



CERAMIC TILES OF ITALY HONORS HAPPY FLOORS WITH 2011 NORTH AMERICAN DISTRIBUTOR AWARD

(Spring 2011) After considering the work of hundreds of leading tile distributors across the United States and Canada, Ceramic Tiles of Italy is pleased to recognize Happy Floors as the 2011 recipient of the *Confindustria Ceramica North American Distributor Award*. Each year at *Coverings*, this award is presented to a prominent North American distributor in appreciation of their dedication to the promotion of Italian ceramic tiles in the marketplace. With 95% of its porcelain tile inventory made in Italy and sales representatives based in every major metropolitan area in the U.S., Happy Floors is able to provide high-quality, design-forward products to residential and commercial customers across the country.

As in past years, a Supervisory Committee, made up of members of the *Confindustria Ceramica* Board of Directors, compiled a list of criteria based on recommendations from Italian ceramic tile manufacturers. Judges' considerations included: long term competence and skill as an importer and distributor of Italian ceramic tiles; preference for Ceramic Tiles of Italy in light of their unique aesthetic and technical qualities; fair-trade practices in the commercial relationship undertaken with Italian manufacturers; and best showroom and corporate image. Based on these standards, Happy Floors emerged as the clear winner, standing out in each of the rigorous categories set forth by the Italian ceramic tile industry.

Founded in 1987, Happy Floors imports, distributes and markets high-quality ceramic and porcelain tile to the United States. The "Happy" in Happy Floors comes from an 80's song lyric, "Don't worry, be happy," which fittingly reflects Italians' sentiments. Headquartered in Miami with sales representatives based in major metropolitan areas in the U.S., Happy Floors is able to personally service customers in all 48 contiguous states. Their core client base of retail flooring stores and specialty tile shops rely on the company to make them "happy" with strict and unwavering dedication to customer service.

Happy Floors began importing tiles from Italy in 1990, which now account for the majority of the company's products. Happy Floors' current inventory includes a long list of Italian manufacturers including: Cedir; Cerdomus; Gardenia Orchidea; Energie Ker; Pastorelli; Tosco Ker; Rondine Group; Saime; Sintesti; Serenissima; UDA; and Vallelunga. According to James Nowicki, vice president and director of sales and marketing at Happy Floors, "Italy is the heart of the tile industry when it comes to innovation, quality, design and trends. No one seems to do it better. We feel fortunate to have strong suppliers who partner with us in a beneficial business relationship."

Since the company's inception, Happy Floors has been committed to affirming the inherently sustainable qualities of tile to the market. Ceramic and porcelain tiles do not contain or emit VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds), are low maintenance, and have a long life cycle but Italian tile manufacturers have also taken multiple steps to further reduce their carbon footprint and

conserve resources. As stated by Mr. Nowicki, “We’ve noticed more and more Italian companies producing tiles with a percentage of pre- and post-consumer recycled material, which also contributes to LEED points. We are pleased to promote such environmentally friendly tile products from Italy. We’ve even created new binders for the A&D community that only feature Italian tile products with recycled content.”

On March 15, 2011, Vittorio Borelli, vice president of promotional activities for Confindustria Ceramica, will present Happy Floors with the *North American Distributor Award* during Ceramic Tiles of Italy’s annual Serata Italiana event. The company will also receive a trip to Bologna, Italy to attend CERSAIE – the world’s largest exhibition of ceramic tile and bathroom furnishings – from September 20-24, 2011.

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Ceramic Tiles of Italy is the trademark for Italian manufacturers of ceramic tiles that are members of Confindustria Ceramica. For more information, visit the gateway www.italiantiles.com with links to our three key industry sites: www.laceramicaitaliana.it (the official website of Confindustria Ceramica), www.italytile.com (the official website for the Ceramic Tile Department of the Italian Trade Commission) and www.tilecompetition.com (a digital guide to the Ceramic Tiles of Italy Design Competition). For instant updates on Ceramic Tiles of Italy, visit www.facebook.com/CeramicTilesOfItaly or <http://twitter.com/tilesofitaly>.

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