11–14 JANUARY 2025 – THE RIVA DEL GARDA EXHIBITION

KICKS OFF THE AUTUMN-WINTER 2025/26 SEASON

**Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags:**

**an antidote to the global crisis**

**Over 1,000 exhibitors, including companies and brands, 8,358 retail outlets represented by visiting buyers invited by the fair, and more than 100 participating countries. Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags reaffirms its status as the perfect antidote to navigate the global crisis. The return of startups showcasing retail-focused innovations, the confirmation of the Highlights Area for consumer trends, and numerous networking opportunities during the Expo Riva Night further strengthen its appeal.**

The doors open to the **new Autumn-Winter 2025/26 season**. As always, **Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags leads the way**. It does so certain of its ability to offer visitors a **unique business experience**, featuring **over 1,000 exhibitors, including companies and brands, from approximately 40 countries**.

However, there is no overlooking the **widespread crisis** that continues to affect the international footwear and accessories markets, the fashion industry as a whole and many other sectors. A study conducted by World Footwear in the first half of this year confirmed a sharp decline in the footwear industry in 2023, although many remain optimistic about a strong recovery in the coming months. Factors contributing to the crisis include high raw material costs, insufficient international demand and intense competition in domestic markets.

So, why invest time and resources in **Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags**?

Because this prominent international event could prove to be **an effective antidote to the challenges of the global economy**.

The careful and well-balanced selection of **exhibitors** aims to provide buyers with a wide range of potential business partners, diverse in origin, production capacity and quality, product types and pricing. It represents the most significant global opportunity to **identify new suppliers** that best meet sourcing demands.

The **50,000 square metres of exhibition space**, complemented by **three hotels** (Astoria Resort, Du Lac et Du Parc Grand Resort, Grand Hotel Liberty), will host, among others, the **established and extensive Asian manufacturing delegations, particularly from China**, including groups such as Yaquitè, Wenzhou Woil, Wenzhou Bobo, Ningbo Jade, Guangdong Province Qizhan Industrial and Xiamen Luocheng. National and international representatives from the most important trade associations and industry organisations will also be present, including those from Italy, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, India, Turkey, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

A positive sign is the **return to the fair of major brands such as Aerosoles, Pampili and Mustang**, along with the continued presence of **Imac/Primigi, Valleverde, Geox, Marina Galanti, US Golf Club, Armata di Mare and Nazareno Gabrielli**, to name just a few.

Equally well-founded are expectations regarding the **retailers** attending the fair.

Registrations confirm the participation of **buyers from approximately 100 countries**, 70% of whom are either owners or head buyers. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that **25% of buyers are coming from Africa**, mostly from sub-Saharan regions. In addition, **over 100 hosted buyers** selected by the fair – from 32 countries – will be attending for the first time. These include retailers representing more than 2,600 points of sale. If we also consider the long-standing participants from previous editions, who will also return for the 102nd edition, the **total number of represented points of sale will reach 8,358**.

Thanks to **numerous initiatives aimed at connecting supply and demand** through non-traditional methods, Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags reaffirms its status as a strategic platform for seizing business opportunities.

One such example is the **Digital Connection App**, which enables users to precisely identify the most suitable companies for their needs, establish direct contact and

plan visits. For the first time this year, the exhibition will also feature a **dedicated pathway** for those seeking products for **infants** and **children**.

The **Market Focus** sessions represent another unique opportunity to facilitate connections between exhibitors and buyers. They provide a chance to explore prospects and trends in major global markets.

At Riva del Garda, deals are often finalised after-hours, perhaps even at a hotel or local restaurant. Similarly, strong relationships are often built during the **Expo Riva Nights** – relaxed evenings organised by the fair to bring the footwear and bag community together and facilitate networking. In January 2025, with the support of numerous partners\*, a special guest will enliven the evening: **Amii Stewart** and her band will perform in the show "Back to My Roots".

Challenges are overcome with perseverance, vision, a touch of luck and above all, the right information – a crucial aspect Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags has been careful not to overlook. Throughout the exhibition, the **Innovation Village Retail** and **Startup Competition** will once again take centre stage, offering advanced solutions for distribution, with the participation of **nine startups** (seven Italian, one French and one American) selected by partner Retail Hub. The fair’s Scientific Committee – composed of Enrico Cietta from Diomedea, Matteo Pasca from Arsutoria and Alberto Mattiello from Retail Hub – along with a panel of expert judges, including buyers and exhibitors, will declare the winner, recognised for their presentation of the most innovative project.

In this complex and ever-changing moment in time, understanding and carefully evaluating **consumer trends** is more crucial than ever. Addressing this need is the **Highlights Area**, which, in collaboration with Arsutoria, provides visitors with insights into the latest fashion and consumer trends, offering practical suggestions on the most interesting models to purchase, thanks to collections from **15 exhibitors selected** by the Fashion Committee.

The opening of the **new dining area in Hall D**, following the inauguration of the new multi-storey car park in 2024, further demonstrates how the Riva del Garda exhibition continuously evolves.

With so many innovations, Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags reaffirms its status in 2025 as the premier destination for developing international business, despite the ongoing challenges and uncertainties affecting the industry.

\*Expo Riva Nights:

**Partner**

Wenzhou Woil Import And Export Co

Wenzhou Bobo Shoes International Co., Ltd.

**Contributor**

Guangzhou Yaqite Industrial Co., Ltd.

China Leather Publisher co. Ltd.

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