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President Giampiero Di Persia

An ancient saying of unknown origin states: “May you live in interesting times.” For better or worse, no one can doubt that we are currently living in interesting times. For the Chamber, these trying times require courage and a sustained commitment to our mission of fostering trade between the U.S. and Italy, as well as supporting the endeavors of our associates. To that end, we are proud to report that 2008 has been another successful year rich with initiative. This year saw closer collaboration with our existing partners and the beginning of new strategic business relationships. As a representative desk of Fiera Milano, we organized three delegation visits of U.S. fashion buyers and olive oil importers to Apulia. We also continue to support the Vibo Valentina Chamber of Commerce in a project to bring Calabria’s authentic agro-alimentary products to the United States. In the spirit of new partnerships, the Chamber became a representative Desk for Centro Estero Veneto in April 2008 and Unioncamere Molise in October 2008. Already this past October the Chamber sent a delegation of U.S. food & beverage importers and journalists to the Region of Molise.

As the face of “Made in Italy” in the Southeast, the Chamber continues to promote authentic Italian products & culture in South Florida via a series of networking events designed to help our members expand their professional contacts, most notably the increasingly popular Italian Cooking Show held last summer and our always pleasurable Italian “aperitivi.” This holiday season, the Chamber salutes Italian excellence in design, craftsmanship, fashion, and culinary tradition in this special December edition of .it Italian Trade dedicated exclusively to LUXURY, Italian Style. In an international market where the artisan’s skillful hand is too often replaced by the hum-drum of mass production, the Chamber is committed to promoting human creativity, quality, and style as embodied by the “Made in Italy” name we are proud to proclaim. In this edition, readers will be whisked away to some of Italy’s most exclusive vacation destinations, will be treated to Italian gourmet delicacies, and will explore the world of Italian fashion, art, and design. Finally, this journey will bring them to the discovery of unknowns, with a Business Section dedicated to business opportunities in Alabama and Molise and the fascinating field of Forensic Accounting.

With 2009 right around the corner, our focus shifts to upcoming initiatives. As the face of “Made in Italy” in the Southeast, the Chamber continues to promote authentic Italian products & culture in South Florida via a series of networking events designed to help our members expand their professional contacts, most notably the increasingly popular Italian Cooking Show held last summer and our always pleasurable Italian “aperitivi.” This holiday season, the Chamber salutes Italian excellence in design, craftsmanship, fashion, and culinary tradition in this special December edition of .it Italian Trade dedicated exclusively to LUXURY, Italian Style. In an international market where the artisan’s skillful hand is too often replaced by the hum-drum of mass production, the Chamber is committed to promoting human creativity, quality, and style as embodied by the “Made in Italy” name we are proud to proclaim. In this edition, readers will be whisked away to some of Italy’s most exclusive vacation destinations, will be treated to Italian gourmet delicacies, and will explore the world of Italian fashion, art, and design. Finally, this journey will bring them to the discovery of unknowns, with a Business Section dedicated to business opportunities in Alabama and Molise and the fascinating field of Forensic Accounting. With 2009 right around the corner, our focus shifts to upcoming initiatives. As a tribute to the fusion of Italian design and luxury, the Chamber is organizing the first edition of OROMIAMI, an exhibition dedicated to high-end Italian jewelry to take place from February 2 – 4, 2009 at the Ritz Carlton in South Beach. And this is just the beginning… Please refer to the Chamber’s publications for more information. In closing, I would like to thank our dedicated staff, associates, contributing authors, and friends for their support and contribution to the Chamber’s mission. We remain convinced that “no man is an island, entire of itself.” Your participation is the key to our - and ultimately your - continued success. I sincerely wish all of you a blessed and peaceful holiday season and a prosperous 2009.

Giampiero Di Persia
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In Italy, where no town is complete without a Roman-era theatre or aqueduct, the ancient and the modern live in harmony. Many travelers still consider this vibrant land an essential destination. From its rolling landscapes, culinary delights, and grand cities steeped in history, Italy is nothing if not inspirational. Italy, the land of La dolce vita!

Hidden among rolling hills dotted with vineyards and olive groves are century-old Etruscan villages, brimming with the treasures of their long lives. Not far away, whitewashed houses on steep cliffs overlook the crystal blue waters of the Mediterranean. Scattered across a delicious landscape are cosmopolitan cities like Florence, Venice, and Rome, all bustling with people in search of la dolce vita.

The Bay of Naples

On the horizon, as one looks across the bay of Naples, is the Isle of Capri. This Mediterranean jewel was treasured by the Roman emperor Tiberius and celebrated in the works of many illustrious poets. A brief but pleasant ferry brings you to Capri's docks in colorful Marina Grande, the main port and departure point for trips around the island. If you have time a trip around the island by boat really is a must, not just to experience the beauty of the amazing Blue Grotto, but to take in the breathtaking views of the other caves and coves which surround this lovely island. On shore, from Marina Grande you can take a cable car up to a terrace which offers spectacular views. Then, passing through a medieval gateway you enter the town of Capri and its charming Piazza Umberto I brimming with cafes and boutiques. From here you can explore the quaint alleyways and take a stroll along Via Vittorio Emanuele and Via Camerelle past designer shops and galleries to the famous promenade, Via Tragara. Continue along the “Pizzolungo” coastal path with its stunning seascape to take in the immense beauty of this breathtaking island.
Where to Stay in Capri

Hotel Caesar Augustus (www.caesar-augustus.com)
This cliff-side luxury boutique hotel is perched on a stunning Capri cliff with panoramic views of the entire Bay of Naples some 1,000 feet below. Fifty-six individually decorated guestrooms and suites feature balconies or terraces with sea views. Guests can dine alfresco at the poolside restaurant or enjoy drinks from the poolside bar as they lounge by the infinity pool.

The Amalfi Coast

The Amalfi Coast, located in the Region of Campania, is one of the Mediterranean’s most breathtaking stretches of coastline that will leave any visitor enchanted by its steep enchanting cliffs that give way to quaint coastal villages and the dazzling green and blue hues of the deep waters below. Here visitors will find everything from striking scenic views, luxury boutiques, fine dining, and some of Italy’s most charming accommodations for those seeking the ultimate vacation destination.

Where to stay in Positano

Le Sirenuse (www.sirenuse.it)
This hillside villa is complete with a spa, pool, and expansive sea views. A family-run hotel, Le Sirenuse offers upscale yet comfortable accommodations in a former palazzo in the village center of Positano. Many have balconies or terraces with sea views. Guests can swim in an outdoor pool, go touring on a classic wooden boat, or simply relax with a soothing spa treatment.

Venice

Sooner or later you will become lost in Venice, a city of more than 100 separate islands divided by roughly 150 canals and crossed by 400 bridges. Its narrow and closed streetscapes make it difficult to navigate. To help, signs all over town indicate the way.
to the train station, the Rialto Bridge, and Piazza San Marco in the heart of the city. Entirely built on water by men who dared to defy the sea, Venice is unlike any other town. It is full of secrets, ineffably romantic, and -- at times -- given over entirely to pleasure.

Where to Stay in Venice

Ca’ Sagredo (www.casagredohotel.com)

Situated on the banks of the Grand Canal, between the Rialto Bridge and the Ca’ d’Oro, hotel Ca’ Sagredo sits within the walls of a 13th century Venetian palazzo built on the site of a pre-existing Byzantine construction that was initially the home of the noble Morosini family. A number of the rooms are home to important works of art, including paintings by the most eminent Venetian painters of the 18th and 19th centuries and artists of the calibre of Sebastiano Ricci, Giambattista Tiepolo, Niccoò Bambini, and Pietro Longhi.

Calabria and the Coast of the Gods

Situated on the side of the promontory which looks out over the Gulf of St Eufemia is Vibo Valentia in Calabria. Vibo Valentia, which was one of the most important territories in Magna Grecia, is today a well known summer tourist destination because of its beautiful coastline. The enchanting historic center of Vibo Valentia is dominated by its Norman Svevo Castle which houses the State Archaeological Museum. Well worth visiting: the Baroque style Cathedral dedicated to the Patron Saint Leoluca and attenzione ad ogni dettaglio creano un ambiente di classe e accogliente. L’hotel ha a disposizione 55 camere e suites, fornite delle ultime tecnologie multimediale. Le suite dispongono di una terrazza privata che offre una vista sul mare da tagliare il fiato.

Portofino


Dove alloggiare a Portofino

Hotel Splendido (www.hotelsplendido.com)

Appollaiato sulla collina, può essere considerato uno dei più lussuosi ed esclusivi alberghi sul mare. Nel mezzo di un lussureggiante giardino tropicale, che sembra quasi finire nel mar Ligure, si trova il meraviglioso Hotel Splendido di Portofino. Di proprietà del prestigioso Orient Express Group, lo Splendido occupa un edificio che fu originariamente un monastero medievale.

Ah, l’Italia! Terra di vini e pasta, resti Romani e palazzi rinascimentali... Una terra colma di gemme culturali e radicata nella storia.

Italia: che bella!
the ruins of the Greek city Hipponion, located just outside the residential area of Vibo Valentia. In close proximity to Vibo lies Tropea with its coast known as the "Costa degli Dei."

Where to stay around Vibo Valentia

Hotel Ashley (www.hotelashley.it)

Hotel Ashley is an elegant five-star hotel a short forty-minute drive from Vibo Valentia. An air of sophisticated and discrete luxury pervades the interiors of the Hotel Ashley. The classic furnishings and careful attention to detail create a stylish and, at the same time, welcoming environment. The hotel has a total of fifty-five elegant bedrooms and suites, fitted with the latest in audiovisual and communication technology. The Junior Suites and Suites all open out onto their own private terrace and a breathtaking sea view.

Portofino

The most beautiful scenery in Europe? Portofino! It has been a destination of the rich and famous for more than half a century. Guy de Montpassant was one of the first visitors to Portofino, which he described as "a crescent moon around a calm basin." Liz Taylor, Richard Burton, Nietzsche, and Humphrey Bogart all chose Portofino as the perfect hideaway.

Where to stay in Portofino

Hotel Splendido (www.hotelsplendido.com)

Clinging to the hillside, overlooking what might well be considered Italy's most fashionable and glamorous sea resort, amidst a lush subtropical garden which seems almost to tumble down into the Ligurian sea below, is Portofino's marvelous Hotel Splendido. Now owned by the prestigious Orient Express hotel group, the Splendido occupies a building originally built in medieval times as a monastery.

Ah, Italy! Land of vineyards and pasta, Roman ruins and Renaissance palazzos...a country brimming with cultural gems and deep-rooted history.

Che bella Italia!
Italian luxury products have been present in the American market since the beginning of the 20th century when they represented one of the pillars of Italian industry in the country. Salvatore Ferragamo was one of the pioneers in the American market. Already in 1920 he earned a reputation among the American press as the preferred designer of the divas of the nascent Hollywood film industry. Some 28 years later, in 1948, he opened his first store in New York. It wasn’t until the 1950s and 1960s, however, that we really start to see a significant influence of Italian lifestyle on American society. In those years Italian fashion, automobiles, movies, and songs began to filter into the American collective consciousness, creating icons and trends inspired by the lifestyle of the Bel Paese. A great deal of credit is due to high-profile individuals, celebrities, and actors from the entertainment world who appreciated and ultimately diffused knowledge of Italy’s high quality -- and at times, unconventional -- design among the general public. Audrey Hepburn and Marilyn Monroe with their custom-made Ferragamo shoes, Jacqueline Kennedy and her favorite stylist Oleg Cassini, and Italian actresses like Gina Lollobrigida and Sophia Loren certainly left a big impact on the American imagination. As the years passed America’s passion for everything “Made in Italy” grew. Today Italian luxury products encompass not only fashion and design, but also yachts, marble, furniture, ceramic, and enogastronomic products. Medium and large-sized Italian companies have built their success on the creativity, impeccable quality, and strong brand image which characterizes Italian production. From one small store in New York in 1948 to more than 40 mono-brand stores and countless points of sale in the best department stores of North and Latin America, Salvatore Ferragamo has consolidated a presence all across the continent. The U.S. market continues to be of the most
important in the world both for the Florentine company, as well as many other pillars of Italian fashion like Ermengildo Zegna, Prada, Dolce e Gabbana, Gucci, Bottega Veneta, Valentino, Armani, Etro, and Roberto Cavalli that enjoy notable brand recognition in the North American market.

The importance of a solid brand image is undeniable for companies whose products become a status symbol in a market as vast and competitive as North America's. This factor is also relevant for companies that have successfully established themselves in the Latin American market, an emerging, complex, multi-cultural, and multi-faceted market where an affinity for quality and taste has profound roots. More than other companies, Ermenegildo Zegna, Armani, Max Mara and Salvatore Ferragamo have pursued an aggressive marketing and expansion strategy in the most important countries in this region. Their efforts have resulted in important market gains for Italian brands in a relatively short period. Latin American markets are certainly distinct with regards to the level of development of distribution and retailing networks. Take Mexico for example, which is certainly more evolved than other countries in that it boasts a structure which places department stores next to mono-brand boutiques and specialty stores. Many of these sales points can be found in Mexico City -- which alone generates more than 60% of the country's sales for luxury companies -- as well as metropolitan areas that have experienced rapid expansion. On the other hand Brazil, the most important country in the region and a huge source of revenue for luxury fashion brands, has not had the possibility to tap its full potential. The
luxury and fashion retailing sector, while on the rise, is not yet sufficiently structured due to the general lack of department stores. The exception is Daslu. From its beginnings as a tailor shop, Daslu became the first store to import luxury brands into Brazil. In a short time it became a veritable “temple of fashion” in the country and a meeting place for the affluent socialites of São Paulo; the only place to purchase Gucci, Ferragamo, Prada, and Fendi amidst a cocktail and some gossip. Daslu’s store concept is entirely unique and perhaps not replicable in that it places fashion’s biggest names alongside up-and-coming South American designers. Then, just next door, clients might lounge in a Buddha Bar or peruse a superbl flower shop, a primary example of the integration of taste and style, international fashion, and Brazilian culture.

But Latin America is not only Brazil or Mexico. Colombia, Chile, Panama and Argentina are also promising emerging markets with an expanding upper class. In these markets, still relatively economically unstable and difficult to penetrate, brands must ensure their strategic positioning and sustained presence in the market. After opening an office in Miami dedicated to the expansion of the Latin American and Caribbean market, Salvatore Ferragamo grew exponentially. Today it is possible to find the Florentine brand in seventy-five points of sale in the region (twenty-five of which are directly controlled by the company), a demonstration of Latin America’s strategic value in the expansion of brand names in emerging markets.

In general, luxury companies’ revenues in Latin America amount to less than 10% of their U.S. sales. Although limited, securing commercial sales in Latin America has two main advantages, namely the development of a solid local market and the heightened visibility of the brand at the international level. The Latin American market, though challenging, offers enormous opportunities. Take Miami for example. Often referred to as the capital of Latin America, Miami offers numerous opportunities for expansion thanks to its geographic position as a bridge between the North American and Latin American/Caribbean market.

Ferragamo is one of several Italian companies that has benefited from South Florida’s strategic location to both secure its position in the Latin American market and, as a result, to consolidate the brand’s visibility in the U.S.. Take Ferragamo’s store in Bal Harbour for example. For Ferragamo (and many other Italian brands that have a notable presence in Latin America), Bal Harbour has now essentially become the second most important market in the U.S. after New York. The demand for the men’s collection in particular is on the rise. This very unique luxury shopping center -- in essence a lush, open-air garden that envelops its visitors in a warm and inviting ambiance -- has become a point of reference in the world of fashion and luxury with sales that are some of the highest registered by North American malls. In addition to the exclusivity and uniqueness of the concept, the success of Bal Harbour can be attributed to the area’s notable Latin American population, which boasts significant purchasing power and a fashion culture that lends itself to full appreciation of Bal Harbour and its exclusive brands. Bal Harbour’s popularity is certainly facilitated by the high concentration of the most prestigious brands in the fashion world -- and in particular, the Italian fashion world -- yet another demonstration that “Made in Italy” remains the leader wherever fashion and luxury thrive.

Diego Stecchi, Director of Ferragamo Latin America and Caribbean
Claudia Montresor, Development Manager
Ferragamo Latin America and Caribbean
Burratina di Andria, Mozzarella di Bufala Campana, Olio Extra Vergine di Oliva, Prosciutto di Parma & San Daniele, Salamino ai Guanciale, Speck, di Parma, Pomodorini Collina, Funghi Porcini, Tartufi Freschi...

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Italian Gourmet Luxury

BY COSTANTINO CICCHELLI, MANAGER SOUTHEAST, ACADEMIA BARILLA, GCICCHELLI@BARILLA-USA.COM

When I left Rome in 1996 to study abroad in Boston, I lacked a clear vision of the perception of Italy abroad. Like any true Italian, I loaded my suitcase with several packages of pasta and a wedge of Parmigiano Reggiano, still largely unaware that Italy was already waiting for me in Boston. I was pleasantly surprised to find all those Italian culinary brands that made me feel at home again in an instant.

More than ten years have passed and yet the presence of Italian culinary products circulating throughout the U.S. market has multiplied. High-end gourmet products like truffles, aged balsamic vinegars, Prosciutto di Parma, mozzarella cheese DOP, Parmigiano Reggiano, and caviar are now fairly accessible, both in gourmet stores and on the internet. Due to its privileged geographic position, various Mediterranean influences, and culture, Italy boasts one of the world’s most important culinary traditions and is a noted eno-gastronomic tourist destination.

There are numerous factors which have helped diffuse knowledge of Italy’s rich gastronomic traditions (and as a result, demand for “Made in Italy” products). First and foremost, Italians living abroad deserve a tremendous amount of praise. They act as veritable ambassadors who -- via the diffusion of their alimentary traditions -- have recreated a “Little Italy” wherever they have established themselves. Acknowledgment must also be given to television stations like the Food Network and its culinary superstars like Giada De Laurentis and Mario Batali who have brought the art of “Italian food” into millions of households across the country. Certainly, the advent of the Slow Food movement in 1989 has also played a fundamental role in combating the frenetic lifestyle associated with “fast food,” as well as reviving the appreciation for Italy’s rich regional products and noble gastronomic traditions. The movement -- founded with the desire to rediscover and preserve artisan gastronomic production and various traditional cooking methods -- has certainly aided in raising awareness of and appreciation for regional culinary traditions (www.slowfood.com).

Another factor which launched Italian alimentary products (and particularly traditional Italian delicacies) to the foreground was the creation of various food consortiums tasked with preserving and diffusing genuine Italian products. These increasingly present commercial alliances ensure that producers adhere to high standards of quality necessary to consolidate the continuous arrival and presence of high-end gourmet food products abroad. Let us also not neglect the important role of food fairs like CIBUS and Salone del Gusto in Turin that, year after year, attract both Italian gourmet enthusiasts along with a growing number of foreigners interested in our savory and wholesome alimentary traditions. (For more information, visit http://www.fiereparma.it and http://www.salonedelgusto.com).

The widespread presence of Italian cooking schools that offer ad-hoc courses for all levels is another factor which has impacted the demand for Italian gourmet products. Some students prefer the more romantic versions set in old medieval farmhouses...
Italian Gourmet Luxury

renovated and managed by families passionate about cooking. There are also the more traditional gastronomic institutes like Academia Barilla's institute in Parma that are entrusted with the mission of safeguarding and promoting high quality Italian artisan food products abroad. These institutes have a modern and avant-garde feeling, yet their passion for teaching authentic Italian cuisine maintains the original artisan inspiration, offering educational excursions to principal artisan producers of Parmigiano, Prosciutto di Parma, and balsamic vinegars to name just a few (www.academiabarilla.com).

Although all of these factors have aided in the awareness among the general public of Italian culinary products, technology, the rapid pace of transportation, and modern refrigeration/conservation techniques have made it possible to furnish the tables of American families with the very best in Italian culinary traditions. In essence, it is now feasible to impart widespread access to every Italian luxury of the palate.

How are the culinary habits of Italians changing? According to a study by COOP, the absolute leader of large Italian distribution, the use of primary products like milk, flour, white rice, and sugar is decreasing, while there is a marked increase of more than 20% in the consumption of gourmet products like champagne, fine wines, and high-quality regional products and delicacies.

Just what are these gourmet luxury products? Let us set out on a culinary journey to discover just a few. We could begin with the ventresca fillet, the belly of the Mediterranean tuna. These fish, which are caught mainly in Sicily with a simple line and hook, are then skillfully filleted by local fisherman and preserved in olive oil in clear glass jars. Another seafood delicacy is the bottarga, the flathead mullet roe pouch from tuna fish or sword fish, which is massaged by hand and then salted and dried for a few weeks before being cooked in beeswax. Connoisseurs shave or grate the bottarga on pasta or other tasty dishes. For gourmet enthusiasts of the bovine type, there is the delicate Chianina beef steak. This lean meat, which is very low in cholesterol, is best known as the "real" Fiorentina steak. Let us not forget another classic embodiment of gourmet luxury: caviar, a delicacy of wild or farmed sturgeon. Caviar, which is massaged by hand and then salted and preserved in a pouch from tuna fish or sword fish, is then skillfully filleted by local fisherman and preserved in olive oil in clear glass jars. Another seafood delicacy is the bottarga, the flathead mullet roe pouch from tuna fish or sword fish, which is massaged by hand and then salted and dried for a few weeks before being cooked in beeswax. Connoisseurs shave or grate the bottarga on pasta or other tasty dishes. For gourmet enthusiasts of the bovine type, there is the delicate Chianina beef steak. This lean meat, which is very low in cholesterol, is best known as the "real" Fiorentina steak. Let us not forget another classic embodiment of gourmet luxury: caviar, a delicacy of wild or farmed sturgeon.

No culinary journey of Italy's most prized gourmet treasures would be complete without a visit to the "acetaia" or vinegar factory. The history of balsamic vinegars goes back to ancient times, when they were used as a preservative for meat and fish. The modern production of these vinegars is based on traditional recipes passed down from generation to generation. The most prestigious balsamic vinegars are those produced in the Modena region, where the "acetaia" is a traditional vinegar factory. These vinegars are aged for a minimum of 12 years in wooden barrels, which are renewed every 5 years. The result is a rich, concentrated liquid with a sweet, tangy flavor that is perfect for drizzling over pasta, salads, and grilled meats.

Another Italian delicacy that is not to be missed is the Parmigiano Reggiano. This hard cheese is made from cow's milk and is aged for at least 12 months before it is ready to eat. The best Parmigiano Reggiano is produced in the Parma region, where the cheese is made using traditional methods passed down from generation to generation. The result is a hard, crumbly cheese with a nutty, buttery flavor that is perfect for grating over pasta, salads, and grilled meats.

In conclusion, Italian gourmet luxury products represent the very best of Italian cuisine. They are a testament to the country's rich culinary heritage and the dedication of its people to preserving and promoting these treasures. Whether you are a food lover or a connoisseur of fine ingredients, Italian gourmet luxury products are sure to delight your senses and满足 your cravings.

Academia Barilla's institute in Parma, the use of primary products like milk, flour, white rice, and sugar is decreasing, while there is a marked increase of more than 20% in the consumption of gourmet products like champagne, fine wines, and high-quality regional products and delicacies.

Although all of these factors have aided in the awareness among the general public of Italian culinary products, technology, the rapid pace of transportation, and modern refrigeration/conservation techniques have made it possible to furnish the tables of American families with the very best in Italian culinary traditions. In essence, it is now feasible to impart widespread access to every Italian luxury of the palate.

How are the culinary habits of Italians changing? According to a study by COOP, the absolute leader of large Italian distribution, the use of primary products like milk, flour, white rice, and sugar is decreasing, while there is a marked increase of more than 20% in the consumption of gourmet products like champagne, fine wines, and high-quality regional products and delicacies.

Just what are these gourmet luxury products? Let us set out on a culinary journey to discover just a few. We could begin with the ventresca fillet, the belly of the Mediterranean tuna. These fish, which are caught mainly in Sicily with a simple line and hook, are then skillfully filleted by local fisherman and preserved in olive oil in clear glass jars. Another seafood delicacy is the bottarga, the flathead mullet roe pouch from tuna fish or sword fish, which is massaged by hand and then salted and dried for a few weeks before being cooked in beeswax. Connoisseurs shave or grate the bottarga on pasta or other tasty dishes. For gourmet enthusiasts of the bovine type, there is the delicate Chianina beef steak. This lean meat, which is very low in cholesterol, is best known as the "real" Fiorentina steak. Let us not forget another classic embodiment of gourmet luxury: caviar, a delicacy of wild or farmed sturgeon.

No culinary journey of Italy's most prized gourmet treasures would be complete without a visit to the "acetaia" or vinegar factory. The history of balsamic vinegars goes back to ancient times, when they were used as a preservative for meat and fish. The modern production of these vinegars is based on traditional recipes passed down from generation to generation. The most prestigious balsamic vinegars are those produced in the Modena region, where the "acetaia" is a traditional vinegar factory. These vinegars are aged for a minimum of 12 years in wooden barrels, which are renewed every 5 years. The result is a rich, concentrated liquid with a sweet, tangy flavor that is perfect for drizzling over pasta, salads, and grilled meats.

Another Italian delicacy that is not to be missed is the Parmigiano Reggiano. This hard cheese is made from cow's milk and is aged for at least 12 months before it is ready to eat. The best Parmigiano Reggiano is produced in the Parma region, where the cheese is made using traditional methods passed down from generation to generation. The result is a hard, crumbly cheese with a nutty, buttery flavor that is perfect for grating over pasta, salads, and grilled meats.

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without a mention of the white truffles from Alba in Piedmont or black truffles, perhaps not as prized but equally a delicacy. Then there are the balsamic vinegars from Modena -- aged for 12 to 25 years or more in wood essence barrels -- that are safeguarded by various local consortiums that compete for the honor of the best product. Various cheeses are yet another expression of Italy's most illustrious gourmet ambassadors. Examples include the Red Cow variety of Parmigiano Reggiano, which comes from a protected bovine race that was already utilized in ancient times for the production of this king of cheeses, as well as the Parmigiano Reggiano produced from the milk of cows raised in the wild amongst rolling hills and sprawling meadows. Finally, a salute to the absolute king of spices, saffron, is in order. Saffron, a spice which originated in Asia and is patientely gathered by hand from the delicate pistils of a flower, has been used since antiquity as a natural colorant, pharmaceutical remedy, cosmetic, and prized alimentary ingredient. Within Italy, the Regions of Abruzzo and Sardenia boast the most fragrant varieties of saffron.

To this already exhaustive list of Italian gourmet products one must consider all those products, once associated with humble cooking traditions, which have now entered the kitchens of famous chefs and reappeared at dinner parties across the country. One example is the sophisticated salted anchovy water, the result of a process which baths salted anchovies in water-filled wooden barrels. The savory water, which is then filtered into containers below, is a secret ingredient for fabulous risotti and seafood pasta.

Those who come to know Italian culinary traditions first hand will learn to appreciate all the sophisticated nuances and rich variations of Italian regional delicacies, each one with its noble heritage and tradition of gourmet excellence. The proliferation of exceptional Italian restaurants throughout the U.S. will certainly aide in this refined and diversified cultural enrichment process that is already taking shape all across the country.

There is no doubt that the circulation of an increasingly greater number, variety, and quality of Italy's most prized gastronomic gems in the general gourmet food market will instill in the American public a greater knowledge of and appreciation for Italy's exquisite culinary treasures. Surely, friends and relatives who have the privilege of partaking in an Italian inspired dinner party will experience an unforgettable culinary journey of the palate that reeks of luxury and good living in distinct Italian style.

In essence, when it comes to rich culinary traditions and culture, Italy has a plethora of superb gourmet products for even the most discerning tastes. I have been fortunate enough to work in this fantastic and rewarding sector. Looking back, it may have been an insightful premonition that led me to place that wedge of Parmigiano Reggiano in my suitcase on my fateful journey to the United States years ago.

For information on cooking classes, culinary journeys, and products visit: www.academiabarilla.com and www.ditalia.com.
RASOMURO  it's there...but it's not there  perfect alignment with the wall, quintessential design
Made in Italy: this is that magical little phrase that appears on clothing, jewelry, accessories, and furniture that lights up the eyes of our American friends. We Italians are in fact famous for our design, style, and craftsmanship. In Italy we are accustomed to living with numerous established brands, whereas in the U.S. imported “Made in Italy” labels instantly join the ranks of luxury goods. Along with fashion icons like Bulgari, Fendi, Gucci, and Ferrari, there is an increasing number of other labels that have slowly but surely reached the pinnacle of luxury.

In recent years, we have witnessed another important movement in the world of Italian design. In all respects, products that are not strictly tied to the world of fashion have entered that exclusive club of “Italian luxury products” in the American market. Furniture, fabrics for interior design, tiles, and lighting products now all recall that magic word “design,” or better yet, “Italian design.” American architects are honored to be able to utilize products from the Bel Paese, which are still largely regarded as the best in the world. There are certainly many distinctly Italian brands which boast a portfolio of magnificent creations, many of which were conceived by foreign designers like Philip Stark, Karim Rashid, and Zaha Hadid just to name a few. But why exactly have our products earned the world’s esteem? Without a doubt it is our attention to detail, precision in the production process, emphasis on quality and not quantity, and our ability to wait for months for a designer kitchen or sofa (resisting the temptation to load it in the car and transport it home immediately). In essence, Italian products belong to a niche market.

This is the face of “Made in Italy” and the embodiment of luxury: a product which is still sewn or finished by hand and packaged with precision, ultimately enveloped in a context of superior quality and impeccable taste. Internationally, household names like B&B Italia and Minotti are considered an atelier of high design. Inside their showrooms you will encounter affluent fur-clad women who have just stepped out of a designer kitchen or sofa (resisting the temptation to load it in the car and transport it home immediately). In essence, Italian products belong to a niche market.

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Luxury is Not Just Fashion Anymore

Floors is to confer a tone of absolute exclusivity to the home – and ultimately – is proof of one’s refined and modern aesthetic taste. Upon closer consideration, there are in effect innumerable elements and accessories that render a home luxurious, just as a woman in a Valentino evening gown and a Bulgari necklace reeks of classic elegance. In the world of design, vases by Venini, sofas from Armani, Arclinea’s kitchens, or Barovier’s Murano glass chandeliers represent some of the historic centerpieces of Italian design. Not to be overlooked however, are the more modern companies that have established their presence and consolidated their brands in the high-end international market. The most elite companies are in search of a unique design concept that utilizes new materials in a way that can satisfy even the most demanding clients who require the latest and greatest creations. In this quest for creative expression and impeccable taste in the home, it is no wonder that living rooms and kitchens can cost upwards of sixty or seventy thousand dollars, becoming veritable dominions of luxury.

For more than thirty years Terzani -- the Florentine lighting company that has a branch in Miami -- has cultivated a brand that seeks to combine exclusive design and alternative, highly prized materials. Recently, the company reached a milestone with the creation of a chandelier roughly a meter in height designed by Barlas Baylar, a Turkish designer firmly established in New York. This chandelier is made by hand according to traditional methods, from its chrome iron rings, to the more than three kilometers of thick intertwined chains that, almost like a hand-woven fabric, create the illusion of an elegant, flowing evening gown complete with a train. The delicate production process and the exclusivity conferred to every piece gives this product an air of absolute uniqueness and opulence that is sought after by the very best designers for the most exclusive and sophisticated residences.

In essence, our unrelenting quest for the latest trends, innovative design, exclusivity, and luxury for our personal items has now entered our homes, our offices, and our gardens, where -- and I say this with my head held high -- Italian design still reigns supreme.
“The financial crisis? It doesn’t affect us.” This was the comment made by Marc Spiegler, the Director of Art Basel and Art Basel Miami Beach, during the recent Wall Street crisis.

It is with this spirit of optimism that the sixth edition of Art Basel Miami Beach will take place from December 4 – 7, 2008. This sister event of Switzerland’s Art Basel is one of the most important winter art shows prized for its capacity to unite business and entertainment in a prestigious international event for art dealers and art enthusiasts alike.

“For Miami – stated Spiegler – there was concern about losing the support of many of the galleries and sponsors. Fortunately, this did not happen. Everyone confirmed their commitment to the event. There will even be several Brazilian collectors who were absent from previous editions. This demonstrates that even during times of crisis, the contacts that an art dealer makes during an exhibition like Art Basel are crucial. So, while they might fail to participate in other art shows, they will not miss out on Art Basel. If someone does opt out, there is always someone else ready to take their place.”

According to the numbers, Spiegler is right. Two hundred galleries hailing from some thirty countries representing almost all the world’s continents will present the work of some 200 well-respected and emerging artists from the 20th and 21st centuries.

**Nomade (2007) by Jaume Plensa**

“La crisi finanziaria? Non ci tocca”. Ha iniziato così una sua dichiarazione nei giorni della crisi di Wall Street il direttore di Art Base e di Art Basel Miami Beach, Marc Spiegler.

Ed è proprio con questo spirito e quest’ottimismo che dal 4 al 7 dicembre partirà la sesta edizione di Art Basel Miami Beach, uno degli appuntamenti fiorenti dei mercati internazionali delle arti. Tuttavia, molto più significativa è la sua capacità di uniti affari a intrattenimento, sorella americana della svizzera Art Basel.

“Per Miami – afferma Spiegler – c’era diffusa la voce di una fuga di sponsor e gallerie. Ma non è accaduto: tutti hanno riconfermato i loro impegni. In più ci saranno collezionisti brasiliani assenti dalle precedenti edizioni. Anche in tempi di crisi, per un gallerista sono importanti i contatti che una fi era come Art Basel può portare, e quindi magari cancella altre manifestazioni ma da una sedia di esserci. E se qualcuno rinuncia, c’è subito chi è pronto a sostituirlo”.

E sono i numeri a dare ragione ai Spiegler. Duecento gallerie provenienti da tanti la paesi e da quasi tutti i continenti presenteranno il lavoro di oltre 2000 artisti affermati ed emergenti del ventesimo e del ventitréntesimo secolo. Non solo Europa e America, quindi, ma anche Asia, America Latina ed una galleria dall’Africa. Questa ricca offerta che rappresenta tutte le arti a partire dalla scultura, dalla fotografia e dalla pittura sino alla videoarte dovrà soddisfare la folla dei quarantamila visitatori e collezionisti previsti.

E l’Italia anche a quest’edizione sarà presente con alcune delle principali gallerie come la sensibile Continua, le milanesi De Carlo, Emi Fontana, Kaufmann, Marconi, Stein e Zeno, le torinesi Noero e Soffiantino e la napoletana T293. Nonostante le bocche cuide di rito, iniziano già a filtrare alcune indiscrezioni.

Secondo i bene informati l’opera dal prezzo più caro sarà della Galleria Continua che esporrà “There is always cinema” (II) di Subodh Gupta, un’opera stimata più di un milione e duecentomila dollari. La Galleria senese esporrà più una selezione delle opere di Daniel Buren, Chen Zhen, Carlos Garaicoa, Kendell Geers, Nedo Sokolov, Pascale Marthine Tayou.

La Galleria Emi Fontana porterà a Miami tutta la propria scuderia, con una selezione delle opere più significative di Monica Bonvicini, Mark Dion, Willie Doherty, Sam Durant, Olafur Eliasson, Liam Gillick, Renée Green, Mike Kelley, Ketty La Rocca, Lovett/Codagnone, Liliana Moro, Tony Oursler, Adrian Piper, Sterling Ruby, Michael Smith, Diana Thater, Rekitt Tiravanija, Luca Vitone, Cosima Von Bonin, John Waters e Gillian Wearing.

LA GALLERIA IN AFRICA. Questa ricca offerta che arriva da oltre 2000 artisti affermati ed emergenti del ventesimo e del ventitréntesimo secolo. Non solo Europa e America, quindi, ma anche Asia, America Latina ed una galleria dall’Africa. Questa ricca offerta che rappresenta tutte le arti a partire dalla scultura, dalla fotografia e dalla pittura sino alla videoarte dovrà soddisfare la folla dei quarantamila visitatori e collezionisti previsti.

T293 presenterà il progetto “Is freedom therapeutic?” con la scultura Marco Cavallo di Claire Fontaine. “L’opera – dichiara il direttore della galleria Paola Guadagnino – funziona concettualmente come un omaggio alla cultura dell’anti-psichiatria e come una domanda imperitente sulla normalità formulata nel tempio delle transazioni mercantili più estreme dell’arte contemporanea. Dal punto di vista logistico essa inverte i ruoli abituali in uso e spinge degli specialisti della vendita a farsi carico dell’esecuzione di un’opera, con l’obbligo di distruggerla alla fine della fiera. Marco Cavallo è un euforico, un ospite che nessuno ha invitato, un oggetto dallo statuto ambiguo e dall’aspetto rudimentale. Un collage di manifesti legati al progetto e prodotti da Claire Fontaine circonderà il tavolo di esposizione della galleria fornendole un contesto specifico. Marco Cavallo è qui l’ambasciatore cieco di una condizione da lrimo che ricorda la posizione di ciascuno di noi di fronte alla malattia mentale in un tempo in cui la società è un cantiere che continua senza di noi”.

Dovrebbe essere proprio Art Basel Miami Beach l’evento nel quale Lello Esposito – qui è sempre nel proprio studio – presenterà negli Stati Uniti – dove da anni, oltre Napoli, lavora in un proprio studio – la sua ultima creatura creata in occasione dell’elezione del nuovo presidente. Dovrebbe essere proprio Art Basel Miami Beach, Marc Spiegler, “The financial crisis? It doesn’t affect us.” This was the comment made by Marc Spiegler, the Director of Art Basel and Art Basel Miami Beach, during the recent Wall Street crisis.

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According to the numbers, Spiegler is right. Two hundred galleries hailing from some thirty countries representing almost all the world’s continents will present the work of some 200 well-respected and emerging artists from the 20th and
21st century. Works of arts from Europe and America, along with Asia, Latin America, and Africa will be featured. This rich selection—which will encompass all art forms, from sculptures, tophotography, topaintings and video-art—will certainly satisfy the some 40,000 visitors and art dealers expected to attend.

Italy will be present once again at this edition with some of its principal galleries like Siena’s Continua, Milan’s De Carlo, Emi Fontana, Kaufmann, Marconi, Stein, Zero, Turin’s Noero and Soffiantino, and Naples’ T293. Already, despite the rituals of discretion that typically accompany the event, rumors are flying. According to some sources the Continua Gallery will exhibit the most expensive work entitled “There is always cinema” by Subodh Gupta, valued at more than $1.2 million. The Siena gallery will exhibit a selection of works by Daniel Buren, Chen Zhen, Carlos Garaicoa, Kendell Geers, Nedko Solakov, and Pascale Marthine Tayou.

The Emi Fontana Gallery will bring an arsenal of its most prestigious works by Monica Bonvicini, Mark Dion, Willie Doherty, Sam Durant, Olafur Eliasson, Liam Gillick, Renée Green, Mike Kelley, Ketty La Rocca, Lovett/Codagnone, Liliana Moro, Tony Oursler, Adrian Piper, Sterling Ruby, Michael Smith, Diana Thater, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Luca Vitone, Cosima Von Bonin, John Waters, and Gillian Wearing.

T293 will present its project “Is freedom therapeutic?” with Claire Fontaine’s sculpture of Marco Cavallo. “This piece,” stated Director Paola Guadagnino, “works on a conceptual level as homage to the culture of anti-psychiatry and as an impertinent question about normality as formulated inside the temple of the most extreme economic transactions in contemporary art. From the logistical point of view, it inverts the usual roles adopted by artists and art dealers and compels specialists in selling to take charge of the execution of artwork, with the obligation of destroying it at the end of the fair. Marco Cavallo is a fugitive, a guest that no one invited, an object of ambiguous and rudimentary nature. A collage of posters attached to the project created by Claire Fontaine will surround the sculpture’s exhibition space to convey a specific context. Marco Cavallo is the blind ambassador in a condition of limbo that recalls the position of every one of us faced with mental illness during a time in which society is always evolving and continuing without us.”

Art Basel Miami Beach will also host the U.S. debut of Lello Esposito’s latest creation inspired by the recent election of the U.S. President. In addition to Naples, Esposito has worked for many years in the U.S. with his own studio. This work consists of a large American flag painted on a 392 x 190 cm canvas, which serves as the backdrop for 232 aluminum poles to commemorate the 232 years of American history since the independence of the country. The poles, which were created from the fusion of some 799 kg of aluminum, vary from a height of 160 to 260 cm. With his “stars & stripes” creation, the eclectic Neapolitan artist wanted to convey a positive message on the vigil of the election of the new President of the United States which projects and promotes the value of liberty. Year after year the installation can be augmented with more of its luminous, smooth, and meaningful “Libertystaffs,” which feature an effigy of the Statue of Liberty at their tips.
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The Italy-America Chamber of Commerce Southeast is proud to feature several “Made in Italy” success stories that have joined the ranks of the local Italian business community. Whether it is an indulging cup of coffee or a home beautifully adorned with the most avant-garde wall/floor coverings or a door unlike any other that reeks of sophistication, they prove that luxury, cutting-edge design, ingenuity, impeccable quality, and total indulgence, ITALIAN STYLE, are alive and well in South Florida.

REKICO USA LLC: Where Every Coffee is a True Masterpiece

There are places where style, taste and harmony take form. Rekico is the coffee roast that, day after day, brightens your life with the pleasure of a perfect break and the flavor of a coffee you won’t forget, a journey into taste that you can experience every day. With Rekico, every coffee is a true masterpiece.

Rekico was established in the late 90s in Faenza, Italy. With more than 20 years of experience in the sector under his belt, founder Alberto Castellari decided to create a new point of reference for quality and service that would meet the approval of coffee-lovers in cafés, at home or at the office. Rekico provides high quality coffee bean blends and a broad range of convenient solutions including pods and capsules, with a series of machines specifically designed to guarantee quality coffee.

Over the years, Rekico has increased its employees, equipment and turnover, although the company’s commitment to quality and excellence remains constant. Further confirmation of the company’s evolution came from the new factory, with its cutting-edge roasting systems and a dedicated room for in-house training that offer its clients the kind of service that only a true partner can provide.

The constant attention to every fine detail, from selection to roasting, packaging to distribution, makes Rekico coffee the final destination in an exclusive, exciting journey into taste. Rekico embodies a coffee culture that is expressed at its best in the prestigious blends stemming from the experience of our tasters and master roasters who bring to your cup a sweeter, creamier, more richly aromatic coffee.

From the very start Rekico’s philosophy has been clear and precise: to make each cup of coffee a miniature masterpiece of taste, balance and aroma that offers the perfect answer for even the most refined of palates. Everything we do is designed to bring the best coffee to the best places. But presentation also has its part to play. For this reason Rekico has created its distinctively elegant and original image, which adds a touch of style anywhere, along with a broad range of accessories and giveaways (cups, change trays, watches, gifts, sugar candies, t-shirts, polo-shirts, etc.).

Today the story of Rekico has expanded beyond the borders of Italy, with distribution that encompasses Europe, and projects in countries throughout the world. The recent creation of Rekico USA LLC confirms this willingness to develop and establish Rekico in the overseas market. For more information, visit our website (www.rekico.com) or contact Area Manager Dilip Pathak (dilip@rekico.com) or Marketing Manager Andrea Castellari (andrea@rekico.com); Rekico USA, 1001 Brickell Ave Suite 1402, Miami, FL, 33131, tel. (305)970-5673.

The Iris Group: A Question of Taste

The Iris-group is an undisputed leading international producer of high quality, avant-garde floor and wall ceramics for residential, commercial, and industrial products. The group, which consists of Iris Ceramica, Iris U.S., and Fabbrica Marmi e Graniti (FMG) (www.irisfmg.com) among others, is committed to creating long-lasting products that are both environmentally
friendly and on the cutting edge of design.

Recently, the Fabbrica Marmi e Graniti (FMG) recorded a huge success in Bologna, Italy at Cersaie -- the International Exhibition of Ceramic Tile and Bathroom Finishings -- with its new Nature 2.0 range and SHINE finish. Nature 2.0 is the response to a changing world that needs new materials as its means of expression. It represents the groundbreaking union of nature, cutting-edge technology, and aesthetics in the construction of new natural stones for the living-spaces of the future. The range consists of through-body colored slabs with extremely high performance in five hues: COBALT, CORAL, RARE, MIST, and SUN. The colors and effects of Nature 2.0 stones are achieved solely from combinations of clays, sands and the purest minerals. With the creation of its Nature 2.0 line, FMG projects us in a wholly new way towards the future of architecture, which demands sustainable, high-quality materials that express the outcome of new thinking in aesthetics.

The other new product FMG presented at Cersaie offers a prime example of pioneering innovation. SHINE, the new and exclusive glossy finish that brings out all the natural allure of the stone, creates an undulating effect that recalls the brilliant surface of the sea. SHINE reinterprets FMG’s slabs, imbuing them with a brilliant effect that is three-dimensional and rich with lustrous highlights and nuances. Ultimately, it creates a unique, elegant finish with lasting appeal that is distinctively “Made in Italy.”

With the opening of the new Iris Boutique in Miami, Iris U.S. (the American division of Iris Ceramica) brings the beauty of FMG’s new lines and other exclusive Iris surface coverings to South Florida. The Iris Boutique is located inside the Ecostone showroom at 2900 NW 77th Court, Miami, Florida 33122. For more information, visit the company’s website (www.irisus.com) or contact the South Florida Area Manager, Gianfranco Carolo, at Gianfranco@irisus.com, tel. (786) 281-3159.

Lualdi Porte: Making an Entrance

For 128 years Milan-based Lualdi Porte has surprised homeowners with creative designs, innovative materials and exquisite craftsmanship.

Lualdi Porte believes that doors are interior design elements that provide added value to any space – like a genuine master. A high-class door is a vertical surface of two square meters that ensures style and beauty for the entire home. The brand serves as the doorway to Italian design excellence, from the initial design to the product’s final manufacturing. It is a credo that the family-owned company has followed for four generations.

Thanks to cooperation with outstanding architects worldwide, Lualdi Porte is in a position to perceive lifestyle changes in advance. Their designers are inspired by life and the fashion trends around them. The company utilizes a variety of materials like glass and different types of wood, including ebony, rosewood and walnut. In addition to using unique materials, designers “play” with color and perfecting the finishing – all of which contributes to interior design.

Lualdi began designing doors in the 1960s when an architect asked Lualdi Porte to produce internal doors for an exclusive home in Milan, a welcome innovation in the sector. From that time Lualdi became the reference point for architects and designers working on high-end projects for the most exclusive clients. Over the years, Lualdi Porte has continued to bring innovation -- like the use of telescopic frames and the absence of joints -- to the manufacturing of doors.

The ability to interpret and realize the ideas of designers and to guarantee flexible and excellent manufacturing skills are just some of the advantages that have earned Lualdi Porte a position at the top of the industry.

With significant international experience accumulated over the years, Lualdi Porte continues to work on technological advances and sophistication, aiming to make it even easier to install doors in every style of architecture, from classic to modern.

For more information, visit our website www.lualdiporte.com or our South Florida showroom at 209 Altara Avenue, Coral Gables, FL 33146. Tel. 305-461-5464. Contact Alessandro Lualdi 786.210.1132, alessandro.l@lualdiporte.us.
A better place to build a better world. That's what companies around the world are finding when they discover Alabama is both an ideal place to live and do business.

Companies working in aerospace, biotechnology, automotive and other sectors are discovering the advantages Alabama has to offer. Alabama's diverse and thriving industrial base proves that with an ideal business climate and a reputation for becoming a partner with industry, the state has the perfect combination for new business success stories. One example is National Alabama Corp., which in February raised its first steel beam in North Alabama's Shoals area, celebrating the progress the railcar manufacturing company has made in constructing its future plant there. The $350 million project is slated for completion in late 2008 or early 2009. The company plans to employ 1,800 people, producing approximately 8,000 railway freight cars annually.

Working closely with local economic development teams from every region, the Alabama Development Office, the state's lead economic development agency, helps companies every step of the way through the site selection process.
The state is highly competitive in the economic development process and is winning some of the biggest industrial projects in history such as last year's mega ThyssenKrupp steel project. "We have a dedicated, energetic workforce, and when you combine that with the leadership of our state and local economic development teams, it all helps to create a stronger Alabama," said Governor Bob Riley.

Alabama has 345 internationally-based companies located in the state, with four of these companies based in Italy. Monarch Ceramic Tile is an Italian-based company with a plant in the northern Alabama city of Florence, Nonwoven Industries is located in the southern part of the state in Mobile, and RadiciSpandex is centrally located in the city of Tuscaloosa. In October of 2008, the Italian aerospace and defense contractor Finmeccanica acquired DRS Test & Energy Management in Huntsville. Officials from the two companies said the deal strengthens Finmeccanica's position in international markets, reinforces its commitment to the U.S. market and allows DRS to place a greater emphasis on research and development. "The Huntsville facility is a very, very important facility of the company," said DRS spokesman Richard Goldberg said. "It really is one of our centers of excellence."

In the automotive sector, well-respected companies such as Mercedes, Honda, and Hyundai have found Alabama is the ideal setting for manufacturing. Last year alone, 738,832 cars were produced in Alabama, an amazing feat considering that not a single car was produced in the state as late as 1995.

The announcement that Kia will build its first U.S. plant one mile from the Alabama state line has already brought more than a dozen suppliers to the state. ADO continues to work to maximize the economic impact for current and potential automotive suppliers and workers who live within driving distance of the plant. Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Inc. in Huntsville and International Diesel, which produces advanced technology diesel engines in Huntsville, have also discovered the advantages of setting up shop in Alabama. Today, there are more than 300 automotive related companies operating in Alabama — a 286 percent increase since 1991. This number includes an extensive supplier network.

In the aerospace sector, Alabama is home to hundreds of aerospace companies doing work in space and defense; aviation; and maintenance, refurbishment and overhaul (MRO). These companies have created more than 73,000 direct jobs for Alabamians with an annual payroll of more than $3 billion.

The aerospace industry in the state is comprised of four primary business sectors: manufacturers of aerospace; aviation and defense hardware; software and equipment; MRO of existing assets; parts manufacturing and supply for the aerospace industry; and companies providing a variety of business and technical services and support to the industry.

One of the more recent aerospace announcements in Alabama was of EADS North America, which constructed a $600 million aircraft engineering center in Mobile. Aerospace giant Boeing is also a prominent corporate citizen of Alabama, with expanded facilities in the north Alabama cities of Decatur and Huntsville. Lockheed Martin also has undergone several expansions in the small south Alabama town of Troy.

Alabama has also made key investments in the areas of research and biotechnology and life sciences during the term of Governor Riley. Those investments include $12 million for the University of South Alabama Cancer Research Center, $10 million for a new research region per autore le varie società in ogni tappa del processo di scelta del sito. Lo stato è molto competitivo nel processo di sviluppo economico e sta portando avanti alcuni dei più importanti progetti industriali della storia, come l’ultimo mega-progetto per i motori d’acciaio per ThyssenKrupp. “Possiamo contare su un’energetica e dedicata forzalavoro che insieme alla leadership del nostro Stato e con i gruppi economici di sviluppo locali, ci aiuta a creare un’Alabama più forte”, ha detto il governatore Bob Riley.

L’Alabama annovera 345 società multinazionali di cui quattro con sede in Italia: Monarch Ceramic Tile è una società italiana con sede nella città di Firenze nel nord dell’Alabama; Nonwoven Industries ha una sede nell’area metropolitana dello stato nella città di Mobile; RadiciSpandex ha sede al centro dello Stato nella città di Tuscaloosa. L’ottobre del 2008, la società Finmeccanica impegnata nel settore aerospaziale e della difesa, ha acquisito la DRS Test & Energies Management in Huntsville. I dirigenti delle due società hanno dichiarato che l’accordo rinforza la posizione di Finmeccanica nei mercati internazionali, nonché il suo impegno nel mercato americano e permette alla DRS di crescere con grande entusiasmo nell’ambito della ricerca e dello sviluppo. "Le strutture della città di Huntsville sono molto, molto importanti per la società", dichiara il portavoce della DRS Richard Goldberg. "E veramente uno dei nostri centri di eccellenza".

Nel settore auto, società di grosso calibro quali Mercedes, Honda e Hyundai hanno trovato in Alabama un luogo ideale per la produzione. Solo l’anno scorso, in Alabama sono state prodotte 738.832 auto, risultato eccezionale se si pensa che non era stata prodotta alcuna auto fino al 1995. L’annuncio che Kia costuirà il suo primo stabilimento in territorio americano a solo un miglio dal confine con l’Alabama ha già portato una dozzina di fornitori nello Stato. L’ADO continua a lavorare per massimizzare l’impatto corrente e potenziale per i lavoratori ed i fornitori del settore automobilistico che vivono a poca distanza dall’impianto.

La Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Inc. in Huntsville e Diesel International, che produce tecnologie avanzate per i motori diesel, hanno scoperto i vantaggi di stabilire le proprie sedi in Alabama. Oggi oltre 300 società legate all’industria automobilistica operano in Alabama, con una crescita del 286% rispetto al 1991. Questo numero include una vasta rete di fornitori.

Nel settore aerospaziale, l’Alabama ospita centinaia di società che lavorano nel campo dell’aviazione, della difesa, della manutenzione, rifonimentazione e revisione (MRO). Queste compagnie hanno creato più di 73.000 posti di lavoro per gli abitanti dell’Alabama.
Alabama: A Better Place To Build A Better World

One of the primary reasons industries as well as researchers find that Alabama is a good match and continue to expand there is the quality of the state’s workforce and its highly-respected workforce development program. The state’s premiere workforce training program, Alabama Industrial Development Training, has been ranked first among workforce training programs in all 50 states. Services are provided at no cost to employers or trainees. The workforce management system includes recruitment, assessment and training of potential employees, development and production of job-related training materials, provision of training facilities, and delivery of job-specific services. AIDT also provides certified manager training and supervisory and team leadership training. Finally, a new Workforce Development System has been implemented to coordinate the state’s many services.

Alabama’s team approach to economic development is also evident in the state’s effective international trade efforts. The Export Alabama Alliance has been formed to be a seamless network of international trade agencies with the fundamental objective to help Alabama companies grow their business internationally. Experienced advisers provide the help Alabama companies need to be successful overseas. This success has translated into $14 billion in manufacturing goods being exported in 2006.

Whether in trade or economic development, “Team Alabama” has proven that its approach is highly effective. “Companies seeking to relocate or expand have seen that here in Alabama there are world-class companies that are profitable and continuously expanding,” said ADO Director Neal Wade. “That success is the most effective sales tool we have.”

For more information, contact the Alabama Development Office (www.alabamausa.org), tel. (334) 242-0400, e-mail: idinfo@ado.alabama.gov.
Molise is a rare gem waiting to be discovered and known in depth, with its numerous nature itineraries and treasures that will unveil the charm, peacefulness, and genuine simplicity of this land and its inhabitants. The region, which extends over a little more than 4,400 square kilometers, is situated among the Sangro and Fortore rivers, Campitello Matese, the Capracotta mountains, the Trigno and Biferno lush valleys, and a coastline that graces a sea awarded a prestigious European ecological award known as the Blue Flag. The Region of Molise consists of a variety of landscapes, from hills to lakes, waterfalls and mountains, to small cities, towns, villages, and farms that reside on the cliff’s edge or are tucked away in lush valleys, all jealously preserving a life-style on a human scale.

In addition to its picturesque scenery brimming with historical, archaeological, and natural treasures, Molise boasts a rich cultural heritage painstakingly safeguarded by its proud people intent on preserving their age-old customs amidst modernity’s changing tide.

A Growing Economy

In the midst of an international crisis, Molise is swimming upstream, registering unexpected growth of its GDP. The Region’s GDP calculated on market prices per capita highlights a 4% increase. Furthermore, the trend of household expenses shows a 1.8% increase over average national household spending. Lastly, labor demand registered an increase of 0.6%.

Molise prides itself on its strong industrial sector in both manufacturing and construction. The Region’s traditional dominant sectors include agro-alimentary production, textiles, clothing, wood, and wood-working. The Region also boasts a notable chemical, rubber, and engineering sector, along with a thriving service sector, which accounts for some 75% of the Region’s GDP. This allows monthly average household consumption higher than any other Southern Italian region, certainly comparable to the rich North.
The United States and Molise

The U.S. represents a market of great strategic value for Molise both for trade volume and cultural ties stemming from the emigration of local inhabitants to the United States.

With time, this direct connection with the United States grew both culturally and commercially as evidenced by growing trade opportunities for Molise businesses that established U.S. branches, commercial offices, warehouses, and industrial plants for the partial manufacturing and re-exportation of convenience goods including food & beverage products, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, mineral water, boxed wine, furniture, and furnishings for interiors and exteriors of tourist resorts.

In recent years, America’s demand for Molise’s traditional products has grown significantly, offering local businesses unique investment opportunities. The Region’s truffle and wine production in particular has expanded to open new and important horizons for the local eco-gastronomic economy.

Investing in Molise

Molise is a region characterized by small to medium sized businesses with deep roots and a wealth of entrepreneurial potential. Over the years, many large enterprises have established their own production plants in Molise, a Region which offers numerous advantages, namely competitive conditions, quality of life, a positive climate for industrial relations, social cohesiveness, the presence of industrial areas, and a hospitable environment within small urban centers.

All of these factors recreate an authentic and genuine “life-style” which enriches and favors the quality of work, a factor which can not easily be found in other Italian Regions. With regards to investment opportunities, Molise has focused on alternative energy and the sustainability of small villages, in addition to fundamental sectors such as food & beverage production and high-end tourism.

Renewable energy is a sector of great potential that has experienced significant growth thanks to the rising price of oil and a heightened international awareness of environmental issues.

The Region’s decision to concentrate its efforts on renewable and sustainable energy production and on the reintroduction of small villages stems from solid experience in the sector. Consider that in Molise the percentage of sustainable energy production is increasing, almost in line with national production.

On the other hand, the Region’s “I borghi” formula aims to promote a new model of tourism and residential hospitality based on widespread accommodation facilities (tourist villages, residences, and hotels) able to ensure deep ties with the local culture and communities and true authenticity in all travel experiences.

In line with this mission, the Region is implementing policies that aim to bolster its tourist industry, while simultaneously safeguarding its territorial treasures and true authenticity in all travel experiences. The Region’s truffle and wine production in particular has expanded to open new and important horizons for the local eco-gastronomic economy.

For more information, contact Unioncamere Molise (www.mol.camcom.it).
Accounting with Fiuto

BY FERNANDO CANCEINO, CIA, CFE, RGL FORENSICS (WWW.RGL.COM), FCANCEINO@US.RGL.COM

Nineteen years ago, I was sitting in my office in Malaga wrapping up an audit file, when a colleague dropped a newspaper article on my desk: Multimillion Dollar Fraud Rocks Gibraltar Financial Industry. The story claimed that a Gibraltar investment firm had allegedly misappropriated all of their investors’ money. Then the telephone rang. It was the partner in charge of the office. I listened as he barked orders and soon found myself on the way to Gibraltar with a team from London to investigate this investment firm. The team was composed of Forensic Accountants, a profession that until that moment was entirely unknown to me.

Forensic accounting is a profession that combines investigative skills with accounting, auditing, and consulting to conduct investigations. Typically, forensic accountants work on cases involving allegations of fraud and misconduct, civil and criminal litigation, economic disputes, and mergers and acquisitions. Forensic accounting starts with predication and is much more concerned with the granular level, determining whether an event did or did not take place with minimal regard for materiality. The detailed development of factual information including the who, what, when, where, how and why of a suspected or known impropriety, is derived from both documentary evidence and testimonial evidence. This differs from audit in that a forensic investigation is about providing evidence, not assurance. Forensic accountants are akin to detectives and private investigators, where the rules of evidence play a key role.

Investigations that involve forensic accountants range in magnitude from embezzlement at a small retail business to widespread government corruption. The nature of each case is unique and may involve various sorts of experts including forensic technologists, valuation specialists, and other experts. Jurisdiction of the alleged impropriety adds to the uniqueness of each case due to local laws and regulations regarding how investigations may be conducted.

Central to any investigation, however, is the search, collection, review and analysis of evidence. In this electronic age, these tasks include securing, storing and reviewing data in a systematic, disciplined manner suitable for use in a court of law. Data includes email and voice communications, electronic accounting, transactional and banking records, electronic documents and files, and computer and network usage logs. An important aspect of handling evidence is the establishment of a secure chain of custody over evidence so as to withstand the test of possible tampering or tainting. The review and analysis process involves countless hours of parsing through documentation in search of evidence relevant to the case. This requires general knowledge about the types of documents that are to be reviewed so as to quickly dismiss non-relevant documentation. One example is the use of banking industry experts to search through loan files in search of non-compliance with lending regulations. Although interviews are not conducted in all cases, skillful interviewing produces useful leads and sometimes out-right confessions. In addition, project management skills are necessary to effectively manage and guide the investigative process, especially when large volumes of data and numerous personnel are involved.

Diciannove anni fa ero seduto nel mio ufficio di Malaga, chiudendo una pratica di revisione contabile, quando il mio collega lanciò sulla mia scrivania un articolo che diceva: Frode multimilionaria scuote l’industria finanziaria di Gibraltar. L’articolo riportava la notizia secondo cui una società di investimento con sede a Gibraltar aveva derubato i propri investitori impossessandosi del loro denaro. Poi il telefono suonò. Era uno dei partner responsabili dell’ufficio. Ascoltai mentre mi urlava concitati ordini e presto mi ritrovai sulla strada per Gibraltar con un gruppo di londinesi per investigare su questa società di investigazione. Il gruppo era formato da Forensic Accountants, una professione che fino a quel momento non avevo nemmeno idea cosa fosse.

La contabilitá processuale é una professione che unisce capacità investigative con la tenuta contabile, la revisione e la consulenza per condurre indagini. Tipicamente queste indagini passano attraverso casi che coinvolgono accuse di frode e cattiva amministrazione, omicidi, furti, danni e minacce. Determinare se un evento è accaduto o meno, con poco interesse verso la rilevanza. L’esperto si concentra sull’analisi dettagliata dei fatti, ovvero chi, cosa, dove, come e perché di una sospettata o accertata scorrettezza, deriva sia da evidenze documentate che da testimonianze. In questo l’indagine forense si differenzia dalla revisione contabile perché si occupa di trovare delle prove, non le certezze. L’esperto si concentra sull’analisi dettagliata dei fatti, ovvero chi, cosa, dove, come e perché di una sospettata o accertata scorrettezza, deriva sia da evidenze documentate che da testimonianze. In questo l’indagine forense si differenzia dalla revisione contabile perché si occupa di trovare delle prove, non le certezze. L’esperto si concentra sull’analisi dettagliata dei fatti, ovvero chi, cosa, dove, come e perché di una sospettata o accertata scorrettezza, deriva sia da evidenze documentate che da testimonianze. In questo l’indagine forense si differenzia dalla revisione contabile perché si occupa di trovare delle prove, non le certezze. L’esperto si concentra sull’analisi dettagliata dei fatti, ovvero chi, cosa, dove, come e perché di una sospettata o accertata scorrettezza, deriva sia da evidenze documentate che da testimonianze. In questo l’indagine forense si differenzia dalla revisione contabile perché si occupa di trovare delle prove, non le certezze. L’esperto si concentra sull’analisi dettagliata dei fatti, ovvero chi, cosa, dove, come e perché di una sospettata o accertata scorrettezza, deriva sia da evidenze documentate che da testimonianze. In questo l’indagine forense si differenzia dalla revisione contabile perché si occupa di trovare delle prove, non le certezze.

Le indagini che coinvolgono la contabilitá processuale variano in grandezza a partire dall’appropriazione indebita di un piccolo negozio fino alla corruzione a livello governativo. La natura di ciascun caso é unica e può coinvolgere diversi tipi di professionisti, come tecnici processuali, consulenti, investigatori privati ed altri esperti. La giurisdizione in cui é verificata la sospettata incorrettezza si aggiunge a determinare l’unicità di ciascun caso, in quanto le leggi e regolamenti in vigore in quel determinato paese con riguardo a come le indagini possono essere svolte.

Il punto focale di ogni indagine é la ricerca, raccolta, revisione ed analisi delle prove. Nei moderni tempi tecnologicamente avanzati, questa attività include proteggere, conservare e revisionare i dati in un modo disciplinato che ne consenta l’uso in fronte ad una corte. I dati includono email e comunicazioni vocali, ordini elettronici, registrazioni bancarie e note di transazioni, documenti elettronici e files, registrazioni d’uso telematiche. Un importante aspetto della gestione delle prove é lo stabilire un processo sicuro di custodia delle prove in modo che possano superare il test contro possibili alterazioni o inquinamento delle prove stesse. Le procedure di revisione e analisi implicano ore ed ore di esame della documentazione alla ricerca di prove rilevanti per il caso. Ciò richiede una conoscenza generale dei diversi tipi di documenti che devono essere visionati e la capacità di scartare quei documenti che non sono rilevanti. Un esempio e quello di avvalersi di esperti del settore bancario per ricercare tra documentazioni di un mutuo aspetti non in conformità con la regolamentazione sui prestiti. Ancora se interrogatori non sempre sono condotti, in alcuni casi possono portare a utili informazioni e talvolta a dirette confessioni. Non in ogni caso é necessario avere delle capacità manageriali per poter gestire e condurre in modo efficace il processo investigativo, soprattutto quando il volume di dati e di persone coinvolte é notevole.

Nessuna considerazione sulla contabilitá
Any discussion of how forensic accountants go about conducting investigations is incomplete without mentioning the impact of technology on the forensic accounting profession and the legal environment. The use of software to aid in the investigative process is also becoming quite prevalent. Software tools to sort, parse and analyze large amounts of data are extremely helpful in identifying relevant information and evidence. Case management software is an important item in the forensic accountant’s tool kit. This software aids in mapping and linking of the facts, as well as managing the relevant documents, and facilitating the report writing process. Proprietary and open access databases are queried to obtain information on persons, entities, or groups of interest.

Researchers at the University of California at Berkeley estimate that 93 percent of all information is solely computer data. Additionally, the US Federal Rules of Civil Procedure have been amended to reflect the use of e electronic documents and “e-discovery,” principally Rules 26, 34, and 37. As such, the use of technology in forensic accounting has become an integral part of the profession in order to handle the increasing complexity and large volumes of data associated with current cases, and in interfacing with the operational reality of business, law, and government.

Globalization and technological advancement have increased risk and complexity for businesses, governments and society. As such, the forensic accounting profession has expanded into business intelligence and regulatory compliance. Additionally, current events in the financial industry have raised the need for forensic accounting in the areas of mortgage fraud, anti-money laundering, terrorist financing, and Foreign Corrupt Practices Act compliance. Furthermore, the profession plays a key role in fraud prevention; a role that in the current economic and financial environment will become much more prominent than it has been in the past. The profession promises to become even more important as the global regulatory environment becomes more complex and technology enables even more insidious fraudulent schemes.

Returning to my first forensic accounting case in Gibraltar, the fraud had been quantified in the amount of at least $228 million USD. Through an elaborated web of onshore and offshore companies, the perpetrators had siphoned out the investors’ funds and sent false statements. When too many investors started demanding their money back, the fraudsters ran off. Basically, an elaborated “Ponzi Scheme” had been perpetrated. The perpetrators remain at large and over $110 million USD have not been recovered. Spariti, as the Italians say - disappeared without a trace. In an action similar to the changes facing the global financial industry today, the reaction of the Gibraltar Finance Authority was to increase regulations and governance over the establishment and operations of investment businesses.

Even with all the technological advances available to forensic accountants today, it is my belief that years of investigative experience foster and nurture the development of what the Italians call il fluo, an Italian concept depicting a sense of smell or discernment that is essential for a forensic accounting investigator.
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INTERVIEW WITH ANTONIO AIELLO, 100% CAPRI (WWW.100X100CAPRI.IT)

Antonio Aiello, born in 1974 to a family of noble sartorial tradition, grew up and acquired his experience in the world of fashion. In 2000, he embarked on his own entrepreneurial adventure by opening the first 100% Capri boutique in Capri. Roughly one year later he drew on this first success and opened another store in Rome at the Hotel de Russie in via del Babuino. In line with his company’s philosophy, he selected only the most exclusive of locations to reflect the distinctive style of his products. His trips and business affairs abroad brought him to the Caribbean and Florida where, after falling in love with the area, he decided to open a boutique in St. Barth. This project, which initially foresaw a seasonal commitment of six months, was ultimately kept open twelve months a year to guarantee consistent annual sales. It proved to be a tremendous success.

He opened three more stores in Capri and added innovative lines for women, children, and interior design for the home and yacht. In 2007, the company had the honor of being selected among 300 companies for an opening in the prestigious Bal Harbour shopping center, where today the company is inaugurating its first store in one of the most exclusive shopping malls in the United States.

What is real luxury? His response: “Simplicity.”

Your company boasts a rich Italian, or better yet, Southern Italian tradition. Why did you choose the American market, and Florida in particular, over other international markets?

Capri has always been a favorite destination for Americans in search of the “Made in Italy” name. From the moment I opened the first store, the American market represented the outlet and final destination for more than 80% of the products we sold to Americans (all of this despite the fact that we were not yet directly present with our own stores or distributors). All of the clients who purchased directly from us now continue to do so in our own stores. This permits us to ensure control of the quality of the product, the level of customer service provided, and the client’s overall satisfaction and treatment.

Tell us about 100% Capri’s marketing strategy for the U.S market. How does it differ from your approach to the Italian market?

In the fashion world linen represents 5% of the textile market. Our challenge was to educate the client, and in particular, our American clients who are unfamiliar with this material and often skeptical about its use. We attempt to convey the benefits of linen, both in terms of comfort and usage. We adopted a marketing strategy that -- rather than focus on the overused concept of luxury -- is based on attention to detail, the use of quality products, and true artisanship. The return to ancient...
Barth e Bal Harbour, rappresentano boutique exclusive per uno stile unico. In ogni negozio abbiamo le nostre ragazze che stirano all’interno del punto vendita: il cliente ne rimane incantato, quasi stupito. La nostra clientela è di fascia alta ed il brand è conosciuto e rinomato tra i protagonisti del mondo della finanza, del business, dell’arte e dello spettacolo.

La moda in Italia soffre una situazione di oligopolio. Per molti imprenditori e molti giovani è difficile entrare in questo mondo ed avere successo. Da anni non si sentono nuovi nomi affacciarsi sulla grande scena.

Il mercato in Italia è limitato e forse si sta un po’ perdendo la percezione del Made in Italy, per questo si rende necessario esportarlo e promuoverlo all’estero.

Il nostro progetto prevede una crescita graduale, ci rinforziamo giorno dopo giorno, cerchiamo location molto esclusive e difficili da raggiungere. Oggi Bal Harbour Shop ha un concetto del marketing all’avanguardia, con regole ferree, ma che guarda a 360 gradi, non si ferma ai grandi marchi, ma da la possibilità anche ai meno conosciuti come il nostro con una clientela particolare e in linea con lo stile del mall di avere un foro negozio. È una sfida che abbiamo affrontato, sappiamo che le nostre altre boutique di St. Barth, Capri e Roma vanno bene, vedremo cosa succederà Bal Harbour.

Come pensa che la crisi internazionale può incidere sul tuo business?

Fare un paragone con l’anno passato è difficile. Siamo in un periodo di crescita a livello di linee di prodotti, location e pubblicità. Quest’anno, nonostante la crisi e il cambio del dollaro, sappiamo che guardando a 360 gradi, non si ferma ai grandi marchi, ma da la possibilità anche ai meno conosciuti come il nostro con una clientela particolare e in linea con lo stile del mall di avere un foro negozio. È una sfida che abbiamo affrontato, sappiamo che le nostre altre boutique di St. Barth, Capri e Roma vanno bene, vedremo cosa succederà Bal Harbour.

Dopo Bal Harbour ha intenzione di aprire altri punti vendita e se si dove?

Grazie a Bal Harbour “abbiamo la password”. Dopo di qui dobbiamo scegliere solo il posto che ci piacera di più. Eserciti scegli da una selezione di 300 aziende e è stata un’emozione fantastica. Se questo centro ha scommesso su di noi, noi cercheremo di fare il massimo con la nostra squadra e raggiungere i nostri obiettivi ed avere successo.

How do you think the international economic crisis will affect your business?

It is difficult to make a comparison with last year. We are in a period of growth in terms of our product lines, locations, and marketing. This year, despite the crisis and the euro-dollar exchange rate, we were able to sell a great deal. The Russian market contributed significantly to this success. The rediscovery of beauty, authenticity, and family values has helped consolidate our sales thanks to the high quality, elegance, and simplicity of our products.

What are your company’s plans after Bal Harbour?

Thanks to Bal Harbour we now have “the password.” Now we just have to choose the location we like the best. To be chosen out of some 300 stores was a riveting emotion. If this shopping center took a chance on us, our team will do our best to reach our goals and register yet another success.
A Sense of Pride: R&D Made-in-Italy

BY ANTONIO NANNI, PH.D., P.E., PROFESSOR AND CHAIR DEPT. OF CIVIL, ARCH. & ENVIRON. ENGINEERING, UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI, NANNI@MIA.MI.EDU

When speaking of Italy, we rarely think of a country that seriously addresses research as an integral part of its national educational and industrial systems. There are however notable exceptions and, recently, we have had the opportunity to see such an exception in our very own Miami.

The Past

In the late 90’s and early 2000’s, the Research Minister of Regione Campania at that time, Professor Gino Nicolais, conceived the idea of “Regional Centers of Competence”. Each of these centers was intended to be a collection of units of excellence within Campania’s universities and national laboratories that together could potentially deliver high-quality and unique research products in targeted areas. The ultimate objective was to increase the competitiveness of the regional brainpower as well as provide support in areas of innovation to regional industrial sectors. After a gestation period, each center was required to incorporate as a non-profit consortium corporation, thus having all the privileges and obligations of the private sector. In essence, the center had to be self-sustainable and able to ensure its prosperity and growth based on its success in developing proposals and obtaining projects.

The European Union believed in this novel idea and funded the creation of ten Regional Centers of Competence in Regione Campania with a lump sum investment exceeding 250 million euro. The funding was to be used by the centers to secure fundamental and unique equipment that would allow them to implement their research agendas (http://www.sito.regione.campania.it/internazionalizzazione_cr/cr/en_index.html).

Minister Nicolais also instituted an international oversight committee with the responsibility of checking intellectual rigor and managerial viability of the centers. The committee was chaired by Anthony Di Benedetto, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Massachusetts. I had the privilege to be appointed as a member of this committee and witness in person the realization of this remarkable idea.

The Present

This past September, a delegation from one of the centers known as AMRA -- an acronym that stands for Analisi e Monitoraggio del Rischio Ambientale (Analysis and Monitoring of Environmental Risk) -- visited the United States. The delegation was composed of seven individuals led by Prof. Paolo Gasparini, President and Scientific Director. The delegation met with representatives of South Florida development agencies (i.e. Beacon Council, Enterprise Florida, and the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce) and the officers of the Italian Consulate General including Consul General Marco Rocca. Other relevant meetings were held at the University of Miami (see Figure 1: Prof. Gasparini presenting AMRA) and the United States Southern Command. After three days in Miami, the delegation concluded its first landing on U.S. shores by visiting officers of the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington D.C.

AMRA, the only Italian Center of Competence in the field of Analysis and Monitoring of Environmental Risk, aims to develop novel technologies applied to the assessment, mitigation and management of natural and anthropic risks. It is fully owned by five public universities and three national research agencies. Its main partner is the University of Napoli Federico II, while the additional partners are: the Second University of Naples, the University of Salerno, the University of Naples Parthenope, the University of Sannio-Benevento, the National Research Council (CNR), the National Institute of Geophysics and Vulcanology (INGV), and

Quando parliamo dell'Italia, raramente pensiamo ad un Paese che fa della ricerca una parte integrante della sua formazione nazionale e del suo sistema industriale. C'è tuttavia una eccezione e, recentemente, abbiamo avuto l'opportunità di vedere una propria nella nostra Miami.

Il passato

Nel corso degli anni '90 e degli inizi degli anni 2000, il Professore Gino Nicolais, all'epoca Assessore alla Ricerca della Regione Campania, concepì l'idea dei “Centri Regionali di Competenza”. Ogni centro doveva, dopo un periodo di gestazione, costituirsi come soggetto consorziale a fine scopo di profitto, avendo così tutti i vantaggi e gli obblighi del settore privato. In sostanza, ciascun Centro doveva essere a lui sufficiente, capace di garantirsi una gestione economica e uno sviluppo basato unicamente sulle proprie capacità di proposte e realizzazioni di progetti.

L'Unione Europea ha creduto in questa idea nuova e ha sostenuto la creazione di dieci Centri Regionali di Competenza nella Regione Campania con un investimento iniziale di oltre 250 milioni di euro. I fondi sono stati utilizzati per acquistare la strumentazione d'avanguardia e realizzare le attività di ricerca previste.

Ministro Nicolais ha istituito un commissario internazionale con il compito di controllare il rigore intellettuale e le strategie manageriali dei Centri. La commissione era presieduta da Anthony Di Benedetto, Rettore e Vice Presidente per gli Affari Accademici, dell’Università di Massachusetts. Io stesso ho avuto il privilegio di essere nominato membro di questa commissione ed essere testimone della realizzazione di questa importante idea.

Il presente

Lo scorso settembre, una delegazione di uno dei Centri, AMRA - Analisi e Monitoraggio del Rischio Ambientale (Analysis and Monitoring of Environmental Risk), ha visitato gli Stati Uniti. La delegazione, composta da sette persone, era presieduta dal Prof. Paolo Gasparini, Presidente e Direttore Scientifico. La delegazione si è incontrata con rappresentanti delle agenzie per lo sviluppo del Sud della Florida (Beacon Council, Enterprise Florida, e la Comissione per l'Amichevole Italia) e con il Consolato Marco Rocca ed altri responsabili del Consolato Generale. Altri incontri rilevanti si sono tenuti presso l'Università di Miami (Figura 1: Prof. Gasparini presenta AMRA) e lo United States Southern Command. Dopo 3 giorni a Miami, la delegazione, conclusa la prima tappa negli Stati Uniti, ha visitato gli uffici della World Bank e dell'American Development Bank a Washington D.C.

AMRA, l'unico Centro di Competenza Italiano nel campo dell'Analisi e il Controllo dei Rischio Ambientale, ha l'obiettivo di sviluppare nuove tecnologie applicate alla valutazione, al controllo e alla gestione dei rischi naturali e antropici. Il capitale è interamente detenuto da cinque università e tre Enti di ricerca nazionali.

Il partner principale è l’Università Federico II di Napoli e gli altri partner sono la Seconda Università di Napoli, l’Università di Salerno, l’Università Parthenope, l’Università di Sannio-Benevento, il Centro Nazionale di Ricerca, l’Istituto Nazionale di...
the Zoological Station Anton Dohrn-Naples. This consortium and the wide range of expertise available from the partners allow AMRA to deal with environmental risks in a comprehensive way, ranging from early warning methodologies to probabilistic quantitative approaches for risk assessment, homeland security, industrial risk and waste management.

AMRA is currently undertaking several projects on hydrogeologic and coastal-marine risks assessment and earthquake early warning for the Department of Civil Protection of Regione Campania. It is also deeply involved in European funded projects. In fact, AMRA has coordinated the Na.R.As. (Natural Risk Assessment) project and is a partner of the TRANSFER (Tsunami Risk and Strategies for the European Region) project. It is in the coordinating group of the SAFER (Seismic Early Warning for Europe) project and of the SAFELAND (Living with Landslides in Europe: Assessment Effects of Global Change and Risk Management Strategies) project. Furthermore, AMRA is involved in the collaborative project SoICam (Soil Contamination: Advanced Integrated Characterization and Time-lapse Monitoring). In the area of security, AMRA has coordinated the project Security of Airports Structures funded by the European Program for Critical Infrastructure Protection.

AMRA offers competitive expertise and laboratory facilities in the following fields:

- Methods of early warnings for real time mitigation of risks due to earthquakes, tsunamis, hydro-geological events, and man-produced events. AMRA has designed, implemented and is now operating one of the few earthquake early warning networks existing in Europe. It is one of the coordinators of a major European project (SAFER) and collaborates with the University of California at Berkeley, the National Technical University of Taiwan and the Japan National Research Institute of Earth Physics and Disaster Prevention. AMRA is developing projects also concerning real

Geofisica e Vulcanologia (RGGV) e la stazione Zoologica Anton – Dohrn – Napoli. Tale partnership e l’ampio spettro delle competenze disponibili, consentono ad AMRA un approccio integrato e multi-disciplinare alle problematiche dei rischi, che va dalle metodologie di early warning agli approcci quantitativi – probabilistici per la valutazione dei rischi ambientali, alla valutazione dei rischi industriali alla gestione dei rifiuti fino alle problematiche legate all’ homeland security.


AMRA offre inoltre competenze altamente specializzate e strutture di laboratorio nelle seguenti aree:

- Metodologie di early warning per la mitigazione real-time dei rischi dovuti a terremoti, Tsunami, eventi idrogeologici e eventi di origine umana utilizzando una serie di nuove tecnologie (vi si riferisce ai progetti SAFER e SAFELAND) e attualmente gestisce uno dei pochi sistemi di early warning sismico in Europa. E’ uno dei coordinatori del progetto europeo SAFER e collabora con l’Università di Berkeley in California, la National Technical University of Taiwan e l’Istituto di Ricerca Nazionale di Fisica della terra e prevenzione disastri del Giappone. AMRA sta inoltre sviluppando progetti riguardanti la riduzione in tempo reale dei rischi idrogeologici e la protezione degli acquedotti da eventi dolosi.

- Metodologie di early warning che gestiscono il triggering (o cascata) tra i diversi rischi;

- Protezione delle strutture e infrastrutture da terremoti e attacchi dolosi. AMRA possiede e gestisce uno delle maggiori Tavole Vibranti d’Europa (vd. Figura 2: Tavole Vibranti di AMRA). Ha eseguito con successo uno studio di fattibilità sulla sicurezza dei ponti finanziato dall’Università del Missouri a Rolla;

- Definizione e gestione dei sistemi per i rifiuti industriali ed urbani con approcci olistici e sistematici che utilizzano strumenti innovativi di analisi dei flussi di sostanze e del ciclo di vita;

- Supporto tecnico per la progettazione e la messa in opera di nuove tecnologie utilizzando la pilota e i processi di gassificazione. Un progetto pilota di gassificatore a letto fluido (con una capacità di 100 kWh) viene utilizzato per questo tipo di studi (vd. Figura 3: Impianto Pilota Fugas di AMRA).

Futuro

AMRA ha già preso il volo. Il volo inaugurale è storico. E’ ormai una società con un ampio portafoglio di progetti. E’ prevedibile che AMRA diventerà un nome conosciuto anche nell’area del Atlantico e un partner prezioso per le società e le agenzie dell’America Settentrionale e Latina interessate alla valutazione, controllo e gestione dei rischi ambientali e antropici.

Un’altra realizzazione particolare del Made-in-Italy che può fare la differenza e, in questo caso, servire la società in Italia e all’estero nel raggiungere obiettivi critici di sicurezza e sostenibilità.

**Fig. 1: Professor Gasparini Presenting AMRA**
time reduction of hydro-geological risks and protection of water-supplies from malicious attacks;

• Quantitative methods of multi-hazard and multi-risk assessment, including triggering (or cascades) among different risks;

• Protection of structures and infrastructure from earthquakes and malicious attacks. AMRA owns and operates one of the major shake-table facilities in Europe. It has successfully carried out a feasibility study for the security of bridges supported by the University of Missouri at Rolla;

• Definition of management systems for industrial and municipal solid wastes by means of an holistic and systematic approach that utilizes the innovative tools of the substance flow analysis and life cycle analysis;

• Technical support for design and operation of novel technologies utilizing pyrolysis and gasification processes. A pilot plant bubbling fluidized bed gasifier (with a feedstock capacity of 100kg/h) is used for this kind of studies (see Figure 2: AMRA FluGas Pilot plant).

The Future

AMRA has already taken off. The maiden flight is history. It is now a thriving enterprise with a remarkable portfolio of projects. It is envisioned that AMRA will become a common name also on this side of the Atlantic Ocean and a preferred partner for North and Latin American corporations and agencies interested in the assessment, monitoring, and mitigation of environmental and anthropic risks.

Another unique Made-in-Italy that can make the difference and, in this case, serve society at home and abroad in attaining critical goals of safety and sustainability.

Fig. 2: AMRA FluGas Pilot Plant

Contacts
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Email: gasparini@na.infn.it
IRIS-GROUP:
Iris Boutique Arrives in South Florida

The Iris-group leads the flooring industry in innovative design and technology research around the globe and consists of Iris Ceramica and Fabbrica Marmi E Graniti (FMG). Currently, Iris Ceramica exports its ceramic products to over 100 countries. It is committed to producing high quality, avant-garde floor and wall ceramics for residential, commercial, and industrial products.

Iris US, a new division of Iris Ceramica, was established in December 2004 as an American division to deliver U.S. made products to the flooring industry and to promote Iris-group products throughout the nation. Iris U.S. is committed to promoting sustainable development and the “green factor” via the production of long lasting, environmentally friendly products. With corporate offices based in Anaheim, CA and production in Tennessee, Iris US can domestically produce and ship material all over the nation. Recently, the Iris-group opened an Iris Boutique (or showroom) in Miami that focuses exclusively on Iris surface coverings and the latest trends in lighting and design. Located inside their distributor’s showroom (Ecostone) at 2900 NW 77th Court, Miami, Florida 33122, the Iris Boutique firmly establishes the company’s presence in South Florida. Among other projects, the company landed a more than $1 million flooring contract at Aventura Mall (www.irisus.com).

MAGNEGAS:
The GREEN Natural Gas Alternative

Magnegas Corporation, a company based in Florida (Tampa area) has recently obtained approval to be quoted on the Over the Counter Bulletin Board (OTCBB:MNGA). This is an important milestone for Magnegas Corporation, an alternative fuel company, which has recently obtained an exclusive license to manufacture Magnegas refineries based on the patented Plasma Arc Flow system. This system recycles sewage, sludge and certain industrial and oil-based liquid wastes into a clean burning natural gas alternative called Magnegas. The development of this cost competitive fuel is the result of the many years of hard work by the Italian-American scientist Ruggero Santilli, a well known physicist and mathematician, formerly of Harvard University.

The Magnegas refinery uses a patented electrical process to decompose the liquid waste molecules into atoms. Subsequently, the atoms are recombined into Magnegas, a hydrogen based natural gas alternative which can power bi-fuel cars running on natural gas, cooking grills, industrial equipments and homes. Magnegas is also an ideal metal cutting and welding fuel that is now initially sold in the Tampa area and in Georgia. When used in bi-fuel cars the Magnegas exhaust has been independently certified to surpass all E.P.A. requirements without a catalytic converter, making it dramatically cleaner than fossil fuel (www.magnegas.com).

ALENIA NORTH AMERICA:
New Aircraft Production Facility in North Florida

Alenia North America, a subsidiary of Alenia Aeronautica and Italy’s Finmeccanica Group, signed an agreement with the City of Jacksonville on October 16, 2008 to establish a new aircraft production facility at Cecil Field Commerce Center in North Florida. Alenia has committed to investing over $100 million in the construction and outfitting of the plant and plans to hire 300 people by 2012. The plant will perform final assembly of the twin engine C-27J military cargo aircraft for the U.S. Army and Air Force as well as other foreign customers. This is Alenia’s first major investment in the United States for the defense sector of the aerospace market. In 2005 Alenia established a 300,000 square integration facility with its partners in Charleston, South Carolina for the Boeing 787 program. Finmeccanica is one of the largest industrial groups in Italy, with over 50,000 employees in Italy and 65,000 globally. It is the second largest defense and aerospace company in Europe and the 10th in the world. Since 1917, Alenia has specialized in the manufacturing, design, and support of military and commercial aircrafts.

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Venezia: Serene, Opulent and Powerful

BY CLAUDIO PASTOR, SOCIETA' DANTE ALIGHIERI, CLAUDIO@DANTEMIAMI.ORG.

It was the fourth of June perhaps the sixth hour of the day. I was standing at my window, looking out to sea... when one of those long ships that they call galleys entered the harbor, all garnished with green boughs, its oars thrusting through the water, its sails swollen by the wind.

So swift was its advance that we could soon see the joyful faces of the sailors and a group of laughing young men, crowned with leaves and waving banners above their heads in greetings to their native city, victorious but still unaware of her triumph.

As the ship came in we could see the enemy standards draped over her stern, and no shred of doubt remained in our minds that she brought news of victory... And when we heard it Doge Lorenzo wished all his people to give thanks and praises to God with splendid ceremonies throughout the city, but especially at the Basilica of St. Mark the Evangelist than which there is nothing, I believe, on earth more beautiful."

This scene described by Petrarch in August 1364 clearly shows how the history and greatness of Venice always came by sea. If wars were fought, they were fought mostly to protect her commercial interests. This strategy combined with mostly good government eventually turned Venice into the rich city that it became.

The true wealth of Venice however, was the Venetians themselves. It was their ability to trade and communicate with the many different cultures of the Mediterranean...
that made them rich. It was their open-mindedness and their appreciation and respect for other cultures that made them great.

Few can exemplify this better than the most famous of all Venetians; Marco Polo. When he returned to Venice about 100 years before Petrarch’s visit in the late 1200s (after having spent 20 years in China and the Orient), he brought back with him the rich silks, jewels, spices and both Arabic and Asian cultures that to me represent the essence of Venetian art and architecture.

As all the great cities of history, what made Venice strong was its outward looking vision. Not only was Venice full of foreigners looking after their affairs but the entire Mediterranean was full of Venetians doing business for their city.

There were Venetians all along the Adriatic Coasts, in Egypt, in Greece and in Constantinople. It is the marriage of all of these cultures with Venetian genius that made Venice what it is today. The unique Arabesque Architecture, the rich use of silks and Murano Glass are all products of this marriage. The Venetians imported the best of the cultures they traded with and they then put a uniquely Venetian stamp on what they brought back from all corners of the world.

As William Shakespeare wrote (about Venice) in The Merchant of Venice "the trade and profit of this city consisteth of all nations." As I sit in my office in Miami not far from Biscayne Bay and Villa Vizcaya (full of beautiful examples of Venetian art), I can’t help but think that Shakespeare’s quote can easily be applied to Miami.

We who live in Miami are very much aware of what it means to have "our trade and profit consist of all nations." Let us hope that Miamians, like the Venetians, will love their city and learn to make good use of the many riches that have come to them from international trade and commerce. Perhaps one day the true greatness of this city will have come from its ability to take the best it has received from the many countries and people it does business with and make it uniquely Miamian, just as the Venetians have done so well for so many hundreds of years.
Featured Sustaining Member:

SAVINO DEL BENE U.S.A.

Savino Del Bene is an Italian-based company that offers worldwide logistics. It was founded by Mr. Savino Del Bene in Florence at the beginning of the 20th century. Today Savino Del Bene is a worldwide network specializing in freight forwarding, logistics and supply chain management.

The President, Mr. Paolo Nocentini, heads the Group with the same name, which consists of 80 subsidiary companies operating in 37 countries, with a network of 173 offices and more than 2,500 employees. Savino Del Bene has been operating in the multi-modal shipping and international logistics sector for over a hundred years.

Savino Del Bene’s worldwide expansion program led the company to open its own facilities in America, Africa, Asia, Europe, Australia and the Indian Subcontinent. Over the years, Savino Del Bene has expanded and diversified its services.

Our company knows no limits, moving cargo everywhere in the world. We are constantly meeting the challenges and demands of a global market with professionalism. A leader in sea transport, Savino Del Bene is also one of the major market operators for a number of specific merchandise categories (designer fashion, tiles, machinery, and technology).

In recent years Savino Del Bene has experienced significant growth thanks largely to the know-how and enthusiasm of its management and employees. As a medium-sized company, our services rival those of our direct and ever larger competitors. This quality allows us to provide the kind of flexible services that other freight forwarders are unable to offer.

In the United States, Savino Del Bene has thirteen offices. The company’s growth can be attributed mainly to the opening of numerous branches and the acquisition of companies already operating in the international freight sector. Today, Savino Del Bene has a widespread presence in all five continents.

Savino Del Bene is a trusted and reliable partner that provides multi-modal transport services to companies that demand high quality transportation of their merchandise and products to every corner of the world.

Savino Del Bene U.S.A.’s South Florida office is located at 8815 NW 33 Street, Suite 110, Miami, FL 33172, tel. (305) 463-8844. For more information, visit www.savinodelbene.com.
Macef, the international exhibition dedicated to the home, has been a point of reference for trade members for over forty years. This is true not only for wholesalers, buyers, mass distributors, and retailers, but also for architects, interior designers, and journalists. The winter edition of this trade mission will be held from January 16-19, 2009.

Last September some 75,400 people visited Macef, with a notable increase (10%) in foreign visitors coming mainly from Europe and the wealthiest and most promising emerging markets like India, Central and South America, Eastern Europe, and China. The past edition of the Macef International Home Show gathered 1,873 companies (27% from abroad) in some 100,000 square meters of exhibition space.

The strength of this fair is without a doubt the vast array of merchandise, accessories, and furnishings offered for the home, from table and kitchenware products, textiles and design objects, to jewelry and accessories. This is a great chance to meet the best national and international artisan producers in the field, as well as young, up-and-coming designers and artists.

For more information on MACEF, visit: www.macef.it/eng/.

The Italy-America Chamber of Commerce Southeast is the Fiera Milano Representative Office for the Southeast of the United States. We promote Fiera Milano’s trade shows and events and provide special packages for trade members interested in attending.

For more information, please contact Ms. Kristen L. Maag at maag@iacc-miami.com, tel. (305) 577-9868.

The International Tourism Exchange is Italy’s top tourism event. It will be held in the Fiera Milano complex in Rho, Milan from February 19–22, 2009. It is divided into different areas to satisfy the most demanding operators and travelers.

The first area is dedicated exclusively to travel companies and the tourist industry in Italy. The second zone, entitled The World, offers a complete panorama of the international tourist industry. The Tourism Collection area involves tour operators, travel agencies, hotels, and transportation companies. Next, Bit Technology is an area dedicated to technological products for the field of tourism. Finally, the area known as Certicibit is a zone for all the high quality food & beverage products associated with tourism and gastronomic tours. Certicibit is promoted by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

The last edition registered 600,000 square meters of exhibition space, 5,000 exhibitors hailing from 152 countries, 46,500 visitors, and 108,000 trade members, a notable increase from the previous year’s attendance. The increasing popularity of the fair brings hope for an even more successful subsequent edition.

For further information, visit www.bit.fieramilanoeuexpocts.it or contact the Fiera Milano Desk Info Line: Ms. Kristen L. Maag, at maag@iacc-miami.com, tel. (305) 577-9868.
New Members

Sustaining Members

**BPT Technologies Co**
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Business Category: Furniture

**Rekico USA, LLC**
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Phone: 305-533-1967
Website: www.rekico.com
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Business Members

**Citibank**
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Financial Center Manager
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Miami, FL 33131
Phone: 305-530-3267
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Business Category: Bank, Financial Institution

**Galy Travel**
*Mr. Gabriel Naiman*
President
1175 NE Miami Gardens Dr, # 506
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Phone: 786-262-4397
Business Category: Travel Agency

**MSC Cruises USA (Inc.)**
*Mr. Aniello Neil Palomba*
Chief Operating Officer
6750 N. Andrews Ave., Suite 100
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309
Phone: 954-772-6262
Website: www.msccruisesusa.com
Business Category: Cruise/Hospitality

Upgrade to Sustaining Members

**Mia Cucina**
*Mr. Daniele Busca*
105 Miracle Mile
Coral Gables, FL 33134
Phone: 305-444-7383
Website: www.miacucina.net
Business Category: Furniture
IACC Happenings

September 17, 2008
ITALIAN COOKING SHOW “THE GRAND FINALE”
1. (on the left) Costantino Cicchelli, Academia Barilla
2. Marco Mazzoni, Alma Food Imports

September 30, 2008
SPAGHETTI & CINEMA: DINNER PRESENTATION OF THE ITALIAN FILM FESTIVAL
LA LOGGIA RESTAURANT
3. IACC staff & directors with guests
4. A table of friends enjoying a night out

October 7, 2008
EUROPEAN COCKTAIL RECEPTION
SEGAFREDO, BRICKELL
5. Guests enjoying themselves

November 6, 2008
APERITIVO IN CITTA’: A POSTCARD FROM COMO LAKE
FONTANA RESTAURANT AT THE BILTMORE
6. (from left) Gabriel Naiman, Fernando & Rhody Cancino
7. (from left) Lou & Pamela Haack, Francesca Tanti
small luxury international agency
Advertising
Online marketing
Europe-wide media planning

Partner of Americas Media Group

Ideas with an Italian touch
Miami - Firenze - Split

ManAdv USA Inc.
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Calendar of Events

December

11
IACC Holiday Dinner
The Biltmore Hotel
Coral Gables

January

8
APERITIVO IN CITTÁ
Networking event
The Standard Hotel
Miami Beach

16-19
MACEF
Buyers delegation to Macef
Fiera Milano
Milano, Italy

February

2-4
OROMIAMI
Fine Italian Jewelry Exhibition
Ritz-Carlton Hotel
Miami Beach

March

4
APERITIVO IN CITTA'
Networking event
Ritz-Carlton Hotel
Miami Beach

4
APERITIVO IN CITTA'
Networking event
Miami
Be:lie:ve (2002) by Kendell Geers

Best wishes for a Wonderful Holiday Season and a Prosperous 2009
The hiring of a lawyer is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisements. Before you decide, ask us to send you free written information about our qualifications and experience.
LUXURY,
ITALIAN STYLE

OROMIAM

Fine Italian Jewelry Exhibition
February 2-4, 2009
Ritz Carlton South Beach, Florida