

Italian conferences and exhibitions company Fiera Milano consolidates in SA

Italian conferences and exhibitions company, Fiera Milano SpA's full acquisitions of its South African branch, Fiera Milano Exhibitions Africa (FMEA) will see the multinational company expand its operations in SA and Africa under a new strategy as directed by newly appointed global CEO, Corrado Peraboni. Maria Chieppa, the newly appointed managing director of FMEA, and former senior executive of the listed Italian entity, will be responsible for its local implementation.



Maria Chieppa at the South Africa Italy Summit, organised by the European House of Ambrosio

Millions of Rands invested in growing events

FMEA is also a leading conference organiser in South Africa with the fast-growing Cape Town Art Fair, and the biggest Good Food and Wine Show in Africa, in its portfolio. Chieppa says, "FMEA sees good potential for growth in South Africa. As such, we are making a R10 million investment in the 2016 Good Food and Wine show to cement its position as the leading event on the country's culinary calendar. A further R8 million will be invested in the Cape Town Art Fair as we elevate it to world class exhibition levels. "

Each year, the Good Food & Wine Show takes place in three different cities (Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Durban) to showcase innovations, trends, products and the latest developments in food and beverages, lifestyle gadgets, and appliances. In 2016, FMEA's multi-million Rand investment will be directed at transforming its format and content in collaboration with industry associations for a renewed emphasis on food and wine. Extended exhibition hours and gala dinners will also form part of the new-look show. As before, the latest in world-class food and wine products will be on display for the enjoyment of local chefs. The 2016/2017 show dates are: 28 – 30 October 2016 in Durban; 2 – 4 June 2017 in Cape Town; 28 – 30 July 2017 and 1 – 3 December 2017 in Durban.

From 17 – 19 February 2017, the fifth edition of the Cape Town Art Fair will be hosted at the Cape Town International Convention Centre, which can accommodate the event's rapidly expanding visitor numbers and international profile. As one of the leading international art fairs on the continent, it will represent more than 50 galleries from South Africa, Africa, and around the world.

Sustainable local growth

Trade shows and exhibitions are powerful marketing tools for host cities and countries and FMEA's new strategy will ultimately strengthen and support economic growth in South Africa – not only in the promotion of Cape Town, but also through the attraction of international FMEA clients, industry associations, chambers of commerce, and business partners to the region.

Chieppa explains, “South Africa, with its international airports, good infrastructure and currency value, is an attractive destination and we will be very successful in attracting business to the country. At the same time, SA will become Fiera Milano SpA's springboard into Africa. I have appointed a new management team of experts in their respective fields and we are looking for sustainable local growth, and will also use SA as a base from which to enter Sub-Saharan African markets.”

A long-term commitment

According to Chieppa, Fiera Milano SpA first entered SA in 2012 via a partnership agreement and the recent full acquisition demonstrates the organisation's long term commitment to the country. “We will continue to expand our local exhibitions and conferences portfolio, and we will be adding business-to-business meetings, and premier international events, to our offering. We are proud of our local history and of showcasing SA as a business destination with much to offer the international community.”

Fiera Milano SpA is the only Italian trade fair company listed on the Italian stock exchange.

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