

# A record-breaking HostMilano

Records were broken and there was a clear sense that this was a major event: a better-than-ever showcase for a dynamic industry: the fortieth edition of the International Hospitality Exhibition, the leading event for the various Ho.Re.Ca sectors, closed on 24 October.



At 187,602 professional visitors (up 24.3% on the last edition of 2015), 38.8% of them from 177 foreign countries (a total of 72,699, up 20.4% on 2015), participation can truly be described as outstanding. Outside western European nations, the best represented countries in terms of visitor numbers were China, the USA, Russia, Eastern Europe and Middle East countries, but there were also visitors from as far afield as Australia and New Zealand, Cambodia and Polynesia. Other visitors came from Africa, most notably from Botswana, Burundi, Eritrea, Rwanda and Zimbabwe. These quite new markets could have some very pleasant surprises in store for the future, and once again confirm the key role HostMilano has earned itself as the point of reference for hoteliers, retailers and caterers all over the world.

Purchasing managers and corporate decision makers, including over 1,500 profiled hosted buyers from all over the world (including those identified through close collaboration with the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade), had a chance to see the very latest machinery and equipment, raw materials and semi-finished goods, as well as furnishings, professional apparel and tableware.

The important role played by HostMilano is further underscored by the growing

attention being paid to it by international institutions. Business Beyond Borders, an international project promoted by the European Commission, involved 240 firms from 53 countries in over 200 meetings, and the fair saw the first ever involvement of Grupo Consular de América Latina y el Caribe N.I., which brings together the consular representations of Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela.

This edition was also awarded the prestigious Commercial Service certification, issued by the US Department of Commerce to a very limited number of international fairs characterised for their notable ability to effectively generate business. "Host is a real success story," says Fabrizio Curci, CEO and general manager of Fiera Milano Spa. "Having achieved a 24.3% increase in numbers of professional visitors, Host confirms its standing as a reference point for the hospitality industry, a place where the various sectors it encompasses come together to establish what tomorrow's trends will be, as well as doing business and offering networking opportunities. There was a two-figure increase in foreign visitors: foreign decision makers and buyers including some from far-off lands were up 20.4%. This is an event that no one wants to miss out on, and we particularly liked the way exhibitors now contextualise their products through what are often truly delightful storytelling processes. The world knows that Italy is particularly good at this and it reinforces the Made in Italy brand as a key asset in a sector in which our industry so often leads the way."

