



Fortessa, Inc. 800.296.7508

FORTESSA EXPANDS ITS RETAIL PRESENCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Sterling, VA -- In the first-ever comprehensive presentation of its tableware products for the home, Fortessa will complete the offerings of beautiful and durable Schott Zwiesel® crystal glass by introducing a range of diverse, stylish dinnerware and flatware collections previously available only to the professional culinary market. The full-table collection will offer retailers an extensive selection of bone china designs; a variety of clever, all-purpose servers and accessories; an open-stock series of its signature "Accentz"™ designs; and both classic and contemporary flatware patterns.

In the past, the company's designs have been offered on a selective basis and through exclusive retail sources. An integrated designer/developer/marketer of fine tableware, Fortessa's innovative designs have set tabletop trends in upscale restaurants and hotel dining venues throughout the country and around the world, with a combination of quality, value and style that has captivated leading chefs and culinary experts. In the new collection, Fortessa will translate many of its dining "firsts" for consumers, bringing five-star restaurant designs to the home table, according to Scott Hamberger, vice president.

"It's time to make this transition: The demand for professional quality at home has been building in recent years, while restaurants currently are being designed and operated with more creativity and attention to the total dining experience," Mr. Hamberger said.

Headlining the launch will be hot new bone china designs, such as the sleek, creamy-white "Andromeda" collection, featuring a broad array of service, dinner and dessert plates; versatile serving platters, bowls and special-purpose items, such as covered and open pasta bowls. The line also incorporates professional serving solutions, including cloche covers that fit a number of pieces, stackable ramekins and butter/chip dishes. The all-white contemporary Andromeda designs have a graceful, nuanced styling that can preserve a casual mood or create a certain element of formality.

Other bone china designs, notably "Saterna" and "Oceana," feature decorative embossing - in deep-ribbed and wavy patterns, respectively - that adds a rich aura to the translucent, sturdy dinnerware.

Bright and Beautiful - Shaping a fresh tabletop style, the engaging "Tuto" collection of ultra-white vitrified china features a raised well to match rounded rims of plates and saucers - and soften the angled lines of individual pieces. An example of technology advances in tabletop, the Tuto line is made of vitraluxe, a novel composition with a high alumina content, responsible for the exceptional whiteness and extra strength of the modestly-priced designs.

While reflecting the professional chef's passion for whiteware, the Fortessa offerings make a case for pattern, with decorative showplates and dinnerware in a variety of styles and color options - from full-rim classic designs in fashionably-muted tones of blue and green, to exotic, spicy motifs. On a luxury note, a gleaming burgundy ribbon embellished with gold emblems brings an ornamental elegance to the "Floridian" collection. And going to the casual lifestyle level, a group of bone china plates adopts an artisanal look with a palette of earthy, trendy tones.

Accentz on Style - The trendsetting Accentz collection, with new, adaptable shapes - squares, rectangles and ovals - will be represented in Fortessa's collection on an open-stock basis. Inspired by today's freewheeling food and dining styles, the bone china designs are favored by chefs for their multiple serving purposes, used for everything from appetizers to entrées and desserts.

On the Cutting Edge - Making its retail debut, flatware in Fortessa's new collection offers a mix of styles and shapes, from neoclassic patterns to modernist architectural forms. The new "Pantheon" pieces, for example, trace their heritage to a vintage design, updated for the contemporary table with smoothly-arcing, ergonomic shapes that fit the hand easily, comfortably. In a more sophisticated fashion, "Acqua" flatware balances contoured utensils and solid handles patterned with a ripple-textured embossing. Offered exclusively in high-quality 18/10 stainless steel, the flatware designs have the ample, elongated lines that coordinate with larger-size dinnerware and help to heighten the tabletop theme.

All flatware settings come wrapped in a felt pouch and beautifully gift-boxed. Cutlery introduced under the Fortessa brand includes an assortment of both modern and traditional steak knives, offered in sets of four, in handsome hardwood gift boxes.

Strategically positioned for the upper-level housewares and the upstairs tabletop departments, Fortessa's tableware collections range in price from \$39.99-\$79.99, retail, for a five piece setting. Flatware prices retail from \$34.99 to \$44.99, for the five-piece setting.

To complete the design context, Fortessa's new dinnerware and flatware designs will be showcased with Schott Zwiesel tritan® crystal glassware and Zwiesel 1872™ handcrafted stemware. Under a partnership agreement, Fortessa, headquartered in Sterling, VA, is the source for Schott Zwiesel's fine glassware in the U. S. and throughout the Americas.

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