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## Exports to Africa travel with Grimaldi Group

Many opportunities from demographic development, fears of political instability.



THE PORT of Salerno is an important hub in the Grimaldi Group's maritime services network. This is where the Euromed service, which connects the eastern Mediterranean with Northern Europe, calling at Salerno both westbound and eastbound, and the Med Waf service meet. Med Waf connects Italy to West African ports, a region in which Grimaldi has a strong and consolidated presence, **starting with the Lagos terminal in Nigeria.**

The maritime agency service in Salerno for Grimaldi's ships is provided by Michele Autuori srl, of which the group took corporate control in 1996, buying it from the Autuori family. There are still representatives of the founder's family at the operational helm of the agency, with Ferdinando Autuori in the role of president. The agency acts for Grimaldi as an operational agent in **the port of Salerno** and as a commercial agent throughout Central and Southern Italy.

"Med Waf," explains Ferdinando Autuori, "is the service that resumed connections with West Africa ten years ago. We began with every fortnight, then every ten days, and now it's weekly. The number of ports called at has also increased progressively over the years, with the addition, for example, of important ports such as **Casablanca and Dakar.**"

The Med Waf service, which in the beginning was served by two ships, is now plied by four ships: Republic of Argentina, **Republic of Brazil**, Great Ivory Coast and Great Ghana. The ships arrive in Salerno from Valencia, Marseilles, Genoa and Livorno and continue to Casablanca, Dakar, Banjul, Abidjan, Lome, Cotonou and Lagos, from where they depart once more for the Mediterranean. From

Dakar there are several connections to other ports: to Freetown via Monrovia and Conakry; to Nouakchott; to Libreville via Luanda, Pointe Noire, Douala, Bata/Malabo; and one to South America which calls at Vitoria, Rio de Janeiro, Santos, Montevideo, Asuncion (via Montevideo), Zarate, Paranagua. **“The addition of Casablanca to the service was very interesting, because it makes it possible to intercept intra-African traffic as well.** Salerno is a hub port for Grimaldi, like Antwerp in northern Europe. This route is mainly used for goods exported from Italy to Africa. “The Grimaldi company,” Autuori pointed out, “is the third largest worldwide carrier in the RO-RO and multipurpose sectors. Med Waf ships are used to transport new and used cars, coaches and trucks. In addition, a great deal of project cargo is shipped and transported at the port. The vessels are also equipped to transport 20-foot and 40-foot containers. The versatility of the Grimaldi group vessels makes it possible to cater for the different levels of demand at different times by loading different types of goods.”

The service is interconnected with other Grimaldi services, in particular Euromed, another service that calls in North Africa, which connects it to the rest of the Mediterranean and Northern Europe.

**Euromed** has been in operation for 20 years, initially with two ships and now with five. It has a weekly frequency and pivots on the port of Salerno, where it calls twice. From Salerno it goes east to Piraeus, Izmir, Ashdod, Limassol, Alexandria in Egypt, then returns to Salerno and continues to Savona, Setubal, Portbury (Bristol), Cork, Esbjerg (Denmark), Wallhamn (Sweden), Antwerp, Southampton and winds up its tour at Salerno.

The Salerno agent goes on to say that **“Africa is a very important continent, affected by considerable demographic and economic development.** He is also discounting for major instability. For example, ten years ago Nigeria was a very strong market, today it is weakened by terrorism and the drop in the price of oil, which is its greatest commodity.”

By transshipping to Salerno, goods travelling on other Grimaldi short sea services that arrive and depart in the Campanian port to and from Catania (6 weekly departures), Palermo (5 weekly departures) can also reach destinations in Africa, Genoa (5 weekly departures), Cagliari (4 weekly departures), Sagunto (Spain, 3 weekly departures), La Valletta (Malta, 3 weekly departures of which 2 via **Catania**), Livorno (2 weekly departures), Tunis-La Goulette (Tunisia, 2 weekly departures)