The January 2023 edition of the Riva del Garda show has closed

**EXPO RIVA SCHUH & GARDABAGS, BACK IN THE LIGHT!**

**TEN INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS, MORE THAN 8,600 ATTENDEES FROM 100 COUNTRIES AND VISITORS FROM OUTSIDE THE EU UP 5%. THESE ARE THE FIGURES WITH WHICH EXPO RIVA SCHUH & GARDABAGS CLOSES AN EDITION THAT ENABLED FOOTWEAR AND LEATHER GOODS OPERATORS TO RESTORE THEIR BUSINESS MOMENTUM. THE WIDE RANGE OF COLLECTIONS, WHICH ALLOWED BUYERS TO DIVERSIFY THEIR SOURCING, WAS INVALUABLE. INITIATIVES DURING THE FOUR DAYS OF THE SHOW COVERED SUSTAINABILITY, MARKET FOCUSES AND RETAIL INNOVATION.**

*Riva del Garda, 18 January 2023*

We’re out of the tunnel, the 98th edition of Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags has confirmed it. The feeling was clear from the very first day, like squinting before emerging from a tunnel and coming back into the light. The numbers of the Riva del Garda show are clear: the difficult period, following the pandemic, is behind us. From 14 to 17 January, Riva del Garda witnessed a return to business, with exhibitors and buyers of footwear and leather goods from all over the world very satisfied with the opportunities presented to them at the show.

**Roberto Pellegrini**, **Chairman of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi,** comments: “*We close this edition with a smile. The uncertainty into which Covid threw the entire industry has finally dissipated. Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags has once again become the crucial business platform for all those who want to buy and sell footwear and leather goods on a global scale. Numbers do not always tell the whole story, but in this case, they help to explain what our satisfaction and optimism for the future is based on*”.

**Attendance was 8,610,** with people coming from more than **100 countries**, extremely positive numbers that were accompanied by **visitors from outside Europe increasing by 5%** as a percentage of the total. Particularly noteworthy was the growth in visitor numbers from Latin America, South East Asia and North America. The influx of buyers from Israel was a nice surprise, while the number of Italian visitors also increased.

*“"It was very gratifying to see so many delegations from all over the world, who appreciated the variety of the offer present at Riva del Garda,"* says **Alessandra Albarelli, Director of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi**. *"Ten governmental institutional delegations attended, from India, Turkey, Spain, Portugal, Indonesia, Côte d'Ivoire, Hong Kong, Italy, and the Chinese regions of Sichuan and Wenzhou. By meeting them in the setting of the new Business Club, we were able to get an even deeper insight into their markets and needs. The fact that a number of important trade show associations and institutions from other countries have asked us to work with them to grow their events and the entire sector in their region makes us proud of the work we have done”*.

The important commitment to the incoming market, made in recent months, has borne fruit and the buyers who came to Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags appreciated not only the new collections on display, but also the in-depth meetings dedicated to supply chain sustainability and traceability, as well as the various innovations proposed by the start-ups of Innovation Village Retail. The winner of the **Innovation Village Competition** was announced during the show. The event's Scientific Committee and a broad spectrum of experts and operators in the sector chose **WonderStore** (wonderstore.ai) as the winner, with ACBC and iHEEL taking the other places on the podium. The start-up, which is already on the market, uses the latest IoT, Computer Vision, AI and storytelling analytics technologies to profile, count, track and analyse customers visiting a shop and provide useful insights to boost sales.

Innovation was not the only theme at Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags, it also provided an overview of several established and growing markets. The **Market Focuses** dedicated to German-speaking European countries, Latin America, India, the USA and South East Asia highlighted awareness of key industry issues and the close ties with the international network of buyers that the show has built up. “*We brought producers and buyers together in an intimate and relaxed setting so that they could get to know each other, tell each other about themselves and identify new opportunities for cooperation*”, explains **Exhibition Manager GianPaola Pedretti**. “*Among the huge amount of information gathered”, she continues, “one consideration stood out above all others: the situation regarding the prolonged shutdown of Chinese and Asian production and logistical difficulties is now returning to normal, but what happened during the pandemic has prompted buyers from all over the world to diversify their sourcing. They have all found in Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags the ideal platform at which to make contact with a wide range of suppliers, something that, in their opinion, is not offered at any other show”*.

We’re therefore back in the light, and Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags has absolutely no intention of heading back into the dark again. Many concrete initiatives are already planned to further boost trade at the **next edition from 17 to 20 June 2023**, dedicated to spring/summer 2024.

**AUTUMN/WINTER 2023/24 TRENDS**

It's time for Autumn/Winter 2023/24. As always, Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags got things going for the coming winter, presenting new collections from international manufacturers and brands. A varied landscape, in which ankle boot models were again the winners. Those who thought that we would go for a longer style proved to be mistaken, as the preference remains for a style that goes just above the ankle.

The allure of Biker and Military, with strictly carrarmato bottoms, continues to attract buyers, often featuring distinctive laces and zips.

If you are looking for something new, still in the short boots category, you can opt for a western flavour. Texans are making a tentative comeback.

The call to the mountains is less strong than in recent seasons, but still with us. The mood remains, thanks to allusions and details in the laces and technical eyelets.

And since winter is coming, as the well-known TV series puts it, there can be no lack of warm and cosy materials. For the coming season, fur and knitwear appear more as details and style references.

The success of trainers, with increasingly wide and varied offers for both him and her, is timeless, and not constricted by the seasons. The important structures remain, although not necessarily chunky, and the models often feature patch uppers that skilfully mix different materials and shades: creative chaos that also invigorates us in the autumn/winter season.

For those looking for something more classic, the way to go is with minimalist sports shoes with lower bottoms and the uppers cleaned of any frills.

The masculine atmosphere is further enhanced by the continued success of moccasins (high soles, please) for the more classic, while those seeking an extra touch of novelty will find it in the urban outdoor style made of suede.

Felt and wool, natural materials of choice, are the way to go for those who want to offer a little pampering and, above all, draw attention to sustainability, also for home footwear.

The youngest among us can also choose to wear models with fur inserts or ones that are very soft (quilt-style). Otherwise, they can opt for light, very comfortable shoes that are well suited to short outings as well as to the classroom and the city.

**A WORD FROM THE EXHIBITORS**

**BERTUCHI, Spain - José Angel Martinez (Export Manager)**

“Although our business focuses on summer footwear, this was a very positive edition, even better than many pre-pandemic. The buyers were interested, curious about the new collections, and eager to do business with us. In particular, we met buyers from our target markets, which are France and Europe in general, as well as the USA. We were pleasantly surprised by the visit of an important Israeli distributor who was very interested in our new line of ballet flats and with whom we laid the foundations for an important long-term project”.

**K-TREND FOOTWEAR, Hong Kong - Kin Yan Kan (President)**

“We have been exhibiting at Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags since 1995, but returned to exhibit after a three-year absence due to Covid. We mainly work for private labels and distributor brands. We recently launched online our own brand Oivio Fit, shoes made from recycled and waterproof materials, designed for the Asian market. We are very pleased to have found a lively and interested atmosphere at the show. It is an extremely important event for us, because it is the only one dedicated to the mass market with a truly international scope. We were visited by buyers from all over Europe and the UK, but also from the Middle East and the USA to finalise the last orders for the season and finetune their definitive collections. We also had contacts with new buyers from Wales and Poland”.

**SODISHOES, Portugal - Joao Matos**

“Although we changed halls, we are satisfied with how this edition went. We met our regular customers, as well as some new ones, particularly from South America. It was again confirmed to us that Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags attracts buyers from all over the world, from Europe as well as from the USA and Asia”.

**LAMBA, India - Saurabh Lamba**

“We have been exhibiting at Riva del Garda since 2008. Our impression of this edition is undoubtedly very positive. We met our customers and buyers from our core markets (Europe, UK and the USA), but also new buyers from Israel, Greece and Poland. The timing of the show is perfect for large retail chains and distributors”.

**STEPHANIE CLASSIC, Brazil - Fabio A. Spohr**

“We are very pleased with how Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags has welcomed my brand and colleagues from the association of which I am a member, the SICTC - Sindacato da Industria de Calcados des Tres Coroas. This is an event not be missed for those who want to consolidate their exports at an international level. We particularly valued the Business Scout work conducted by the show, which allowed us to make contact with important international buyer delegations”.

**VILLA GROUP, Italy - Paolo Villa**

“The show went very well, definitely better than the last few editions. We are gradually returning to pre-Covid levels. We met buyers from all our target markets: Europe, in particular France, Spain and Italy, and the UK. And there was no shortage of contacts with new customers, particularly from Spain. We noticed a slight drop in the attendance of buyers from Eastern Europe, for obvious reasons. Our winter collection was really well received”.

**About Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags**   
With visitors from all over the world and more than 40 countries represented among exhibiting companies, 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 17 to 20 June 2023, at the Riva del Garda Exhibition Centre.

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