

# LAPIS by Appiani

## The partnership with Metco has resulted in the first wear-resistant, stain-resistant and antibacterial hi-tech porcelain mosaic collection

If tradition deserves respect, innovation needs partners. That's why, in response to a specific market need for healthiness, functionality and safety without sacrificing aesthetics, the Altaeco Group (Appiani, Ceramica Bardelli and Ceramica Vogue) teamed up for a partnership with Metco, the Valsamoggia, Bologna-based leader in the field of digital soluble ink development. The result is the new LAPIS collection.

This new collection uses Metco's ZeroBakter technology, a solution that has the advantage of making the mosaic virtually indestructible, stain-resistant and above all impervious to mould and bacteria.

"Our design concept is to 'design differently'," explains Gianmaria Bardelli, Marketing & Design Director of the Altaeco Group. How better to exploit the historical value of a brand than to make the most traditional product "eternal"?

LAPIS is a highly technical porcelain stoneware, "the world's first mosaic with an antibacterial finish", says Gianmaria Bardelli.

li. "This was achieved thanks to the perseverance of Metco, which worked together with us to develop the product and to obtain all the necessary certifications from the top Italian laboratories."

LAPIS is offered to the market with Appiani BioShield+\* finish which incorporates Metco's ZeroBakter solution. One of the key advantages is the fact that it is the first "structural" solution in the sector capable of producing ceramic products with active, certified, measurable and long-lasting antibacterial properties. Rather than a surface treatment, it is a solution (a silver-enriched metal complex) that penetrates inside the body of the unfired product and is subsequently incorporated during firing, developing active and permanent antibacterial centres.

"We are the ingredients of a successful recipe that has been created through the joint efforts of two partners: the Altaeco Group, which has believed in this technology, and Metco, which has built its international reputation on the ability to break away from old paradigms," says Metco's marketing director Claudio Casolari. "Companies like ours don't adapt to standards but 'create' them, producing something that didn't previously exist."

### Salus per aquam

A spa, or "salus per aquam", is the ideal environment for the LAPIS collection, which thanks to ZeroBakter is resistant to mould,

actively eliminates 99% of bacteria and is suitable for frequent sanitisation, even with aggressive cleaning agents.

It is ideal for use in swimming pools and bathrooms, as well as in restaurants, schools and private outdoor and indoor spaces. These are just some of the areas of use of the product, available in a variety of colours that combine the concept of "natural" (an obvious reference to natural stones) with the ability to convey an emotion and appeal to the end user's sensibilities.

"LAPIS is a smart material that meets the needs of human beings and contemporary design," notes Gianmaria Bardelli.

For Altaeco, sustainability is more than just a slogan. "By 2023 we want to certify factory sustainability reports for all Group companies," explains Gianmaria Bardelli. This was the same philosophy that inspired the development of LAPIS with the goal of creating a product that is superior in every way, a hi-tech porcelain produced using a single-pressing process.

Like the other collections, LAPIS reaffirms Appiani's dedication to small sizes. No tile produced by the company is larger than 20x40 cm in size, despite – or perhaps because of – the fashion for "large slabs". A further major technological challenge concerns the versatility of the mosaic moulds, where the 30x30 cm size will soon be joined by new modules produced flexibly and on a just-in-time basis by means of 3D printing.

appiani



Gianmaria Bardelli