

The International Furniture Fair Singapore 2004/21st ASEAN Furniture Show : A Resounding Success!

The International Furniture Fair Singapore 2004/21st ASEAN Furniture Show (IFFS/AFS 2004) proved to be a resounding success once again this year.

Throughout Asia, the IFFS/AFS has been recognised as the leading trade fair in its field. This year, held at the Singapore Expo from 1st to 5th March, the fair's presentation of furniture was once again broad, diversified and unique in scope from around the globe.

The event showcased more than 25,000 pieces of furniture and furnishing products from 450 exhibitors, who come from a total of 29 countries. These exhibitors occupied more than 50,000 sqm of floor space at the Singapore Expo. The vast majority of the exhibitors expressed that they were very satisfied with the results from the show. Indeed, the Singapore Furniture Industries Council, who was the organiser of the event, reported that at the close of the show, some 20,000 sqm of gross space had already been booked for IFFS/AFS 2005.

In terms of visitors, 17,126 professionals attended the fair, which was an increase of 4.5% per cent over IFFS/AFS 2003. Visitors hail from 102 countries spread across all continents of the world.

During the show, exhibitors generated USD225 million of spot orders during the event. The organisers also estimated that IFFS/AFS 2004 exhibitors would generate USD1.9 billion of follow-on sales for the year 2004.

"I am very pleased to note that the fair attracted many prominent exhibitors from all over the world, and that generally, they had done good business. This is an indication that Singapore is living up to its reputation as a major furniture hub in Asia," says Mr James Koh, President of the Singapore Furniture Industries Council.

True to tradition, this year's furniture fair included plenty of innovation in furniture, which gave the industry a refreshingly different touch. These included furniture designers' interpretations of what the future of the furniture, both at the Furniture Design Award and the Design Gallery. Not only did these special features add diversity and richness to the fair this year, but the vast array of ideas represented by exhibitors created a show that is very differentiated from other furniture shows in Asia.

Mr Massimiliano Ortolan, Associate Sales Director of DeCoro Ltd (Italy) remarks, "The International Furniture Fair Singapore/ASEAN Furniture Show is a good window for DeCoro. We meet up with some of our existing customers as well as several new ones. It is also one of the best fairs in the region and alone in this fair, we secured more than 30 new customer accounts including major ones from United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. At IFFS/AFS 2004, we confirmed orders from all our existing customers. I must add that the fair is indeed very well-organised and the layout very efficient and easy for visitors. The fair also has a very good selection of producers and buyers. Last but not least, staying in Singapore is enjoyable for all, allowing us to work hard in the day yet relax in the evening with the Singaporean lifestyle!"

Mr Hein Van Le, Director of Vanle Resin Co., Ltd (Vietnam) complimented, "Two years here at IFFS/AFS and every year, the show continues to appeal to different market tastes with the good balance of furniture and furnishing products. We are already looking forward to IFFS/AFS 2005! It truly lives up to its reputation as establishing itself as Asia's premier international furniture trade show."

"The best show we've ever had in five years! There are many opportunities to meet potential and genuine buyers in countries which we have not been represented yet. The traffic is excellent and it is always a pleasure to be in Singapore and it continues to be the most important show for both exhibitors and buyers in the region," comments Ms Jennell Sonsteng, Regional Sales Manager of Sauder Woodworking (USA).

Mr Michael McLeod, Very Important Buyer from Super Amart (Australia) says, "My fourth visit to IFFS/AFS and this time round, I am searching for a variety of bedroom pieces and trends in assorted colours as well as design or anything new that I can export to Australia and I know the fair always meet my expectations."

"I have been visiting IFFS/AFS for three years now and I saw an increased number of Indonesian, Taiwanese and Chinese exhibitors. I am looking for colonial-style furniture for the German market and I know I must come to Singapore because they have all the furniture and furnishings under their roof. I am already looking forward to the next fair!" chips Mr Lienhard Megnet, Very Important Buyer from Bruno Steinhoff (Germany).

"IFFS/AFS 2004 has once again reaffirmed that the fair is indeed the ideal 'East meets West' business platform for the furniture industry. We are now eagerly looking forward to the 2005 edition of the show, which we plan to be bigger than 2004, with an even more impressive variety of products on display," says Mr. Jerry Tan, Chairman of the IFFS/AFS 2004 Organising Committee.

Taking a broader perspective, the success of the IFFS/AFS has also reaffirmed that the global furniture outlook has recovered from the Gulf War and SARS impact, and is in fact growing again, due to the burgeoning consumption markets in the Middle-East and European economies and heavy volumes of furniture imports from the United States.

About Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC)

Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) was established in 1981 as the official representative body of Singapore's furniture industry. It currently represents 95% of furniture manufacturers in Singapore, 65% of whom have subsidiary manufacturing plants in the region; including Malaysia, Indonesia, China, Vietnam, Myanmar. Its primary roles include promoting the interests of its members and the Singapore furniture industry, facilitating members' exposure to the world market, creating more entrepreneurs through human resource development, developing local talents, creating more leading-edge and award-winning designs by organising competitions such as the annual Furniture Design Award, forging strategic partnerships with government- and trade-related agencies, harnessing technology and knowledge for growth through the use of information technology.

About International Furniture Fair Singapore/ASEAN Furniture Show (IFFS/AFS)

The International Furniture Fair Singapore/ASEAN Furniture Show (IFFS/AFS) began in 1981 and has since grown to be regarded by industry experts as Asia's most prestigious furniture trade show. Held in conjunction with the ASEAN Furniture Show (AFS), IFFS/AFS provides an effective marketing platform for regional companies to venture into global markets. As a testimony to the quality of the show, IFFS/AFS is the first Asian-based international furniture fair to be accepted as a member of the elite Union des Foires Internationales, a Paris-based international authority on trade fairs. In addition, it is the only furniture trade event in Singapore to be awarded the 'Approved International Fair' status by International Enterprise Singapore, in acknowledgement of its role in promoting international trade. The Singapore Exhibition and Convention Bureau also recognises the fair as a major exhibition event in Singapore's international exhibition calendar.