**OPENING TODAY IN RIVA DEL GARDA**

**Hospitality – Il Salone dell’Accoglienza**

**Opens with The People Industry: in an increasingly digital world, it is people who represent the irreplaceable value of the hospitality industry.**

**Italy’s leading international Ho.Re.Ca exhibition opened today with more than 850 exhibitors and 50 top buyers from all over the world.**

The **48th edition of Hospitality – Il Salone dell’Accoglienza**, Italy's most comprehensive international Ho.Re.Ca. exhibition, opened today and will run until 8 February at the Riva del Garda fairgrounds.

**Roberto Pellegrini, Chairman of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi**, stated: “Today, we open the doors to an international event boasting extraordinary figures, exceeding last year’s already impressive results by more than 35%. This makes us proud of our hard work and achievements over the years, owing to our constant commitment but also the valuable support and collaboration of the Trentino area. Today, thanks to our intensive scouting activities and collaboration with ICE (ITA - Italian Trade Agency), who we thank for their ongoing support and for recognising the importance of Hospitality*,* we proudly welcome 50 top buyers from 20 European and foreign countries. For this edition, we have consolidated several long-standing partnerships and also initiated new ones. Our aim was to focus the spotlight on accessible and inclusive hospitality, as well as the people who work in this industry.”

Over the four days of Hospitality, the 9 exhibition halls will showcase the latest industry trends and cover all aspects of the Ho.Re.Ca offering thanks to the presence of 861 exhibitors – a higher participation rate than last year, of which 40% are new companies – divided into four themed areas, “Contract & Wellness, Beverage, Food & Equipment and Renovation & Tech”, and three specialist areas, “Solobirra, RPM-Riva Pianeta Mixology and Winescape", dedicated to craft beer, cocktails and wine tourism. Moreover, 140 events featuring 175 speakers will animate the exhibition with training sessions and interactive experiences: a unique opportunity for hospitality, restaurant and catering operators to find new ideas, inspirations and innovative solutions to help grow their businesses and stay competitive on the market.

“This year, we have expanded the scope of the exhibition to make it even more complete, embracing all segments of the Ho.Re.Ca industry and more. Following last year’s positive feedback and in line with tourism trends in both the business and leisure sector, we have reconfirmed the outdoor tourism area, to which the entire ‘Outdoor Boom’ hall is dedicated. The theme of accessibility and inclusion affects all segments of the hospitality industry and is one we have chosen to address with training initiatives and food itineraries designed with all dietary needs in mind. But above all, we have taken up the issue through *FOR ALL*, an area developed in collaboration with Village for All - V4A and Lombardini22 that recreates the check-in and check-out experience, guiding visitors along interactive and immersive pathways illustrating the varying needs of people with visual, physical-motor, auditory-sensory and cognitive disabilities, enabling them to see darkness, move space and listen to silence. Through this project, we aim to support enterprises, operators and professionals in a delicate process of transition, seeking to cater to the needs of all. The aim is to create not only physical and interactive spaces but also thought-provoking ones, offering professional operators who attend the exhibition both inspiration and substance. Design is another important focus and is the protagonist of the “Hospitalità Materica” (Material Hospitality) installation curated by ADI – Association for Industrial Design, through its delegations from Veneto and Trentino-Alto Adige. A journey through the art of material language in hospitality design, where the designers become storytellers through materials, selecting and elevating each element to create unique experiences”, commented **Giovanna Voltolini, Exhibition Manager of Hospitality**.

Hospitality 2024 was officially inaugurated with the opening talk, “The People Industry”, featuring speeches by representatives of industry associations and the hospitality sector in general, drawing their audience’s attention to the challenges currently faced by the market. And, to highlight the importance of people, visitors at the talk were involved in an interactive survey where they were asked to relive a past trip or holiday of which they held a particularly positive and fond memory.

In remembering an unforgettable travel experience, the common denominator in almost everybody’s answers had to do with a smile or extra bit of attention: essentially, **PEOPLE**.

“That is why, for this edition, we started talking about the people industry, understood as an organised and professional system. Placing the people who work in the industry at the centre means recognising the value of the Italian lifestyle, which is just as valuable as ‘Made in Italy’ is for products. We must remember this when we speak of training – which there is a lot of at the exhibition – employment contracts, recognition and staff development”, pointed out **Alessandra Albarelli, Managing Director of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi**. “Only by placing people at the centre will they be attracted and will professional growth be possible within the hospitality system, be it a restaurant, hotel or bar. The result will be skilled people able to transmit to their guests and travellers the true beauty of places, the type created by the authentic nature and professionalism of human beings.”

The influence of “The People Industry” is confirmed by Italy’s economic data, where the direct and indirect impact of the hospitality industry – from food to beverage to wellness and the outdoors – has reached 6.9% of GDP (Tourism Satellite Account Index 2023), generating 4.5 million jobs, of which 3.4 million with open-ended contracts.

**Roberto Calugi, Managing Director of FIPE - Italian Federation of Retail and Catering Businesses**, highlighted how important it is to be aware of the role restaurants play in the tourism and agrifood supply chain. Continuous training is crucial in a sector that employees 1,200,000 people and 300,000 enterprises, which in 2023 generated a turnover in excess of 90 billion euros. Calugi then illustrated the special project “Add an extra place at the table for another child”, dedicated to encouraging families with children to go to restaurants, following the memorandum of understanding recently signed between FIPE and other industry associations, and the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy and other ministries. “At FIPE, we propose the implementation of special children’s menus in Retail and Catering Businesses for children under the age of 10, at a maximum price of 10 euros.”

Among the key issues at the centre of Hospitality, accessibility, inclusivity and sustainability are intrinsic to outdoor tourism. For **Alberto Granzotto, Chairman of FAITA-FederCamping,** which, this year, renewed its partnership with the exhibition until 2026: “Outdoor hospitality is still enjoying a very positive period. All destinations experienced an increase in 2023, especially lakeside locations. The forecast for 2024 is very optimistic in this segment, which is enjoying continuous growth also thanks to numerous investments in infrastructure and products and services. This year, in a combined effort with the exhibition, we have centred the attention on the latest novelties in the open-air sector, with a special interest and focus on universal accessibility and environmental sustainability, aiming to help make Hospitality one of the most comprehensive and revered national exhibitions dedicated to outdoor tourism.”

**Alessandro Massimo Nucara, Managing Director of Federalberghi** **and Chairman of the National Bilateral Tourism Authority (EBNT)** highlighted the difficulty in attracting, engaging and retaining new resources, especially young people. Through the “Progetto Scuola” (Schools Project), Federalberghi, in partnership with the MIUR (Ministry of Education, Universities and Research), talks to students about the benefits of working in the hospitality industry. Nucara points out that it is important to use a modern, young and fresh language to establish a dialogue with new generations, demarcating the various professional qualifications and enhancing their appeal.

**Valeria Ghezzi, Vice-President of Federturismo Confindustria and President of ANEF-Associazione Nazionale Esercenti Funiviari** (National Association of Cableway Operators) focused on the importance of working within an interconnected supply chain, offering guests a complete experience in exploring their local surroundings. To this end, technology plays a key role in improving the services.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony was also attended by **Silvia Betta, Deputy Mayor of the Municipality of Riva del Garda**, and **Roberto Failoni,** **Councillor of Small Business, Trade, Tourism, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing of the Autonomous Province of Trento.**

This year too, operators can plan their itinerary using **the Hospitality Digital Space app**, a virtual platform used to manage appointments, engage in networking, consult the product and exhibitor catalogue and view the complete program of events.

THE COMPLETE [HOSPITALITY 2024 PROGRAM](https://hospitalityriva.it/it/eventi)

Riva del Garda (TN), 05.02.2024

**Information on** [**Hospitality – Il Salone dell’Accoglienza**](https://hospitalityriva.it/it)

Organised by Riva del Garda Fierecongressi, Hospitality is the leading international exhibition in Italy dedicated to Ho.Re.Ca. operators. Covering an exhibition area of more than 40,000 square metres, the event stands as the most comprehensive in Italy, boasting an extensive training program and drawing a diverse audience of companies and professionals in the Contract&Wellness, Renovation&Tech, Food&Equipment and Beverage areas and the special Solobirra, Riva Pianeta Mixology and Winescape areas.

The 48th edition is being held in Riva del Garda, from 5 to 8 February 2024.

[www.hospitalityriva.it](http://www.hospitalityriva.it) @HospitalityRiva

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