

Chimont

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# leatherZone

NEWSLETTER FROM THE FUTURE OF TANNING



# Innovation<sup>3</sup>

## Research and quality in keeping with tradition

The value added  
of ChimontGroup.

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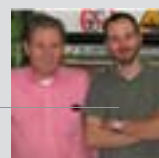
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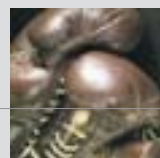
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# focus On

## Innovation cubed

Why have we chosen to entitle this issue of **LeatherZone** “Innovation”? The answer is simple, and lies in three key concepts – tradition, research and quality – that we at **ChimontGroup** believe to be fundamental for the construction of real and lasting success. Today, with the total globalisation of markets and faced with an increasingly aggressive competition, the company that wants to remain competitive is practically obliged to improve the quality of its products constantly, innovating its productive processes, while at the same time protecting the traditions that made it successful. This is why investing more and more in research is indispensable, substituting old processes that are costly and cause pollution with others that are economical and clean. This is why there will be an increasing requirement for the contribution of an adequate internal and external communication, which fuels the winning mentality that lies behind constant renovation. This is the philosophy of the Italian company that for years has contributed to innovate the world of leather. **ChimontGroup**, Made in Italy for Leather. Welcome to **LeatherZone**.

**Remo Petroselli**  
**ChimontGroup**  
general manager

# Cuoio “espresso”

## Quality and reduced times. The new semi-rapid process for sole leather.

The process of leather tanning to realise sole leather is one of the longest and most difficult processes of the leather tanning industry. Tanning of this kind, in tubs, uses a very ancient and traditional technique that calls for the workmanship of artisans and long working times. For this reason, there are few companies in the world who specialise in the production of sole leather that is tanned in tubs. Almost all of these companies are concentrated in the areas of Ponte a Egola and Santa Croce sull'Arno.

Tub tanning means having a transformation time for the leather of some 35 to 40 days, and having large scale facilities that permit warehousing of large volumes of liquid tanners. Tub tanning imparts to the sole unique characteristics such as, for example, a remarkable astringency, a high weight yield, and an elevated resistance to water. Another system that is used to produce sole leather is rapid tanning. Rapid tanning permits a notable reduction in working times. In fact, it generally takes a maximum of two or three days. Naturally the results are very different in that, with the system of rapid tanning, the leather

produced generally has only slight astringency due to the quantity of salts that are used in the process, a weight yield that is less than that of tub tanning because fewer tannins are fixed to the fibres of the leather, an appearance on the surface of greater wear and tear, due to the mechanical action and, finally, that water is able to penetrate more rapidly through the leather. For some years now, ChimontGroup has developed a process for tanning sole leather in vats, called **Cuoio “espresso”**, which permits the production of a sole leather that is very similar to that produced in tubs, notably reducing the working times and increasing the capacity to produce steadily. The key to the **Cuoio “espresso”** process is very simple and calls for the use of very little water. Salts that can compromise the rigidity and absorption of the leather are not used, nor are inorganic acids that can cause acid swelling with irreversible damage to the fibres of the leather. Once pre-tanned, the hides can even be warehoused for long periods without any worries about deterioration. The successive phase is tanning, which takes place

in vats, with a bath volume that is rather high and can last from 3 to 6 days, according to the characteristics desired for the leather. During this phase are performed all the steps of tanning in tubs, beginning with softening tannins and ending with astringent extracts, but with working times that are very reduced. The advantages of this process are numerous:

- Very short working times (3-6 days);
- Quality that is analogous to leather tanned in tubs;

- Weight yield that is equal or greater than that of tanning in tubs;

- A surface appearance that is the same as that of tanning in tubs;

- High resistance to the absorption of water;
- No use of salts that compromise rigidity;
- No use of inorganic acids that can cause damage to the fibres.

This tanning system has allowed the creation of new articles that have had great success in the market, such as, for example, dyed leather for heels. The leather for making heels has to have a very important characteristic, that of obtaining uniformity of the distribution of colorants in all sections of the leather. This process guarantees the result, on black colours (which are the most difficult to make penetrate uniformly) as well as on the various shades of browns, from “brunette” to lighter browns.

ChimontGroup has invented another solution that didn't exist until now: welcome **Cuoio “espresso”**, the semi-rapid process with working times that are only a little longer than “rapid” and a quality that is comparable to the complex and laborious “long” process.

| Of leathers decalcified with sodium metabisulphite | Quantity | Time   |
|--|----------|--------|
| > Water  | 30%      |        |
| > Chimotan AC                                      | 3%       | 60 min |
| > Formic acid                                      | 1%       |        |
| > Chimotan QS                                      | 5%       |        |
| > Morning Ph 3,8                                   |          | 3 h    |
| > Brain off float                                  |          |        |
| > Night automatic rotation                         |          |        |
| > Water  | 100%     |        |
| > Formic acid                                      | 0,1%     |        |
| > Draining tanned leathers                         |          | 60 min |
| > Bath / 16°Bè                                     | 50%      |        |
| > Acacia extract                                   | 10%      |        |
| > Brain off float                                  |          | 5 h    |
| > Bath / 16°Bè                                     | 180%     |        |
| > Water  | 60%      |        |
| > Chimotan BL                                      | 1%       |        |
| > Acacia extract                                   | 10%      | 24 h   |
| > Quebracho extract                                | 5%       |        |
| > Softened chestnut extract                        | 10%      |        |
| > Softened chestnut extract                        | 5%       |        |
| > Astringent chestnut extract                      | 10%      | 24 h   |
| > Morning / Temperature 38°C                       |          | 48 h   |
| > Water  | 70%      |        |
| > Bath at end of tanning                           | 30%      |        |
| > Chimotan BL                                      | 2%       | 30 min |
| > Brain off float                                  |          |        |
| > Leathers outside to rest                         |          |        |
| > Pressing dehairing                               |          |        |
| > Brain off float                                  |          |        |
| > Dry retanning                                    |          |        |

# Spazio Tech takes off

Extreme innovation. A machine park of the future.

by Luca Fumagalli © **MdP La Conceria**

Milan, via Trasimeno 8. We are at the northern periphery of the city, in a zone that is easily reached by car, bus and underground. We are at the entrance to an industrial warehouse where Unic has created, opened and inaugurated (this past September 17) Spazio Tech, an avant-garde and technological area oriented towards the development of productive innovation, equipped with every imaginable kind of almost futuristic prototype that, by appointment, can be viewed, tested and used to obtain new samples.

## The machines

The machines have a common denominator that is precise and evident: because these are prototypes, the existence of which – and in consequence, the fact that they appear in Spazio Tech – underlines the desire to set out a new vision of leather and the cycle necessary for its production. Everything is oriented towards the maximum possible rationalisation of production. For instance, here is the rapid tracking of the facilities. Three modules that make up a line (on a pre-industrial scale) of retanning/dyeing and lubrication. The mechanical systems are semi-continuous, and the requirement for water is noticeably reduced. Specifically the line unites: a roller machine for retanning and lubricating, equipped with a special double impregnating bath for treating leather on both sides at once; a stabilising chamber to facilitate diffusion and fixing of the chemical products on the leather; a system of immersion dyeing. Then there is an ink-jet printer for realising decorative effects with high-quality digital printing without damaging the natural

grain of the hides. The logic behind the equipment is to improve the result of printing by reducing the waste of colorants. The technology of another prototype that develops treatments of cold plasma at atmospheric pressure can be applied to finished and semi-processed leathers. Finally, there are seven metres of modular machinery for continuous tanning that has an ambitious and futuristic object: to become an alternative to the vat, improving the processes and lowering the consumption of chemical auxiliaries.

## The reactions

The first comment is general and directly concerns the project. Isabella De Iorio, professor in Special Technologies in the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Naples, is the coordinator of – at the same university – a laboratory for innovative technology for exploitable instruments, and together with Conciaricerca and the Sperimentale of Naples, has patented the modular equipment for continuous tanning. ‘The “useful” movements of leather in the vat have been studied and – once identified – this machine was prototyped; it has the most modern and interesting characteristics, but these obviously upset the organisation that traditionally typified the tanning process. What is certain, however, is that the results that can be obtained move in the direction of a qualitative improvement of the product and the service. As regards Spazio Tech on the whole, I believe that it is an excellent idea and opportunity for aggregating and concentrating innovative technology, and that it opens the door to possible experimentation

that would never be possible to undertake in a company’. Marco Gnemmi of Vallero International (a company in Piedmont that specialises in vats) confirms the interest in the project: ‘The initiative is positive and more than justified, the machines displayed are interesting and demonstrate what is possible. The only doubt concerns the site. A space of this kind can should also be a stimulus for encounters between tanners and suppliers, and Milan is far from the productive districts of reference’. Riccardo Centomo of Bergi (a producer of machinery for tanneries, located in the Veneto) continues along the same line, ‘The inauguration was a sort of open house in which the machines were presented, without, however, being able to observe their practical operations: this is

the reason I say that this is an excellent idea and a good start, because every stimulus to innovation is to be encouraged. The desire is clearly to move away from traditional ways of working towards solutions that are more modern and industrial, which, however, should be evaluated carefully as to their feasibility and connection to reality. For example: optimising a productive process for a million pieces is one thing, but for 20 it is another thing entirely’. On the other hand, the association expects that companies and technicians will come to Spazio Tech to test and experiment the potentials of the equipment, without the presence of curiosity seekers or competitors. If you want to do that, you have to make a reservation and enjoy the demonstrations privately.



In the photo, participants at the event that took place in Milan and some of the innovative machinery on display.

# Chimoil W/19

## The new wax-based lubricant for greasing leather at low temperatures.

The ongoing investigation into how to manufacture new articles with diverse characteristics and looks that are increasingly personalised have led ChimontGroup to experiment with working techniques that have never been tried before. One of these – which has put the laboratory for advanced research to work for months – **regards the vat lubricating on wax of leathers tanned with vegetable extracts**. Articles with a “waxed effect” created on vegetable-tanned leathers have been manufactured for a long time, but the technique used has always been that of applying the wax-based product on the dry surface of the leather by means of roller or spray machines. In this way, however, more than impregnating the leather with wax, we might say that it is refinished, giving the surface the appearance of having been waxed. In contrast, ChimontGroup wanted to make the wax actually penetrate into the leather while it is still wet, during the phase of lubrication in the vat. This technique was widely applied to chrome-tanned leather for the manufacture of highly specialised articles, such as footwear like “Timberland”,

but never on vegetable-tanned leather. The principal reason for this choice arises from the fact that in order to penetrate into the leather waxes need to be applied at temperatures higher than 70° C. Leathers tanned with chrome salts can withstand this temperature, but those that are vegetable-tanned cannot. This is the factor that has limited the application of waxes during the wet lubricating phase.

Our research therefore has concentrated on how to overcome this limit in order to be able to realise wax-based lubrication to be applied in the vat that is capable of penetrating into the leather at temperatures not greater than 42° C. So, was born the new product named **Chimoil W/19**. This product can be used alone or in combination with other lubricants, wet as well as dry. Its principle characteristic is that of penetrating into the leather, and once cooled, to confer the important effect of filling in the fibres themselves, giving the finished article the full grain that is typical of waxes.

The surface of the leather, contrary to what might be thought, is natural to the touch and not greasy. The extraordinary capacity to

penetrate means that there are no waxy residues on the surface of the leather, which means that it is possible to apply refinishes without worrying about absorption or binding. On this kind of crust a multitude of articles can be produced with truly innovative effects. Because the wax is inside the leather, one of the most surprising effects that can be obtained with articles greased with **Chimoil W/19** can be appreciated during the phase of flat pressing.

The waxes, softening because of the temperature, are displaced from the inside of the leather to the surface, creating the extraordinary effects of “Pull up” and leaving the surface dry to the touch.

Another very interesting effect is obtained on articles that are dry vatted. Because of the notable filling effect that the waxes confer to the leather, the grain that is formed on the surface assumes a particular pattern, different from that obtained on the usual leather lubricated with traditional systems.

The tip of the grain is resistant to the rubbing of the vat, taking on a tone that is darker and more brilliant, thus contributing to the realisation of articles that are very natural and transparent. When performing printing, the darkening effects on the surface due to the pressure and temperature of the printer embellish the articles and make them more unique.

There are many other effects that **Chimoil W/19** is able to give to leather. **LeatherZone** will talk more about them in upcoming issues to keep its readers informed about new developments in the world of leather that innovate with quality while respecting tradition.



These are some of the products that can be obtained thanks to the technology of Chimoil W/19.

# Nuovacentauro

## Successful insoles

Interview with Salvo Rossi,  
creator of a winning choice.

Nuovacentauro is one of the historic tanneries for the production of insoles of the Comprensorio del Cuioio e della Calzatura (the Leather and Footwear District centred in Santa Croce sull'Arno). We interviewed Salvo Rossi, the founder of this long-lived company, who has maintained a single corporate structure for all these years and has focussed a great part of his energy on a single product.

### When was the Nuovocentauro phenomenon born?

The firm was founded in '64, initially producing butts, shoulders, etc. As early as '65 we decided to invest in the production of insoles, which are produced by only three or four other tanneries in our District. The insole, as is well known, is considered a 'poor' article, but it was exactly for this reason that the gamble we set for ourselves seemed more challenging. Being able to express creativity and innovation with an article that apparently is of "little value" is one reason we are proud and satisfied. We have always been inclined to rise to a challenge, and when in the 1970s the tanneries moved from the centre of Ponte a Egola to what has now become the industrial zone, we were the second tannery

to take this important step towards colonisation. Through the years, Nuovacentauro has always understood how to read the evolution of the markets and offer the right product at the right time. We understood when it was the right moment to supply our clients with a new product that allowed us to distinguish ourselves from the competition, just as how now we have developed a new, very competitive article with respect to the proposals that come from our Brazilian and Chinese rivals. These countries are marketing a product that we presented as an innovation many years ago; now to the prestigious firms with which we work, we are proposing insoles that are distinguished by the characteristics that are demanded by the stylists.

### What kind of relationship do you have with your clients?

We tend to establish a relationship of mutual exchange of ideas and input in order to produce interesting articles such as Soft (a insole that is as shiny as a mirror and particularly soft, making the shoe very comfortable). Rossetti, Prada and Geox are just some of the names we collaborate with. Our relationships of trust with our

clients are sustained by the fact that the workmanship of the articles is almost exclusively done internally; only the refinishing, which represents a minimal part of our work, is done outside the company.

### What precautions have been adopted to safeguard the health of those who wear the shoes?

My son Luca and I have always believed that safeguarding the health of people and the environment is fundamental. Many of our competitors, given the 'poverty' of the item, don't invest in thorough testing to determine noxiousness. In contrast, Nuovacentauro makes sure, by means of scrupulous chemical analyses, that the insoles that come into contact with the skin are not harmful for the health

of the shoe wearer. We have set up a facility that permits optimum purification, and the mud produced by the company can be used as fertilizer in agricultural fields. The tanning process is realised with vegetable extracts and is absolutely devoid of metals.

This interview shows that Nuovacentauro is a company that recognizes the great importance of safeguarding the environment and establishing human relationships with its clients, placing special emphasis on keeping them ongoing and personal. For Nuovacentauro, this is the all-important quality behind all of the results achieved.

For more information, visit [www.nuovacentauro.com](http://www.nuovacentauro.com)



In the photo, below from the left, Salvo and Luca Rossi. Above, some of the processed leathers that Nuovacentauro offers its clients.



# Triumph at Micam and Mipel

The point of reference for Italians and foreigners.

© **Tecnologie Conciarie**

A number of visitors that was more than satisfactory, collections with a winning spirit, and high quality characterised the two trade fairs dedicated to footwear and leather goods. The next appointment is set for the end of February 2008. From 20 to 23 September the pavilions of Fiera Milano Rho were animated by the fairs Micam ShoEvent and Mipel: on view were the collections of footwear and leather goods for Summer 2008 of more than 2,000 exhibitors in all (to be precise, 1,667 were at Micam, which showed a total increase of 4.8% with respect to the September 2006 edition; that number is increased to 5.1% if only foreign buyers are taken into consideration.

There was also a confirmation of the interest on the

part of Italians, who comprised a total of almost 24 thousand. Japan, Germany, Spain, France, Russia and England led the classification for participation. There were 1,667 exhibitors, with 1,131 Italian companies. Vito Artioli, neo-president of ANCI, said that he was “proud to be able to say that we Italians are still, without a doubt, the first in the world: we are the leaders of the highest sectors of the market, thanks to our product, the synthesis of quality and fashion, and we are also the leading organisers of trade fairs, in that Micam is the point of reference for Italians and foreigners. The offerings were characterised by the high creative content, attention to details, and good quality.

For women, the importance of high heels, elegant,

slender and drawn in various proportions were confirmed, as was the continuing popularity of low-heeled ballerina-like shoes. There were also many sandals, both in cocktail versions and in jewel-like versions with platforms, insets and cut-outs, but also ultra-flats and thongs.

The leathers were shiny, shaded, metallic, patent; colours were pronounced; the accessories contribute to create design effects. Slip-ons and lace-ups recur in the men’s collections: more rigorous lines, the use of exotic leathers, and treated leathers in “sporty” versions as well.

“Free time” styles are still popular with models that are more elegant. 19,097 economic operators were occupied in the stands of the producers of leather goods. Foreigners accounted for about 50% of the total, the Italian presence numbering 9,650.

There was a strong increase in visitors from Russia (+84%), followed by those from Japan (+47%). From Europe, the best performances were those of Spain

(+14%) and France (+8.9%). Visitors from North America increased as well. Giorgio Cannara, president of Aimpes-Mipel, commented on these numbers: “We have positive signs from all countries, in particular those of the East, that confirm that our promotional campaign bore fruit”. The collections presented by 436 exhibitors who showed careful attention to the product, the quality of the materials used, design, and not least, to the image of the company had a positive impact, both at the fair and outside of it.

Collections with colour, the use of quality leathers, often exotic, alone and in combination with other materials, soft and ample forms that do not, however, eschew a balanced femininity, small jewel-like handbags in luminous and metallic tones. This edition of Mipel featured opening hours extending until 10:30 pm on Friday: “After four editions – underlined Giorgio Cannara – the extension of hours could become a fixture”.

The next appointment with Mipel and Micam is set from 28 February to 2 March 2008.



In the pictures, the logos e some moments from the events.



## The return to “measure”

So long to gratuitous excesses. The search for balanced solutions. In praise of materials and the slowness required to “produce them” with accuracy. For it is and will be the moment of the niche, of trends that last, of interior luxury.

by Luca Fumagalli © **MdP La Conceria**

So long to gratuitous excesses. The search for balanced solutions. In praise of materials and the slowness required to ‘produce them’ with accuracy. For it is and will be the moment of the niche, of trends that last, of interior luxury.

What’s cooking this year? We will talk of fashions and styles that start with what style makers and creators, and exhibitors and clients, cook up and evolve and delineate (on the drawing boards now is winter 2008/2009), trying

to identify a direction that is – more or less – shared, one to follow in the medium term. In short: what are the denominators of the works in progress? What road are we taking?

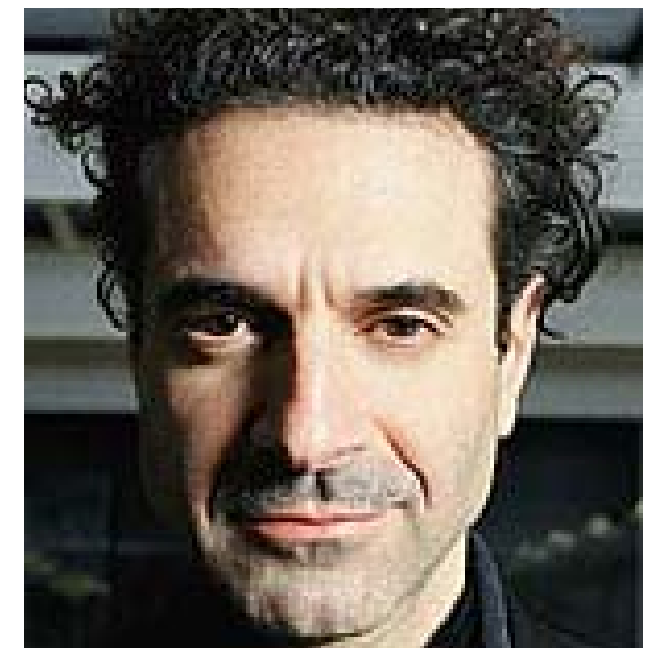
### **The concept of “measure”**

This year’s orientation seems tied to the concept of ‘measure’. More than a reference to ‘dimension’, it is an observation of content: the abandonment of easy and gratuitous excess, the return to a balance of elements (shape, materials, colours, workmanship). Few frills, more value added. Luxury, always and everywhere, but not ostentatious, almost veiled, for connoisseurs. The overarching theme of the upcoming offerings for winter will be nappa leather – solid, thick, soft of course, not lightweight or ‘flighty’ – articulated according to masculine ideas and sizes, but valid for certain feminine solutions as well. These are not revolutionary concepts, but decisive confirmation of a creative itinerary that has been back in the limelight for a few seasons: the classic – reinvented, revisited – that holds its head high, the softness and materials that have to be centre stage, the adieu to excessive vintage and to all flashy finishes, the real value of the product at the forefront.

### **“Academic” opinions**

The direction is clear, and apparently there is no turning back. This is confirmed by the ‘academic’ eyes of fashion and design schools as well, as summed up in the words of Barbara Trebitsch, director of the Master’s program in Fashion Design and Accessories Design at the Domus Academy. Accustomed to interpreting ahead of time the course of fashion and translating it into practise in her teaching, Trebitsch has few doubts: ‘Fortunately for at least a decade there has no longer existed the trends that directed every choice rigidly and pedantically. There is greater cultural freedom and the possibility of applying to fashion conceptual ideas that have a greater range.’ This means, among other things, being able to establish relationships that are very ‘lofty’ between fashion design and a series of other disciplines,

from art to architecture. Trebitsch goes on, ‘The fact that there are no longer rigid seasonal trends means that fashion undergoes a constant and continuous evolution of its own trends, which move today decisively in a precise direction.’ Which? ‘We have abandoned the excesses and unbalances of styles. In doing so, however, we must be very careful: halting the excesses does not mean “quiet down”, if anything, it means dropping gratuitous solutions, kitsch as an end in itself.’ Enough of ephemeral for ephemeral’s sake... ‘At the very moment when society seems to have been dominated, fashion on the other hand is going back to its deeper design value, paying maximum attention to fabrics and couture, modernising techniques and workmanship. The real luxury today is time’. In terms of what? ‘The time spent to develop a fabric, to realise a finished item: it is the content that counts, not the piece of clothing that is all exterior, easy to make and look at. Luxury can be something that seems normal, but that instead isn’t because it “contains” a very high added value’. What counts – what should count – is the product and how it is made more than the label that it carries, contrary to what has happened up to now. ‘We are



In the photo, Ennio Capata, creative heart and soul of Costume National



moving,' continues Trebitsch, 'towards the continuous rediscovery of knowing how to do, on a semi-craftsmanship level, intertwined with suggestions that derive from other disciplines; I am thinking of the importance of certain geometrical shapes, of "playing with the body" ... What is important in any case is that the identity of a brand is emphasised, the intrinsic value of its product'.

#### The "identity" factor

The call to arms, if we can define it that way, was launched in these pages by Ennio Capata, the 'promising' stylist who is by now more than confirmed, creative heart and soul of Costume National: the winning factor in a fashion item is its identity, its strong capacity to be recognised, from the point of view of the product as well as of the company behind it, of the fabrics used, of the technology it applies. This can seem like a discussion that is distant from trends and tendencies, but it's not: 'It is necessary to "make" fashion. Following the dominant trend every season doesn't create an identity that permits you to be credible in the eyes of final clients in the long term.

And throwing yourself into a trend that could go out after a season doesn't allow you to develop a serious stylistic project'.

From here it is a short step to the sense of creative evolution in progress: to dispense with improvisation, basing your own work on the contents: on 'theories' of style, on the concrete qualities of fabrics. 'Space to manoeuvre is interesting', explains a young stylist on the staff of a brand of footwear and clothing in the Veneto, 'we work on tradition, but even more on the value of how we once worked rather than on the banal re-proposing of models and lines. And we are moving towards a greater opaqueness of fabrics, with combinations of shiny, soft and natural grains.

Something that unites a look that is technological with lines that are ethnic'.

This isn't new either, and perhaps this is where the discovery lies: in the variety of creative approaches, the elaboration of fashion in action has recognised a guiding light, that of insisting on the authenticity of the luxury niche, rather than on collections with an impoverished content.



In the photo, the brand new headquarters created from the old industrial warehouses renovated by Costume National.

# Chimotan R3A and Chimoil SU for Floater light

Short retanning, low consumption.

The continued evolution of the latest fashions, characterised in a special way to exalt the accessories that accompany the clothing of the woman of today, sheds light on the important role played by leather goods, and more specifically, on women's handbags. In keeping with this requirement, ChimontGroup has standardised a short chrome-retanning process on the leather, named **Floater Light**, which with a few variations in products and a low consumption of water (it is added up to the dyeing phase in a single bath) permits the realisation of leathers that are soft, full but exceptionally light (the so-called floaters). These leathers have, after drying and shuttling, a grain that's extremely uniform on the entire surface.



The particularity of this article is due to the fact that it can be used in footwear as well, because the grain formed is especially full and substantial, and as a consequence renders the hides suitable for this kind of working. Key products of this process are **Chimotan R3A** (a special polymer which performs a retanning and filling purpose) and **Chimoil SU** (used as a lubricant), fundamental to give the leather the extraordinary characteristics of softness and low specific weight, in order to produce finished items of significant dimension but which are lightweight and comfortable. Once again, therefore, ChimontGroup has shown itself able to keep up with market requirements by developing products and processes in keeping with its working philosophy: to create innovations that are capable of improving production processes, improving overall quality while respecting tradition. The ultimate aim of ChimontGroup is to help its customers to maximise the costs/benefits of their work. For this reason ChimontGroup has been continuing for years to increase the efficiency of its products, finding new ways to avoid useless waste, to lower consumption and, as regards the environment, to pollute less.

# Looking At Karuna/a.skinshoes

## THE ONLY SHOE IN LEATHER THAT DOESN'T STEP ON THE ENVIRONMENT

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# in the World

#### USA / **Jewels at WSA in Las Vegas**

At the past edition of the American WSA show, which takes place biannually, jewellery producers joined those who exhibited a range of proposals comprising footwear and accessories. The new exhibitors were hosted in the area called "The Collection at WSA", already dedicated to some 400 high-level signatures. Some 1600 companies, for a total of about 6000 brands, participated in this edition of the American show, which took place in Las Vegas from 30 July to 2 August 2007. For 2008 the organisers will introduce their latest development, opening participation to suppliers of raw materials and accessories for the footwear industry, who can present their innovations in the context of "Footwear Innovation Expo&Conference". The dates for next year are set for 19 to 21 February and 26 to 28 July.

#### Spain / **Fashion at SIMM in Madrid**

SIMM, the Madrid International Fashion Fair, took place from 31 August to 2 September at the Madrid Fair site (Feria de Madrid), and proved itself to be one of the most significant European appointments for the fashion industry. Now in its 58th edition, the show highlighted the Spring-Summer 2008 proposals of more than 800 exhibitors from about 30 countries: there was a total of 16,788 buyers, a figure that is down 13% from that registered during the same show last year. There were 2,010 foreign visitors, most of whom came from Portugal, Italy, France and Mexico. Notably, France and Mexico increased their presence by 48.8% and 24% respectively. There was also an increased presence from Saudi Arabia, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, China, Cyprus, Denmark, Ireland, Japan, Lebanon, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland and Russia. This edition of SIMM is the beginning of intense trade fair activity on the part of IFEMA, centred around the fashion universe, under the denomination of "Settimana Internazionale della Moda di Madrid". In this context also figure "Pasarela Cibeles", the platform for the promotion of Spanish styling in the world; "l'Ego de Pasarela Cibeles", for talented young fashion designers; and "Modacalzado + Iberpiel Marroquineria e Textilmoda", a textile fair for ready-to-wear. The next appointment with SIMM will take place, again at the Feria de Madrid, from 15 to 17 February 2008, with the Autumn-Winter 2008/9 collections.

#### Indonesia / **Growth in footwear**

After a period of recession, the Indonesian footwear industry is experiencing a phase of recuperation: from 2002 to 2006 the production of shoes in Indonesia and its corresponding value have seen an increase equal to 10%. Last year the sector produced 504 million pairs of shoes, with a utilisation of its productive capacity equal to 70%, while for the present year the use of available resources equal to about 80% is forecast. Growth has interested both exportation, which amounted to 1.6 million dollars in 2006, as well as internal demand, for which an increase of 8% is estimated in 2007. Besides the sectors of oil and gas, the footwear sector is considered one of the primary strategic economic sectors for exports. The US is the prime buyer of Indonesian footwear: in 2006 450 million US dollars worth of footwear was exported to the US, which corresponds to a share of about 28% of the total value of exports. In second place is Germany with 132 million US dollars and a share of over 8%, followed by Great Britain, with a more or less equal share. Other buyer countries were Belgium with 122 million US dollars, Netherlands with 112 million US dollars, and Japan with 96 million US dollars. Until now the export of Indonesian footwear has been dominated by athletic footwear but the country sees a new, very large potential for expansion in the "non athletic" sector, given a diversification both of the market as well as of production. In Europe, Indonesia could profit from the anti-dumping policies adopted by the European Union with regards to imports from China and Vietnam in order to increase its own share, taking over at least 10% of the share covered by the two countries in question, for a total value of 240 million US dollars.

#### Russia / **Russians like Made in Italy**

Russian consumers are fond of made in Italy. Figures of footwear exports registered in the early five months of this year show an increase of over 30% compared with the same period in 2006, for a value of 203.47 million euros (3 millions and 483 thousand pairs). Russia ranks fourth in value in the list of outlet markets for Italian footwear.

#### France / **More visitors at Midec**

Midec edition dedicated to 2008 summer collection of footwear took place from

September 7 to 9. This edition of the event, the most important on the French market, was visited by 10,790 buyers: more than two thousands were from abroad and the remaining 8,700 were from the French market. Compared with February 2007 edition, the increase was almost 2%. Next year edition will see a strengthening of the "Image" area, with the arrival of new international designers and the development of the "Capture" area, a show in the show, with different brands of international renown.

#### China / **ACLE, CIFF and Moda Shanghai**

ACLE, CIFF and Moda Shanghai took place from September 5 to 7, 2007 in Shanghai fairground and gathered 1,193 exhibitors from 37 Countries and regions, and 23 group pavilions. ACLE confirmed its international value and focussed on technology dedicated to both the footwear and the tanning industry. In particular the Italian pavilion registered an increase of exhibitors related with the chemical industry, while the participation of finished leather tanneries decreased. On the other hand, there was a growth of Italian exhibitors who proposed wet blue to meet Chinese market's demand, as China's attention for the quality of the raw material to be processed is growing. The Chinese pavilion presented more technological proposals, though sometimes copied in terms of technology and brochures, and fashion proposals. In fact Chinese tanneries are making great strides to reach international standards bound to specific marketing aspects.

The three fairs altogether were visited by over 15,000 operators, who came mainly from the domestic market, were more prepared and more interested in quality proposals. As usual, the three exhibitions were enriched by collateral events dedicated to fashion and technology. In particular, the conference organised by Brazilian Assintecal in co-operation with China Leather and Apif Ltd on environmentally friendly supplies won a very good success.

The works were presented by three Brazilian chemical companies: Noko Quimica, Tanac and Seta. Next edition of ACLE, Ciff and Moda Shanghai will take place from September 3 to 5, 2008 at the same exhibition center in Shanghai.

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