

Pitti Bimbo Edition 88

January 17 – 19 2019

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Pitti Bimbo, the international junior fashion and accessories exhibition, is held in January and June at the ancient and splendid Fortezza da Basso fortress in Central Florence.

Commissioned by Alessandro de' Medici, the first Duke of Florence, the Fortezza was built between 1534 and 1536. Strategically located in the historic city centre, near the Santa Maria Novella main railway station, the original buildings have been sympathetically restored, new pavilions have been added in recent years, and it is now the principal congress and exhibition venue for Florence and Central Italy – see <http://www.firenzefiera.it/en/our-venues/fortezza-da-basso>.

For the third season in recent years, UKFT has had Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP) grants (See Note 1. below) from the DiT (Department for International Trade) for eligible (see Note 2 below) UK designers and brands exhibiting at Pitti Bimbo. 14 UK designers and brands showing accessories (including child-friendly nail polish), fashion collections, dress-up, and changing bags were approved for TAP grants.

It is a very international show in terms of buyers: 6,400 buyers from stores, shops, boutiques and online stores all over the world attended the January 2019 edition (the 88th); buyer numbers held steady:

Around 38% of buyers were from outside Italy; the largest number of non-Italian buyers was from Spain (+7%), followed by Greece (+20%), UK, France, and Belgium (+ 20%). Buyer numbers for the Netherlands, South Korea were stable, but Russia was down (-14%). In total there were 553 exhibitors and again, this was a very international crowd. There were 206 exhibitors from Italy. The other larger groups were from Spain (57), from France (38), there were 45 designers and brands from the UK (a healthy increase), 23 from the Netherlands and an increase in brands from the USA (24).

Pitti Bimbo is spread many different halls and buildings on the exhibition site, including many exclusive individual private show rooms and chalets, in which large brands staged their own mini-exhibitions. These included the Barbie 60th Anniversary house (with many selfie opportunities/1), and the Japanese Hello Kitty character celebrated its 45th birthday in with a number of collaborations with large brands.

The merchandise sectors this season were:

Pitti Bimbo: – Central Pavilion, Lower Floor:

Prestigious international brands such as Aigner, Colmar Originals, Derhy Kids, Kissy Kissy, Michael Kors, Petit Bateau, Pretty Ballerinas (UK), Yves Salomon Enfant, Sophia Webster (UK designer, showing for the second time).

Pitti Bimbo: – Fashion at Work - Central Pavilion, Ground Floor:

Internationally known childrenswear brands and marques e.g.: David Charles (UK), Ferrari, Fiat 500, Special Day, Ikks Junior, Byblos, Tartine et Chocolat, DKNY

Apartment - Lyceum 24 exhibitors (7 from the UK)

Luxury contemporary tailoring for exclusive boutiques. Brands e.g.: Caramel, Hucklebones, Jem + Bea, Owa Yurika, Raspberry Plum Ltd, Belle Enfant (all UK)

KidzFIZZ: - Archivi

The Pitti Bimbo concept lab for the most creative collections e.g. Arsene et les Pipilettes, The Bonnie Mob (UK), Frugi (UK), Holly Hastie (UK), Mini Rodini, Oh Baby!, Mimi & Lula (UK), Holly Hastie, Dotty Dungarees (both UK),

Fancy Room: – Central Pavilion Lower Floor

100% Lifestyle design and accessories, from gadgets to technology. Brands e.g. , Cute Cute (UK), Hats over Heels, Illytrilly Miss Nella, Moccis , Rockahula Kids (all UK). Many brands here show through their agents or distributors.

The Nest: – Central Pavilion Lower Floor

Small independent brands and up and coming collections. Brands such as Hannah & Tiff (UK), Kiboro, Zac & Kids.

Ecoethic: – Central Pavilion Ground Floor

A small selection of ethical and responsible kidswear brands such as Airwool, Naturapura, Mini la Mode (UK)

#ACTIVELAB: new location, behind KidzFIZZ

Connecting the universes of sport and street incl. Loud Apparel (UK) , It's in my Jeans (UK), Gardner and the Gang

Sport Generation: Cavaniglia Pavilion - Brands e.g. Chipie Shoes, Fabric Flavours (UK) , Sunuva (UK) Naf Naf, Moschino Baby Kid Teen Shoes, Minoti (UK), Emu Australia, Tom Joule (UK)

Superstreet – denim, street and urbanwear Brands: Blue Seven, Boy London (UK), Guess Kids, Petrol Industries, Odra, Someone Kids, Desigual, Happiness

Pitti Bimbo Editorials – two large walls on the Lower Level of the Main Pavilion showcasing a sophisticated selection of curated objects:

Lost in Space: brands eg Logitech, Monkey Business, Pucker, Little Unicorn, Meri Meri

Dream Mountain: brands eg Atomic Soda, Kikkerland, Lapin & Me (UK), The Daydreamer Studio

Nice Licensing: Central Pavilion

This is a new section, in collaboration with the Bologna Licensing Fair, entirely devoted to the fast growing world of licensing in the childrenswear industry. Brands included: Barbie, Betty Boop, National Geographich, Smiley Original.

The show is child-friendly (children under 12 are not allowed on-site, but instead there is a nursery and children's play area), and globe-trotter friendly (a capacious baggage store and cloakroom make it easy for buyers to get to work as soon as they arrive at the show, and there is considerable free parking for buyers).

Pitti Bimbo 86 was a very successful event for most of the British exhibitors, many of whom were there for the first time. It is extremely important for an exhibitor not to rely solely on Pitti's efforts and international reputation to attract buyers to the show, but to make efforts themselves to let buyers know that they will be at the exhibition. Formal invitations are not expected these days, but interesting and thoughtful emails building up to the show, starting off with news of a general location and building up to a stand number (including embedded thumbnail images) really encourage buyers to visit a specific stand.

What did a selection of the Brits think of the show?

Georgina Parr, Dotty Dungarees: "Pitti Bimbo was a good show for us - we had a lot of interest from new buyers as well as meetings with some shops we are already stocked in. We will have to wait and see whether we get the follow up we hoped for, so it's a little early to tell exactly how many orders will come through, but for a first show it went as well as we could have hoped. KidzFizz was a great spot for us to be and we will definitely be applying to participate again".

Ana Konder of London brand BANDITS (showing in KidzFIZZ): "It was our second time exhibiting at Pitti Bimbo, and we were again pleased with the results we got from the show. It has a great footfall of buyers, and we opened several new accounts. Every major retailer worth mentioning was present. We couldn't achieve the results we aim for in the season without taking part, and we can't thank UKFT enough for helping us achieve that."

Magda Haroon of accessories brand Cute Cute (showing in Fancy Room): "Pitti Bimbo was good. Winter is usually quieter for us than summer but we had many returning customers, and some new ones."

A seasoned Pitti Bimbo exhibitor: "We made the decision to move from one section to a completely different one, which we felt would have more brand adjacencies for us. It was the right thing to do, and it just goes to show that you should always be aware of the way

that buyer traffic is changing within a large exhibition – don't just stick to one area because the organisers put you there – walk the show with your eyes open!"

The Brits in Florence group of 39 companies was promoted by UKFT through targeted mailings of the exhibitor list, see https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/ukft/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/10100103/Pitti-Bimbo_Postcard_09_01_19-Web-ARTWORK.pdf and the production of the Brits in Florence Pitti Bimbo video of images from the participating companies which can be seen here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RPNMb3IBtkQ>

Dates for the next event: 20 - 22 June 2019 at the Fortezza da Basso

Pitti Bimbo is a "juried" show (this means that each brand is selected, and the organisers have to really want you there. To get space you will need to make a strong application which showcases your brand or collection, and your company.

To apply for a stand, apply direct to the Pitti Bimbo organisers. Our contact there is Tiziana Bellandi email: tiziana.bellandi@pittiimmagine.com www.pittimmagine.com Tel: + 39 055 369 224.

Competition for certain areas is stiff, and not every company which applies is accepted to show. If you are new to the show, we have notes on how the Pitti Bimbo show and the application process works. If you are planning to show for the first time, please email Laurian Davies Laurian.davies@ukft.org or call 020 7843 9460.

To apply for a TAP reimbursement grant to help with your costs for Pitti Bimbo, please email Laurian Davies for the grant application forms Laurian.davies@ukft.org . This must be done at least 3 months advance of the next exhibition.

Notes

1. The DIT TAP grant. The Tradeshow Access Programme is funded by the Department for International Trade, and grants for the fashion and textile sector are administered by UKFT. The grant for this exhibition was £1200 per company, payable as a reimbursement on proof of payment after the event. TAP grants are available through UKFT, and applications should be made as soon as a company begins the process of applying for a stand. A company is entitled to 6 TAP grants in the lifetime of the company.
2. TAP grants are available to UK-based SMEs. The DIT Definition of an SME (Small or Medium Sized Enterprise):-
 - a) Has fewer than 250 employees
 - b) Has an annual turnover not exceeding 50m Euros, or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding 43m Euros

NB. DIT reserves the right to review the eligibility of businesses that are distinct and independently operated, but are part of or owned by an organisation itself larger than an SME.

3. UKFT (UK Fashion & Textile Association), the trade association for the UK fashion and textile industries. Financed by the industry, and the largest industry sector user of TAP grants from DIT.