

TURKISH HOMETEX

N e w Y o r k *Show*

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Contact: Ms. Aysenur Soybay,
International Marketing Coordinator
CNR International Trade Fairs
Tel: 90 212 465 74 74 (x2094)
Fax: 90 212 465 74 76-77
aysenur.soybay@cnr.net
www.cnroverseas.com
info@cnroverseas.com

Exhibitors, Visitors Establish Partnerships At New York Turkish HomeTex Show

Major U.S. suppliers and retailers develop relationships with preeminent Turkish manufacturers at second annual event April 11-12, 2005

NEW YORK—Leading United States wholesalers, distributors, suppliers, designers, sales agents and retailers visited the second installment of the annual New York Turkish HomeTex Show, held at Manhattan's Metropolitan Pavilion April 11-12, using the venue as an opportunity to view exciting new products and establish business relationships with a diverse assortment of major Turkish home fashions manufacturers.

“The U.S. executives who visited this year’s New York Turkish Home Textiles Show clearly are interested in developing and expanding their business with Turkish manufacturers,” explains Engur Rutkay, overseas sales director for CNR International Trade Fairs, organizer of the New York Turkish HomeTex Show.



CNR EXPO YESILKOY 34149 ISTANBUL / TURKEY
www.cnroverseas.com / info@cnroverseas.com

“We were quite pleased to bring together these high level executives from Turkey and the United States to facilitate these growing business relationships,” Rutkay adds, noting that total show attendance was in excess of 1,200 visitors.

More than 30 of Turkey’s leading manufacturers featured an array of luxurious bath towels, elegant curtains, high quality bed linens and fine home furnishings fabrics at the Turkish HomeTex Show, which was held during the New York Home Textiles Market Week.

“Many of our exhibitors offered their U.S. visitors a preview of new products that they will introducing at EVTEKS,” Rutkay points out, noting that CNR International Trade Fairs also organizes the annual EVTEKS show, the second largest home textiles trade fair in the world. EVTEKS is held each May in Istanbul at CNR Expo, which encompasses 150,000 square meters—more than 1.6 million square feet—of indoor exhibition space. “A number of U.S. executives will be attending EVTEKS May 18-22, following up on the contacts that they made at the New York Turkish HomeTex Show,” Rutkay says.

Exhibitors at the New York Turkish HomeTex Show say they expect to increase their business in the United States. The United States is currently the second largest export market for Turkish home textiles, with exports to the U.S. totaling nearly \$297 million in 2003.

“This is our first time exhibiting in the U.S., but we hope to build a substantial business here in the future,” remarks Mustafa Kosemusul, general manager for Verona, a supplier of ready-made curtains and curtain fabrics. “We currently supply all of the major European markets, and we expect to increase our export business overall, as well as our U.S. business. Here at the Show, our jacquards got a very nice reaction, as well as our sheer and embroidered curtains.”

Letto, a manufacturer of infant and juvenile furniture, textiles and accessories, also exhibited its products here for the first time. “The people who came and saw us really seemed to like the products,” says owner Sibel Oner. “We made some very nice contacts, and people said they were impressed with our high quality workmanship. All of our products are handcrafted, and we offer fully-coordinated bedroom sets, which got a very good response.”

Abud Abdo, chief executive for towel manufacturer Hateks Hatay, says he expects the company to increase its market share in the U.S. “Our main goal here at the Show is to expose our products to prospective U.S. customers,” he comments. “We have an excellent assortment of terry towels, beach towels, bath robes and bath mats, and our quality is very high. This gives us the opportunity to sell to the U.S. market, because quality is very important to this customer. Also, because we are a fully-vertical, integrated manufacturer, we are very flexible—we can respond quickly to our customers’ needs.”

Metemteks Tekstil, a leading producer of ready-made curtains and curtain fabrics, exhibited its Arte Nova brand at the New York Show. “The United States represents a great growth opportunity and is one of the biggest markets for Turkey,” notes Selen Mermut, export sales director. “Turkish manufacturers have the flexibility to react to the needs of the business and handle small accounts, unlike manufacturers in other regions of the world.”

Mermut says the company’s higher-end products generated the most interest. “We come out with new collections four to six times a year, and our main focus is on quality and fashion,” she explains. “Our flexibility is an important asset, and we feel we have a lot of opportunities for growth.”

Bedding supplier Desim Tekstil spotlighted its certified organic sheets and blankets at the Show. “Our bed linens are certified organic at every step of the process, from the growing of the cotton all the way through the final finished product,” states Sukru Tarim,

Desim export manager. “We use no pesticides, no chemicals and no additives at any stage in the process, and this produces healthier, softer bed linens. It takes longer to grow the cotton and produce the finished goods this way, and the products are therefore more expensive, but the consumer who wants organic products is willing to pay the extra cost.”

Window coverings supplier Osmanli Kalip Makina highlighted a new range of vertical blinds, mini blinds, roller shades and top treatments at the Show. “We are very interested in selling these exciting new products, and we will be following up with prospective U.S. clients after the Show,” notes Mehmet Kosar, general manager.

Several Turkish exhibitors say they are developing strong partnerships with leading U.S. suppliers and retailers. “We have made many contacts in the U.S., and we are slowly building our business by developing good, trusting relationships with these companies,” explains Suha Kaleli, export manager for Galeri Tunc, a manufacturer of high quality jacquard table linens, throws, bedspreads and cushions. “We feel these relationships are very important to our future as a company.”

Galeri offers exclusive designs to its customers and the company prides itself on “excellent service,” Kaleli says. “We offer both custom and ready-made products, and our soft chenille jacquards are currently getting the best response. We see most of our growth coming from finished products, although we also offer decorative fabrics.”

Bath towel and robe supplier Troya Tekstil is highlighting both the quality and value of Turkish textiles. “We offer very competitive prices for the quality of the merchandise,” asserts Vehbi Tombuloglu, marketing manager. “Our main focus is on building strong business relationships with U.S. customers.”

Some exhibitors say they have a well-established business in the United States, and they are looking to increase that business. “We have been doing business with U.S. customers for about 10 years, and we still believe we have opportunities for substantial

growth,” comments Cagri Ovayurt, sales director for EKE Tekstil, a supplier of bath towels, bath robes and accessories. “We are currently doing business with high-end specialty retailers as well as suppliers to the luxury market.”

Ozgur Usta, EKE general manager, adds, “We have gotten the best response to our high-end luxury products, including our trademarked Hydrocotton and our new Aerocotton. Our United States customers come to us for the highest quality, most luxurious products, which is our advantage in the world market.”

Cumhur Bandakcioglu, marketing and foreign trade manager for blanket and throw producer Sesli, points out, “We are currently exporting to more than 50 countries around the world, and every year our business is growing in the U.S. We are offering our full range of cotton and acrylic blankets and throws, and have gotten a very good response to our products due to our high product quality. We definitely see the U.S. as a big growth market for our company.”

Towel and bath robe supplier Ipekyolu Tekstil also received a positive response to its higher end products, particularly a new reversible towel featuring a waffle weave on one side and loop terry on the other. “People in the U.S. are very interested in the products, especially the high-quality products,” explains Alper Buyukkalayci, foreign trade and marketing manager for Ipekyolu. “We do a lot of design work to develop new and exciting product innovations, and these have been well received.

“We are also very flexible and have much lower minimum orders than many of the Asian producers,” Buyukkalayci continues. “We are willing to modify our colors and designs to suit the needs of the U.S. market, and we can ship more rapidly than many of our global competitors. We feel this will help us build our business in the future.”

Zehra Genc, area manager for curtain manufacturer Ulusoy Tekstil, remarks, “American customers react well to our higher-end products, such as our embroidered sheers. We definitely see expansion opportunities in the U.S., due to the interest in high quality.”

The Hereke Carpet Weavers Association also focused on luxury at the Show, offering a range of exquisite, hand-woven area rugs. “These carpets are all handmade of the finest silk, and take more than 30 months to weave,” points out Erhan Or, president of the Association, which represents suppliers in the Hereke region of Turkey. “These carpets historically were woven for the palaces of the Ottoman emperors.”

Executives for CNR International Trade Fairs say they will announce dates for the third annual New York Turkish HomeTex Show later this year. “We are committed to assisting Turkish manufacturers expand their business in the global marketplace,” states Rutkay. “We see this Show as an important vehicle for bringing the best of Turkish home textiles to the United States.”

About CNR International Trade Fairs Inc.

The Turkish HomeTex Show is sponsored by CNR International Trade Fairs, which hosts the annual EVTEKS show, the second largest home textiles trade fair in the world. CNR International Trade Fairs is a commercial enterprise founded in 1985 and based in Istanbul. The company manages CNR Expo, the largest international exhibition center in Europe and Asia, and hosts more than 35 events annually, including 20 international trade fairs. CNR Expo encompasses 10 halls and 150,000 square meters (1.6 million square feet) of indoor exhibition space located on 270,000 square meters (2.9 million square feet) of land in the center of Istanbul.

CNR Expo has played host to more than 100,000 exhibitors and more than 3 million visitors at its various annual events. In addition to the giant EVTEKS home textiles fair, CNR International organizes trade shows in the a wide range of industries, including the automotive, tourism, hospitality, photography, pets, floral, personal care, food, energy, metallurgy, engineering and medical fields. The company also hosts seminars, meetings, business conferences, competitions and special events, such as concerts by leading international stars.