

NO SOFT *Touch*

Portugal's textile industry has held up pretty well during the COVID crisis, largely thanks to the resilience, flexibility, and good business practices already in place before. Textile company Lameirinho is a shining example of the sector's never say die attitude.

Paolo Coelho Lima
CEO @ LAMEIRINHO

A recent report by The Power House highlighted the “collaboration, education, empathy, and ethics” that run through the Portuguese textile and fashion industry. It says that despite initial fears predicting scores of businesses going bust, most have managed to survive; the same fighting spirit that's seen Portugal's textile makers fend off competition from Asia over the last decade is a big factor in this. The report also points out that “close-knit privately-owned companies where a family spirit is passed down to the employees had a much easier return” after the Portuguese government lifted lockdown measures in May 2020 that were imposed in March. It's now spring of 2021, and while Portu-

gal is back in the grips of a lockdown, the future is looking much brighter thanks to the vaccine.

One textile company that epitomises this family spirit is Lameirinho. Established 73 years ago in 1948 by Joaquim Martins Coelho Lima, it started off with just two looms. It now operates 172, each churning out fabric for exquisite bed linen. Joaquim's grandson Paulo is the current CEO and a member of the board – he's carrying the family torch and overseeing everything from the weaving to shipping stages to make sure the Coelho Lima name remains synonymous with quality, trust, and integrity.

“I am an architect by education, I studied at one of the best schools in Europe, but the world changed and I had to decide if I wanted to pursue a career in designing buildings →



or come back and help my father run the business – I chose the latter. My brother Miguel and sister Olinda also decided to join the company, so we’re now all working together,” Paulo says.

He’s responsible for Lameirinho’s commercial and marketing arm – his main aim is to make the company as international as possible. Miguel oversees production, while their sister Olinda is head of design. She’s tasked with creating the collections, researching new trends, and making sure Lameirinho’s products are in vogue.

Paulo says that Lameirinho’s reputation stretches far beyond Portugal’s borders because his dad made some astute decisions during the early days. “We are well-known abroad – in the sixties, the company focused on export, we started offering people better quality bed linen, something they hadn’t seen before, softer with a higher thread count. Lameirinho grew quickly – luckily my father is smart; he invested the revenue back into the business to improve R&D and other areas.”

With an 800-strong workforce spread across 200,000 square metres of factory space in Guimarães, it’s no wonder Paulo and his siblings chose to support their father – there’s a lot to organise. The family team is currently developing its own brand as it diversifies – aside from creating fabric for other companies, it’s rolling out a brilliant selection of unique bed linen, initially in the Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, and Middle Eastern markets.

“All of our fabrics can be printed or dyed, our finishing processes use an extensive choice of modern techniques – you can never have too much attention to detail,” Paulo says. “We are an industrial company; we try to preserve as much production as possible. We just need to buy the yarn – we are doing everything from the weaving to the shipping, Lameirinho is vertical and everything is done in Portugal. This sets up apart from many of our competitors.”

Their own brand of luxury sheets can be found in the majority of Portugal’s best hotels. “This really helps us to promote the brand be-



Not sleeping on the job: some of Lameirinho’s high-quality bed linen



Lameirinho’s employees are our most valuable asset



Rolling big: Lameirinho has 172 looms

cause when people sleep in a nice hotel with excellent bed linen they remember, and often want to replicate the experience at home,” Paulo says. “Hotel guests search for our label after a superb night’s sleep, and celebrities and designers also spread the word about our products on social media. Aside from creating our own brand, we are investing in every area of the company; we want it to be more environmentally friendly so aspects like water treatment are being improved to reduce pollution. The plan is to increasingly replace chemical products with ecological products.”

Despite the company’s technological advancements and global plans, Lameirinho is all about family and people, as Paulo concludes: “We are located in a valley in the middle of Portugal’s textile region – the Coelho Lima name is synonymous with textile-making. Me and my siblings are the third generation. The company’s invaluable textile knowledge is also passed down through our workers, some of whom have been with us for 40 years, and some of their children even work for us now. Our employees are Lameirinho’s most valuable asset.”

Our long-lasting business relationship with Lameirinho is hugely appreciated by Domingos de Sousa & Filhos. To have honest partners in this industry is something that we cherish every day, and for that, we would like to thank Lameirinho.

Fátima Sousa, CEO,
Domingos de Sousa & Filhos S.A



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Domingos de Sousa & Filhos S.A. is a Portuguese family business working in the textile industry since 1961. With more than 60 years of experience, our products are known for their unrivalled quality, including jacquard, beach, and tea towels.

Domingos de Sousa & Filhos is a vertical company – we are specialists in open-end yarn spinning and dyeing yarn and fabrics in cross reels. We use modern electronic jacquard looms that can produce 220 tonnes of terry cloth each month.

Over the last year, Domingos de Sousa – like the rest of the world – has faced incredible challenges; as a result, we have increased investment in our proven strategy based on consistent sustainable production.

Our role as a responsible player in the industry is now more important than ever. We strive to make a positive impact in the supply chain.

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