**EXPO RIVA SCHUH & GARDABAGS, TO BE HELD FROM 11 TO 14 JUNE, TO FOCUS ON INTERNATIONAL MARKETS AND INNOVATION**

**41 countries, more than 1,000 exhibitors, brands and companies represented in the international marketplace dedicated to footwear and accessories, which will provide a packed programme of events to top buyers and visitors. Spotlight on the strategic markets of India, Turkey, China and Brazil and on innovation, the focus of the**

**Innovation Village Retail Hub project.**

**Ribbon-cutting ceremony at 11 am on Saturday, 11 June, attended by Senator Donatella Conzatti and Senator Andrea de Bertoldi, together with local institutions and the senior management of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi.**

*Riva del Garda, 9 June 2022*. Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags is ready to confirm its position as the point of reference for the international volume footwear and accessories market with its 97th edition, set to open on Saturday, 11 June in the presence of Senator Donatella Conzatti and Senator Andrea de Bertoldi. The show will run until Tuesday, 14 June at the Riva del Garda Exhibition Centre. This unique, eagerly-awaited event plays a leading role on the international scene, as confirmed by the presence of the industry's major players and the growing numbers in attendance, drawing ever closer to pre-pandemic levels. 41 countries will be represented by more than 1,000 exhibitors, who will display their collections – featuring 4,000 products – over the 25,000 square metres of the fairgrounds, with a wide range of proposals and a truly unique exhibition offer. The key players in attendance – from Italy, China, Turkey, India, Pakistan, Brazil, Spain, Portugal, Germany – will be flanked by a large number of companies representing Asia, including those from Indonesia, Bangladesh and Malaysia. Chinese production will also be represented through the presence of around 80 companies, both attending in-person and using hybrid stands, a service that allows samples to be physically exhibited at the show and business negotiations to be conducted virtually and remotely, enabling companies to continue to do business despite current limitations.

The show’s nature as a global hub is further enhanced by the massive presence of official delegations of buyers from more than 20 foreign countries – including Northern Europe, America, Central Asia, the Middle East, the Far East and Africa – made possible thanks to the valuable networking opportunities available and the internationalisation programme resulting from the partnership with the Italian Trade Agency (ITA).

*“The massive presence of buyers, including those from overseas, confirms the international vocation of this edition of the show. The direction we have taken so far and the partnerships established to boost foreign incoming business have enabled us to put together a concrete and specific programme for buyers looking not only at Europe, but also at countries outside Europe, thereby achieving our goal of further enhancing the show’s role as an efficient business and networking platform. This is an important new feature both for exhibitors, who can thus enjoy an exhibition environment of highly profiled companies, and for buyers themselves, who will find in Riva del Garda a wide range of showcased products, whether private labels, brands or quick production, enabling them to restock retailers, together with a unique opportunity to finally meet their community in person”,* said **GianPaola Pedretti**, Exhibition Manager of Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags.

*“The goal we have set ourselves is to focus on the offer of new and innovative services that enable demand to be profiled and cross-referenced with supply, thereby creating the perfect match between the two and turning the show into an efficient networking and business platform. Making Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags “the place to be”, the place to meet the community and provide a unique and complete business experience is undoubtedly what sets the show apart and gives it a strong identity. Over time, it has been able to evolve by implementing innovative initiatives in line with market trends”,* added **Alessandra Albarelli**, General Manager of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi.

Consumers, traceability and of course sustainability, as well as new markets and business models will be at the heart of the packed programme of events and meetings – promoted under the supervision of its Scientific Committee – which will explore the most current topics. The programme will be streamed live on the show’s platform from the opening day and available on demand until 30 September. (*The full calendar of events and how to take part can be viewed on* [*https://exporivaschuh.it/it/eventi-expo-riva-show*](https://exporivaschuh.it/it/eventi-expo-riva-show) *and on the Digital Connection virtual platform).*

Product traceability will also be the focus of Innovation Village Retail and the Start-up Competition promoted in partnership with the **Italian Trade Agency (ITA)** as part of the Italian Start-up project. During the days of the show, the ten selected start-ups will have the opportunity to present through pitch and discussion sessions their disruptive solutions in fashion retail, linked to the themes of blockchain, Metaverse and IoT. The events dedicated to young companies will be led by two exceptional moderators and members of the Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags Scientific Committee: **Alberto Mattiello**, Innovation Expert and Head of Innovation Retail Hub, and **Ellen Schmidt-Devlin**, International Sourcing Expert and Cofounder and Executive Director, Sports Product Management Program at Oregon University. And that’s not all: among the ten companies selected during the **Start-up Competition** that will present their forward-looking vision of a product or service, the one chosen as the winner will have the opportunity to take part as an official exhibitor at the next edition of Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags (14-17 January 2023).

Furthermore, there will be space for design, as explored by the sector leaders. This will be at the heart of the **Kind Leather Contest**, which sees Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags partner **JBS Couros**, a leading Brazilian leather manufacturer, **Arsutoria School** and **Fotoshoe Magazine**. The project is aimed at professional designers promoting Kind Leather's core values of sustainability, material recycling and better resource management, which will have its crowning moment at the show with the award ceremony for the winners on Monday, 13 June.

**About Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags**
With 41 countries represented among exhibiting companies and visitors from all over the world, Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags – organized by Riva del Garda Fierecongressi SpA – is the leading international trade show dedicated to volume footwear and accessories.

The next edition will be held from 11 to 14 June 2022, at the Riva del Garda Exhibition Centre.
Opening hours: Saturday 11, Sunday 12, Monday 13 June 2022: from 9 am to 6 pm.

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