**PRESENT AND FUTURE SUCCESS**

**FOR EXPO RIVA SCHUH & GARDABAGS.**

**EXPANSION OF THE EXHIBITION CENTRE ANNOUNCED**

**Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags launches the Autumn-Winter 2025-26 season with 1,100 exhibitors from 36 countries. Future investments in the exhibition centre have been announced: The expanded Hall B1 will be inaugurated in June 2025. Meanwhile, construction work on the new Bi-level Hall and the new Reception Hall will begin in 2026 and 2027.**

The 102nd edition of Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags opens with a positive outlook on both the present and the future.

Taking place from **11 to 14 January 2025**, the event once again leads the way in launching the **Autumn-Winter 2025/26 season**. The opening ceremony was attended by numerous local dignitaries, including the **Mayor of Riva del Garda, Cristina Santi**, and **Simone Marchiori**, Councillor for Housing Policies, Heritage, State Property and Knowledge Promotion for the Autonomy of the Autonomous Province of Trento. Also present were international representatives such as the Ambassador of Bangladesh, H.E. Mr Atm Rokebul Haque, the Consul of India, H.E. Mr Lavnya Kumar, and the Commercial Counsellor of Pakistan at the Embassy in Rome, Mr Yasir Khokhar.

**THE PRESENT**

This positive outlook is supported by the preliminary data available to the organisers, indicating an **edition aligned with the growth trend initiated in 2024**, both in terms of the range of exhibits and the expected visitors. This synergy, as always, underscores the highly international nature of the event.

The **50,000 square metres of exhibition space**, along with **three hotels** complementing the fair’s offering (Astoria Resort, Du Lac et Du Parc Grand Resort, and Grand Hotel Liberty), will host over **1,100 exhibitors**, brands and companies from **36 countries** (40.7% from Europe and 59.3% from outside Europe). Of these, **41 represent bags**, accessories and travel products.

The **strong participation of Asian manufacturers is confirmed, particularly from China, with 375 companies, brands and represented firms**. Additionally, representatives of key national and international trade associations and institutions from countries such as Italy, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, India, Turkey, Pakistan and Bangladesh will also attend. **Italy ranks second** in terms of the number of exhibitors,with **220** companies, brands and businesses, particularly from Lombardy, Marche, Puglia, Tuscany and Veneto.

**A new country** will make its debut at the fair, with a company from **Morocco** participating in the event.Furthermore, **134 new exhibitors** will be joining the event for the very first time.

Expectations are equally strong and positive with regard to **buyers** visiting the fair, according to **GianPaola Pedretti, Exhibition Manager**: “Registrations confirm the participation of **buyers** **from 111 countries**, 70% of whom are either owners or head buyers. Thanks to the support of ICE (ITA - Italian Trade Agency), **131 hosted buyers and international journalists from 38 countries**, selected by the fair, will attend the event for the first time.”

The importance of the Riva del Garda fair on the global stage of fashion supply chain exhibitions was further emphasised by **Matteo Masini, Head of the Consumer Goods Department at ICE (ITA - Italian Trade Agency)**:“The incoming efforts implemented over the years in collaboration with the fair have cultivated long-lasting relationships with industry leaders, consolidating Italy’s position as a key global player. As an agency, we are focused on strengthening ties with markets in the Gulf region, Southeast Asia, and Central and Eastern Europe, which are showing a promising evolution in taste and interest. Importantly, we must not overlook the African continent, where we have expanded our network – an evolving marketplace that deserves attention for the future.”

A final ‘numerical’ highlight underscores the fair’s vitality and its role as much more than just a business hub: the event will feature **19 events designed to engage participants** in exploring consumer trends (**Area Highlights**), innovations for retail (**Innovation Village**), insights into

key international markets (**Market Focus**), and opportunities for networking (**Expo Riva Nights**).

“All these initiatives, along with field missions aimed at deepening relationships and market knowledge – around ten in 2024 – are the antidote we propose to counter the general market contraction,” noted **Alessandra Albarelli, General Manager of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi**. “Our goal is to provide both demand and supply with opportunities to discover the latest innovations, help identify the right suppliers and partners through an advanced business intelligence system, and connect online operators – a rapidly growing distribution channel – at the fair. Above all, we remain focused on attracting mid-sized buyers – chains with 5, 10 or 30 stores – who are uniquely well-equipped and adaptable to navigate today’s economic challenges.”

**THE FUTURE**

**Graziano Rigotti**, **Board Member of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi S.p.A.**, speaking on behalf of the Chairman, Roberto Pellegrini, introduced the theme of the event’s future expansion:

“We are proud to be part of the Italian trade fair system, a key benchmark for the international fashion supply chain. Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags, with its strong international focus, is indispensable. To consolidate this position, we will continue to invest in cutting-edge exhibition facilities and services.

This investment reflects our commitment to the growth of Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags, supporting the business development of a fair that has successfully weathered economic and pandemic crises to return to full capacity.”

Following the completion of the new **multi-storey car park** in 2024 and today’s inauguration of a **new dining area** in Hall D (featuring a self-service area for 180 people and an à la carte restaurant with seating for 60) in the presence of local authorities, further developments will focus on expanding the available exhibition space.

In **June 2025**, the expanded **Hall B1** will be inaugurated.

In **2026 and 2027**, on the other hand, **construction** will begin on the **new Bi-level Hall** andthe **new Reception Hall.**

This demonstrates Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags’ ability to look to the future with boldness and determination, while also leveraging **over 50 years of experience and more than 100 editions of the fair**.

Carefully planned and strategic growth designed to deliver additional **benefits to key players in the** **fashion supply chain**, manufacturers and buyers, as well as to the Garda and Trentino regions.