

Italian Region of Campania at the Dubai International Boat Show: Tradition and Innovation of an Industry Leader

Dubai, March 9 2010- With one of the largest arrays of new proposals at the Super Yacht Pavilion of the Dubai International Boat Show, Sea Ports - a Special Agency of the Chamber of Commerce of Salerno - and the Region of Campania confirm their companies' leading position in the world yacht industry.

The Region of Campania has a long tradition in boat building and is considered the cradle of modern boating in Europe, being the first in the continent to introduce fiberglass in yacht manufacturing. Its boating industry accounts for about 1,200 companies, half of which are shipyards with a total annual turnover exceeding one billion euro. Their production is concentrated in the segment of 20' to 130 ', with a majority in the sub-segment of 18' to 45 ', 95% of which are powerboats. Within Italy, Campania is the most important producer of boats up to 18' and the second most important for boats over 24'.

Italy ranks first in the world in the construction of super yachts with a market share of 51%, while in the overall European yachting construction industry it occupies the third position after France and Finland.

In 2008 the marine sector represented 5.55% of the Italian GDP with a total output of 6.18 billion euro. The sector employs over 100,000 people, of which 35% work in manufacturing and 65% in the nautical and related industries. In the manufacturing front 80% of the national production is concentrated in yachts with inboard, inboard-outboard and water-jet engines.

In the last quarter of 2008 the effects of the global economic crisis started to be evident in this sector through a sales decline affecting all segments of the market. Yet Campania has taken the crisis as an opportunity to reinvent its position in the marine business and rationalize its production. In fact, the reduced importance of the powered boats -both for economic and for environmental reasons- on one side, and the greater importance of sailing comfort and the appreciation of the sea on the other, require new solutions and quality concepts.

In this environment, innovative construction methods, standardization and technology transfer in nanotechnology and composite materials keep Campania at the forefront of the international boating industry.

Campania's boat production is based mainly on fiberglass and composite materials, ranging from 5 meters to 15 meters. "While the most used manufacturing process is still fiberglass stratification, the infusion process is becoming more and more important. Infusion significantly improves the performance of the boats because they can be lighter and therefore more efficient in terms of speed and power consumption" indicates Mr. Iarace, president of Sea Ports during his visit to Dubai.

Technology transfer from local research centers, universities and the CNR (National Centre for Research) has allowed a faster adoption of the infusion process and of innovative fireproof composite materials with applied nanotechnology.

Electrical wiring, which increasingly resembles those of cars, represents another important front of innovation together with the continue research on green power and experimental sailboats.

The goal of the Government of Campania Region and the System of Chambers of Commerce is a massive introduction of technological innovation, focused mostly on four fronts:

- Composite materials and applied nanotechnology.
- Wireless technologies applied to control and steering systems.
- Design and innovation of the hull aimed at saving fuel.
- Reduction of pollution through the adoption of low or zero emission engines.

The plan capitalizes on the strengths and skills of companies, research centers and universities, and intends to promote the osmosis of this knowledge spreading across the industries, to ensure the rapid adoption of advanced technologies while conserving the Italian style of design and traditional use of boats.

“The boat culture and the sailing enjoyment are an integral part of the Campania’s yacht industry -continues Mr. Iarace- and the success of the industry lays also in the success of Campania as a unique yachting tourism destination”.

Campania offers one of the most comprehensive sailing environments in the world, with a wide range of nautical tourism possibilities. The region has more than 50 ports and marinas spread over 500 km of coastline with 20,000 berths. There are around 250 charter boat companies with over 10,000 vessels and the plans are to further boost the visitors’ flow with special promotions focused on environmental tourism.

“The visitor discovers in Campania an incredible environment rich in history, architectural and cultural beauty, and gastronomy without comparison” says Mr. Iarace explaining the uniqueness of the region.

The combination of thoughtful planning, a wide research basis and strong internal demand driven by domestic and foreign tourism, creates in Campania an exceptional setting where the yacht industry will continue to occupy a leading position in the future.

About Sea Ports

Sea Ports is the Special Agency of the Chamber of Commerce of Salerno dedicated to the organization and promotion of the ports' system in Campania. Ports in Campania are spread all along the coast and Sea Ports offers a series of services aimed to improve the coordination and the efficiency of all the activities related to the ports and to the tourism on the coast.

About Campania

The region is located in South West Italy facing the Tyrrhenian Sea and has one of the finest coastlines in the Mediterranean. Naples is the regional capital. The hinterland is essentially mountainous, with irregular massifs broken here and there by valleys and plains. Other important cities are Caserta, Benevento, Salerno and Avellino.

With a pleasant climate for at least 10 months a year, the nautical tourism in Campania is extremely favored by the natural characteristics of the territory. Indeed, the 550 Km long Campania's shoreline is extremely diverse, with long portions of rock rich coast alternated with the finest volcanic sands and varied sea depths.

Moreover, the 250 kilometers of Mediterranean coast of the province of Salerno are recognized by its crystal clear waters and marine fauna. The landscaping beauty of towns like Sorrento, Capri, Positano, Amalfi and Paestum, are an icon of the Italian charm and, thanks to countless references in music and cinema, have become a myth of romanticism and enjoyment of life.

The most known attractions of Campania are the cities of Naples and Sorrento, the marvelous islands of Ischia and Capri, the Imperial Villa in Capri, the Royal Palace of Caserta with its magnificent gardens, the ruins of the ancient cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum and the splendid Amalfi coast, one of the world's top tourism destinations.

Campania was commonly referred to as "felix" ("happy" in Latin) because it has virtually everything you need to lead a peaceful life.