, the construction sector in the countries in the Gulf has presented strong growth. It is expected that in coming years there should be yearly expansion of 11.6% in the sector.

According to figures supplied by Incite (a market consultancy in the countries of the Arabian Gulf), the demand for ceramic tiles in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) should reach US\$ 1 billion a year up to 2009, representing growth of 42% when compared to 2006.

Last year, Brazilian exports to the Arab countries of construction products, like doors, windows, floor tiles, ceramic tiles, metallic structures and aluminum plates, among others, totaled US\$ 255.76 million, an increase of 18.23% when compared to 2005. The main importer was the Emirates, with US\$ 77.95 million, followed by Saudi Arabia, with US\$ 45.88 million and Morocco, with US\$ 39.99 million.

According to Sarkis, last year, during the Big 5, Brazilian businessmen could see the potential of the construction sector in the Gulf and how much the countries are investing and that was how the idea of bringing an Emaar representative to Revestir arose.

"It will be a very interesting opportunity for Brazilian businessmen to see the reality of great works that are being executed in the Gulf region," he said.

Service

Revestir

Date: From March 13 to 16

Site: Transamérica Expocenter

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