



## **ITALIAN STYLE MEETS SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY AT COVERINGS 2013**

**(April 2013 – Atlanta, GA)** With Coverings making its Atlanta debut from April 29-May 2, 2013, Ceramics of Italy will offer its own brand of southern hospitality during the premier tile and stone event. The Ceramics of Italy booth (#2231) – designed by e+i studio and organized by Confindustria Ceramica, the Italian Association of Ceramics, with support from the Italian Ministry of Economic Development – will serve as a central hub of activity and hospitality on the tradeshow floor. Located in the heart of the Italian Pavilion, *Piazza Ceramica* will feature a large open gathering space, piazza-like steps, and a dedicated Italian culinary team in the popular café and coffee bar. It will also include an information booth where representatives from the Italian tile industry will distribute the latest promotional materials and information on the nearly 50 Italian tile brands on display.

### **Piazza Ceramica**

Since 1991, Ceramics of Italy has partnered with prominent architecture studios such as Bernard Tschumi, Aldo Rossi and Arquitectonica to create an exhibit during Coverings that does not only inspire attendees, but also serves the very functional purposes of reception, info point, café and trattoria. After wowing audiences last year – and receiving an Event Design Award for Best Trade Show Environment over 50'x50' from *Event Design* magazine – *Piazza Ceramica* will return to Coverings in Atlanta to serve as Ceramics of Italy's central stand.

Designed by e+i studio, a dynamic architecture and design firm based in New York, *Piazza Ceramica* will transform the 3,000 square foot space into a colorful, inviting and topographic piazza. On two sides of the exhibit, tile-clad steps in a gradient of colors essentially lift the corners of the pavilion to reveal the popular café, coffee bar and information booth. In the center of the pavilion, a large open gathering space serves as a social hub and channels the flow of visitors between the two mounds, which also double as seating. Guests can enjoy coffee and pastries in the morning, authentic Italian cuisine for lunch, and an open aperitivo in the afternoon, all prepared by the pavilion's long-running Italian culinary team: Carlo Donadoni and Graziano Sbroggio of Spuntino Catering in Miami.

As the focal point of the Italian tile industry during Coverings, the architects designed the pavilion itself to be a design showcase. From the floors and walls to the steps and countertops nearly every surface is wrapped in Italian tile featuring a range of products from Italian manufacturers including Atlas Concorde, Ceramiche Caesar, Emilceramica, Fioranese, Floor Gres, Lea Ceramiche, and Marazzi. The floor tiles, set on a raised flooring system, will feature impressive water-jet cutting by Stratos to achieve a colorful topography-inspired floor with the latest porcelain tiles from Italy. Grout, nosing and cleaning products were also donated by Mapei, Profilpas and Fila Industria Chimica.

Surrounding the central stand, nearly 50 exhibits from Ceramics of Italy member manufacturers will showcase the latest Italian tile products – from hi-tech porcelains to hand-made ceramics and mosaics. This year's trend forecast features everything from

long ceramic planks in wood and stone looks, 2cm-thick tiles for easy outdoor laying, and super slim tiles to geometric patterns, 3D textures, micromosaics and majolica-inspired tiles. In addition to tiles made with recycled content, new sustainable initiatives such as antibacterial and self-cleaning will also be prominent at the show.

Those looking for project inspiration should also head to the Italian Pavilion for a special interactive exhibit on the Ceramics of Italy Tile Competition. Now celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the contest showcases the work of prominent North American architects and designers who use Italian tile in their residential, commercial and institutional projects. The exhibit will demonstrate how the A&D community uses Italian tile in new and innovative ways – from inventive patterns to energy saving systems. Past project winners include Leo A Daly, Belzberg Architects, Karim Rashid and Rene Gonzalez.

### **Announcements and awards**

The annual Ceramics of Italy Press Conference will take place on Tuesday, April 30 at 4:00PM in room B208 where representatives from the association will discuss the state of the industry and promotional activities as well as trends. They will also announce the winners of the 2013 Ceramics of Italy Tile Competition who will present their projects in the institutional, residential and commercial categories. Immediately following, Ceramics of Italy will host a cocktail party in *Piazza Ceramica* (booth #2231) and announce the recipient of the 2013 North American Distributor Award, which celebrates the close connection between Italian tile manufacturers and their valued North American partners.

### **Installation Design Showcase**

Ceramics of Italy will once again have a strong presence at the Installation Design Showcase, an initiative organized by show producers and the National Tile Contractors Association (NTCA). For the fourth edition, Italian ceramic and porcelain tile will be prominently featured in two installations, which are built onsite in front of attendees to demonstrate the highest level of design and installation excellence.

The official Ceramics of Italy installation will be an edgy, avant-garde bar and lounge space designed by Atlanta-based architects Margaret Nysewander and Michael Neiswander, of ASD, Inc., in partnership with contractors from RimRock Design and Mapei, who generously donated the setting materials. Playing with scale and texture, the bar will be clad in red-toned tiles from Fioranese, Caesar and Fap and set against sleek, stone-look floor and wall tiles from Ergon, creating contrast and highlighting the installation's sculptural elements. Pulling the setting together is a group of jagged, colorful wall panels featuring tiles from Atlas Concorde and Fioranese. The installation makes the most of Italian tile as a highly functional, colorful, textural, sustainable, and durable material, making it the perfect choice for hospitality settings.

The role of Italian tile in the intersection of design and wellness will also shine in a second installation focused on healthcare. Using new products from several Italian manufacturers including Brix, Coem, Mutina, Impronta and Edimax, Atlanta-based design team, Mary Porter and Craig Anderchak, of VeenendaalCave Healthcare, will work with contractors from David Allen Company to create an inpatient room within a women's birthing center. The installation will highlight the material's hygienic and sustainable qualities while rethinking the aesthetics of healthcare spaces by using wood- and stone-look tiles, decorative mosaics, and ceramics that mimic other materials such as paper. The inpatient room will include an entry hall and an ADA-compliant bathroom as well as a realistic rendering of the remainder of the space.

Those looking for innovative building materials at Coverings should head to the Italian pavilion for inspiration. Ceramics of Italy will also be posting live updates and new product introductions from the Georgia World Congress Center on its Facebook ([facebook.com/CeramicTilesOfItaly](https://facebook.com/CeramicTilesOfItaly)), Twitter (@CeramicsOfItaly) and Pinterest ([pinterest.com/ceramicsofitaly](https://pinterest.com/ceramicsofitaly)) pages.

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Ceramics of Italy is the trademark for Italian manufacturers of ceramic tiles, sanitaryware and tableware, that are members of Confindustria Ceramica. For more information on the ceramic tile sector, visit [www.italiantiles.com](http://www.italiantiles.com).

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