



## Global market appointment in Hong Kong

Leather prices haven't been so low since the financial crisis of 2008, and yet the demand for exhibition space at APLF Leather, in Hong Kong, is significantly on the rise

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www.erretre.com

info@erretre.com

According to the experts the low cost of raw hide is due to a surplus in offer, especially in North America, where there is talk of warehouses still full of hides. An unusual situation after years of high prices that seemed destined to restore renewed competitiveness to the leather sector, something also noted by the organisers of the Asian tradeshow, who always keep a watchful eye on the market:

"Lower prices should stimulate demand from designers and manufacturers and even more so as the raw stock oil price for producing synthetic materials that compete directly with leather has now risen so much".

While the leather footwear sector has been losing market shares against the synthetic sector, in the upholstery and automotive industry the demand for leather has been increasing for the past three years. As ever, the Chinese tradeshow, which opens at little under a month after Lineapelle, in Milan, will be an opportunity to evaluate both the trend of leather prices and the level of international demand in the various product sectors.

But let's get back to the tradeshow. The first novelty is the date, which will be held from the **14th to 16th of March**, two weeks earlier than the usual calendar. A decision made *after careful consultation with both exhibitors and buyers*, the need to avoid the overlapping with Easter holidays and keep up with the quicker rhythms of the fashion system, explains Hong Kong.



APLF Leather & Materials+ 2018 will bring together over 800 exhibitors from 46 countries and is expecting a footfall of over 17-thousand visitors. The exhibition area dedicated to leather, which extends from hall 1A to 1E, is now fully booked, so much so that some exhibitors have been allocated stands in Concourse 1, in the external corridor outside the entrance.

As well as products from some of the biggest tanneries in the world, there will also be the best tanning production technologies on the market and a broad spectrum of chemical product suppliers that cater for every stage of the leather working process. This sector also heralds the return of important companies to the tradeshow, including Fenice, Sisecam and Zschimmer & Schwarz.

As usual important national pavilions will also be on show, including the debut of Sudan, a returning Egypt, and historic collectives like Brazil, China, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Pakistan, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom and United States. The new Materials+ area, inaugurated last year, is also becoming increasingly important, completing the offer of footwear and leather goods materials and components, and attracting a flood of new exhibitors. As usual, APLF Leather and Materials+, will be held alongside Fashion Access, which will be presenting the latest footwear, leather goods and clothing, and Cashmere World, the only tradeshow entirely dedicated to the cashmere supply chain.

APLF Hong Kong is also becoming increasingly important for its rich programme of conferences and seminars. One of the 'must-attend' appointments is the Sustainability event – now a tradition in its own right – which will be held on the 15th of March. For the full programme of events visit: [www.aplf.com](http://www.aplf.com).

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