

BRAZILIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE 2016 INTERNATIONAL FAIRS

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With the financial support of Apex-Brasil, ABIROCHAS organized the participation of Brazilian companies in the three main global dimension stone events: the Xiamen Fair (China), Coverings (USA) and Marmomacc (Italy). There were 161 participating companies in total, with 47 in China, 79 in the United States and 35 in Italy.

China Xiamen International Stone Fair 2016

The Xiamen Fair was established in 2001, based on the dimension stone resources in Fujian Province and the advantages of the Port of Xiamen. The Xiamen Stone Fair has developed rapidly and become the world's largest exhibition in the dimension stone industry. Its scope covers the exhibition of new products, new technologies and equipment, the creation of business opportunities, improvement in the industry's global communication in such a way to promote the development of the entire industry and increase business volume.



The fair's success has made the city of Xiamen famous, as the "world stone Center", which is useful for development of the local economy and progress of the exhibition segment. On the one hand, abundant raw material and large industrial facilities have contributed to the Xiamen Fair. On the other, the Xiamen Fair has been held with growing success every year, which has also brought facilities for local companies in exploiting international trade, learning about the latest technologies and trends. In 2016, the Fair took place March 6-9.

Among the parallel events, the Xiamen Fair hosted the World Stone Congress, including a series of presentations and seminars about industrial, product, technology innovation and design creation trends. The WSC has become the largest event sponsored by the Xiamen Stone Fair in 2016, which was added to the Global Forum of Master Architects, New Quarry Collection 2016, Mechanical Innovation 2016, Stone Design Day, Sessions for Industrial Association and Educational Sessions.

In the Brazilian stand at the Xiamen Fair, organized by ABIROCHAS with financial support of Apex-Brasil, 47 exporting companies were grouped, together with three industrial institutions (SIMAGRAN-CE, ANPO e Marmomacc Latin America). The importance of the Xiamen Fair for the Brazilian dimension stone industry is demonstrated by the growing number of participating companies in the space organized by ABIROCHAS.

Its importance was also highlighted by Brazilian stone exports to China, which returned to growth and closed 2016 with revenue of US\$131.3 million, a 25.8% increase over 2015. Besides this, in 2016 sales of processed stones were a highlight, with an increment of 200% in the trade of processed stones (NCM 6802), corresponding to granite slabs. The recovery of the export levels seen in previous year is foreseen and with a greater share of processed stones in the product mix.

Coverings 2016

Coverings is the main international fair dedicated to debuting new products and developments in ceramic and stone coverings. It is the biggest and most important fair of its type in the United States, with exhibitors from more than 40 countries, attracting thousands of distributors, retailers, manufacturers, installers and estimators, architectural and design professionals, builders and real estate promoters, in addition to specialized press and journalist who cover this vital, dynamic industry. The event also constitutes a valuable source for continued education in all categories of its participants, with qualified seminars and informative sessions and workshops held during the entire period of the event.

Coverings 2016 was held in Chicago, Illinois, April 18-21, hosted in the McCormick Place Convention Center. Around 85 Brazilian stone industry companies took part, 79 of which grouped in a space organized by ABIROCHAS with funds support by Apex-Brasil. Also supported by its industry agreement with Apex-Brasil, ANFACER gathered several ceramics companies in the contiguous space next to ABIROCHAS.

The large turnout of Brazilian companies translates the present importance of the US market for the stone and ceramic coverings industries. For the stone sector, the US accounts for 60% of total export revenues and for almost 80% of processed stone export revenue.

Once again, Brazilian companies had the opportunity to exhibit their diversified portfolio of raw materials and commercial products to American and foreign visitors, who show up in large numbers to the event and at the ABIROCHAS/Apex-Brasil space, conceived around the Brasil Original Stones brand. Two things are worth mentioning: the growth in international demand and the increase in Brazilian supply of marble and quartzite, besides several other exotic

materials added to our dimension stone portfolio; and the increase in supply of serial articles to supply large works by some of the exhibiting companies.



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Brazilian marble and quartzite are in tune to the new demand trend for light colored stones, especially white. In a wider sense, a demand increment was registered for stones with neutral tones, from black to grey.

With hundreds of varieties of stones in its portfolio, Brazilian companies once again demonstrated the capability to meet the supply of the two main segments in the US stones market: single family residences and large commercial, multi-residential and institutional buildings. Thus, the exhibitors considered their participation in Covering 2016 as very positive. The Coverings 2017 event will return to Orlando, Florida on April 4-7.

Reaffirming the importance of Coverings as an international industry event, tens of companies are requesting ABIROCHAS to register them and participate in year 2017. We expect this participation will include a larger number of finished product exporting companies, above all, to the US market.

Marmomacc 2016

Marmomacc 2016 was held at the Verona Fiere Exposition Center from Sept. 28 to Oct. 1. The event constitutes an important space for participation of production and export companies, both for blocks as for slabs and, from now on, finished products.

Marmomacc stands out as the principal venue for Italian technology for quarrying, beneficiation and finishing activities (marble plants), which makes up essential vectors of competition for Brazil. And not only this, Marmomacc allows observing business and institutional actions promoted by Brazil's competitors in the international market.



During the event, the first pamphlet promoting the Global Stone Congress 2018 was distributed, in addition to copies of the 3rd and 4th editions of ABIROCHAS in the News/Abinews and the magazine Quality Stones to exhibitors, visitors and specialized press.

With the presence of the Sector Project Manager of Apex-Brazil, Dr. Marcia Gomide, the meeting of the Sector Project Management Committee Apex-Brazil/ABIROCHAS was held. The Brazilian pavilion also received the visit of Ambassador Paulo Cordeiro and members of the Brazilian Consulate diplomatic corps in Milan, which presents the alignment of actions of commercial diplomacy recognized by the new Apex-Brazil guidelines with the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

As has occurred in previous editions of the Marmomacc, the Brazilian space counted on the presence of Carlo Montani for the release of the Brazil Dossier 2016, published by Aldus Casa de Edizione in Carrara, with the support of ABIROCHAS, with versions in Portuguese, Italian and English. Montani is the author of *Rapporto Marmo e Pietre nel Mondo*, which has been published for 25 years and was also distributed by ABIROCHAS to the Brazilian exhibitors.

Representatives from ABIROCHAS and the Marble Institute of America (MIA) met for discussion of technical issues and projects in regard to the dimension stone industry of interest to Brazil and the United States. A meeting was also held with Professors Nicola Careddu and Graziella



Marras, from the Università di Cagliari – Sardegna, to deal with the possible agreement on waste reutilization and the study of instability of tensions at solid rock quarrying sites.

Even taking into account the unfavorable international market climate, allied to the slow recovery of the European economy, in the evaluation of the Brazilian exhibitors, their participation in Marmomacc 2016 was positive.