

ITA 

ITALIAN TRADE AGENCY

ICE - Agenzia per la promozione all'estero e l'internazionalizzazione delle imprese italiane

Piano
Azione
Coesione



Piano
export
per le
Regioni
della
Convergenza



Ministero dello Sviluppo Economico

PAGE

2

CAMPANIA

The Genius and Art
of the Kingdom of Naples

PAGE

10

APULIA

Creativity and Tailor-
Made Living Rooms

PAGE

20

CALABRIA

The Rural Culture
of Artisan-Artists

PAGE

28

SICILY

Three Thousand
Years of Splendour



*Beauty comes
from Southern Italy*

MANUFACTURE AND DESIGN OF THE MEDITERRANEAN TRADITION

volcanic rock and marble

Sicily: the smithy of the gods



God of arts and crafts, Hephaestus, or Vulcan for the Romans, designer of the house of the Gods and supplier of Zeus' thunders, also constructed arms, statues and jewels with great precision. He was helped by a team of giants and another team of metal automatons in plated gold equipped with eyes, hearts, brains and arms. They carried out their tasks in a workshop in a cave below Mount Etna, the highest volcano in Sicily



Today it might be allowable to harbour some doubt about the activities and address of Hephaestus' smithy. What is certain and documented, however, is the activity of another great Sicily, Archimedes of Syracuse, to whom humanity owes among other things the formulae for calculating the area of a circle, the mechanical principles of the lever and innumerable other inventions, like the Archimedes screw for raising water. After Hephaestus and Archimedes, over the last three thousand years, scientists, architects and Greek, Carthaginian, Roman, Byzantine, Arab and

Spanish artists have worked in Sicily, leaving their mark on local products with a wealth and variety of decorations, shapes, techniques and materials. Let's begin with the simplest: stone.

VOLCANIC ROCK FROM ETNA

Volcanoes are both terrifying and fascinating when hundreds of tons of incandescent lava spill from their mouths. This lava is then deposited in surrounding areas, it cools and becomes volcanic rock, a material with inimitable characteristics of colour and resistance. It is a stone which, over the centuries, local artisans have learnt how to extract, cut and carve with an expertise com-

parable to that of working with marble. An art form that has always been used to adorn the façades of villas and buildings, carve fountains and statues, for laying floors both interior and outside in parks and public squares. Today it is available to designers and their clients all over the world, for the creation of very special places. All this is thanks to an industrial hub formed by 50 highly specialised firms that have developed new techniques for cutting and working the stone to obtain not only slabs for walls and floors, but also items of furniture such as tables, bath tubs and worktops. And the choice of shape, tone, colour and surface is absolutely vast.



WORKING WITH VOLCANIC ROCK

Pallinatura/bocciardatura The slabs are exposed to a jet of steel granules, which produces a surface similar to that of an orange. It is mainly used for floors, stairs, kerbstones and fountains. This process requires special machinery that roughens the surface even further.

Occhio di pernice (partridge's eyeball) This is a kind of rather light, highly porous stone riddled with holes. It is generally sandblasted and used for fireplaces, porches, arches, fountains and interior and outside items.

Puntillatura A process involving chiselling to assume an irregular dotted surface, and used for the construction of slabs, doorsteps and fountains.

Pietra lavica maiolicata (Ceramized volcanic rock) The stone slabs are covered with a thin ceramic strip that is decorated. It is then returned to the furnace at a temperature of circa 1000° which fuses the stone and the ceramic into a single unit, thereby blending the resistance of the stone with the polychrome decoration of the tile.

Spacco di cava It is the simpler process used for the decoration of façades, embossing the surface.

Levigatura/lucidatura The stone is first ground to produce a smooth but not shiny surface. It then undergoes further sanding to remove any holes until the surface becomes like a mirror. Stone treated in this way is particularly easy to clean, yet still resistant to knocks and scratches. It is generally used for interior decor (floors, stairs, kitchen worktops and wash basins) as well as for the outside of buildings.

Terracotta lavica This is made from a mixture of volcanic sands and clay, baked at high temperature. This robust product can be used for insulation and is resistant to sudden variations in temperature. It is used to make different kinds of tiles and bricks for floors and both interior and external walls. Different shades and colours are available from pink to deep red. The corresponding differences in shades and smoothness lend themselves to the creation of mosaics.

Raku dolce is a method of creating ceramics that goes back to Ancient Greece. It involves treating the surface with a mixture of water and clay so as to make it smooth and delicate to the touch. Subsequently the final product can be painted, engraved or decorated in other ways.

THE FIRMS

Made a Mano Its exclusive collections are hand decorated. The colours applied are obtained through ancient techniques. It collaborates with Italian and foreign architects and designers.
www.madeamano.it

Furnò Produces different kinds of tiles using clay and local volcanic stone, which undergoes a process of extrusion or manual manipulation. The process of shaping and pressing the tiles is carried out manually; the product is then left to dry for several days before being baked at a temperature of 1000°. In this way the tiles assume a timeless patina, making them suitable for restoration work on the walls and floors of old buildings.
www.cottosicilyno.it

Fratelli Lizzio One of the main suppliers of tiles and bricks for the construction of homes and public buildings. The firm specialises in producing items as thin as 7 mm, and different surface treatments – the use of resins, highly polished surfaces and so on.
<http://fratellilizzio.it>

Malvuccio This firm specialises in working blocks of stone and the construction of fireplaces, stairs, window frames, fountains, sinks and interior bathtubs.
www.malvuccionarmari.com

Terremediterranee Works with volcanic stone (rough or treated) and terracotta for construction of kitchen, bathrooms, tables, washbasins and flooring. The firm also offers vases, lampstands, tableware, as well as ceramics with traditional and modern designs and specialised work (“raku” and “raku dolce”).
www.terre-mediterranee.it

Le Nid Set up by Barbaro Messina, the artisan who invented a process for creating ceramics from volcanic stone, is now run by his sons, Vincenzo and Filippo. The firm produces tiles and decor in volcanic stone as well as hand crafted Mount Etna terracotta, and lamps, vases, tableware etc. in different styles, both modern and traditional.
www.lenid.it

Scud Lavica a third generation family firm producing different types of tiles in volcanic stone for external use and home interiors.
www.scudlavica.it

Ceramiche d'epoca It works mainly with ceramized volcanic stone, making kitchen and bathroom surfaces, barbecues and outdoor tables.
www.ceramicheepoca.it