

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The 2013 edition of the Italian Furniture Show stands under the light of the Europe wide depressive economic situation. The visitor flow on the first day, the 9th of April, was scarce in the morning, improving during the afternoon. With "kitchen" missing this year, the innovation level was relatively low. No clear tendencies could be identified, unlike other editions, where damped hinges, sliding doors everywhere and other trends were indicating directions to the retail and to consumers. Everybody seems to search its own way on the technical side, whilst cosiness and wellbeing are at the centre of the conception efforts of the manufacturers.

DESIGN TENDENCIES

Style tendencies were clearly linked to the current need for customers to create a cosy nest for themselves in a threatening and insecure environment. Therefore, the tendency of previous years of a return of wood has continued and wood in natural look is now present as a mean of contrast to natural coloured lacquers or as the main material, often in roughened looks and touches. The main colour trend is pigeon grey in various shades (white has clearly disappeared as fashion colour), in combination with strong pastel green, emerald, yellow and earthy tones with very few highlights of bright colours (yellow and green). This translates into all materials, from lacquered parts, to melamine parts, to leather and to textile. Home, sweet and de-stressing home is the motto. Italian minimalistic design (a lot of nothing nicely dressed) is still the mainstream. But the presentations are now more realistic with a certain (orderly) disorder giving the impression of lived ambiances.

TECH TRENDS

No main theme from the technical point of view, a part of the LED and OLED invasion on every piece of furniture, repeated also in the EuroLuce Exhibition, where very thin and light solutions based on the non-invasive LED technology were the main theme quasi everywhere. Plays with shadows of all kind are the other trend at EuroLuce.

A very important part of furniture solutions are open, without doors and therefore, the technology aspect was clearly downplayed. First attempts to bring more electronics and multimedia into furniture are still clumsy, only as far, as a plug somewhere to charge a phone. Handle-free solutions with one-touch mechanisms are still in the majority, with very little discrete handle and knobs solutions contradicting the trend. Drawer solutions mainly one-touch or damped and mostly with full extension. Sliding door solutions on most of the wardrobes and a few (even electrical) sliding door solutions on side-boards and mid-height cabinets were not creating a new trend either.

SUMMARY

All in all a not too inspired edition, with little food for the brains of the technology oriented suppliers in the industry. A special area dedicated to Office Furniture is still searching for a new justification to be a more important part of the consumer's budget – a lot of design and little function are on offer.

