

# *Ferretti's Asian Attaché*

*HELM caught up with Giuseppe Zecchin, Ferretti Group's Asia Pacific Area Manager, at the PIMEX boat show to discuss the Italian yachtbuilder's Asian strategy.*

**W**hat is Ferretti's strategy with regards to trying to sell yachts in Asia?

Since the beginning of the year, we have opened eight new dealerships in the Asia Pacific region. This year we are concentrating on promoting the Riva brand. Riva represents the jewel in the crown of the Ferretti Group. It's the most-known brand and it has 100 years of history. If you compared Riva to cars it would be a Bentley or a Rolls-Royce, so it's the top of the brand. The market now is mature in Asia enough to understand that, and people are aiming for a brand like Riva. At the beginning when the market was still developing, we started with other brands that were more appropriate for new buyers. But now the market is developed and Asian boat buyers want something more. It's time for Riva.

Are you more targeting Western expat buyers who live in Asia or more local Asians – Thai, Chinese, and more?

It depends on the market. Unfortunately the Thai buyers are not quite there yet so we are mainly targeting Western expat buyers. But in China, the market is all for Chinese. Same in Hong Kong, the minority is expats.

Is there any region in Asia you are particularly focusing on?

We are mainly focusing on China, for the future. Most of our new dealers are in that area. Back to our strategy, we want to appoint new dealers not only as salespeople but also to provide services.

We reckon that the infrastructure is there, but what we need is to educate and spread the nautical culture. We need to help the owner understand what he can do with the boat and help the owner enjoy the boat. It's a lifestyle. Sometimes people say, "I have the villa, I have the cars, I want something more. I see my friends buy a boat but what am I going to do with that." We have to educate dealers for the Ferretti Group so they can serve

Ferretti is promoting Riva Yachts to buyers in Asia.



## Features

the future, but PIMEX is the reality. You see outside we have two 80ft boats on the marina, and you see these sort of boats everywhere here. This is a very important market, especially for Pershing. So we are promoting our larger boats and also our extremely big superyachts from Custom Line and CRN. So we're talking 40 or 50 metres. PIMEX is one of the main shows for us for those brands.

Many companies in all sorts of industries are turning to Asia for their futures. Is the Ferretti Group doing that?

Yes, it would be unwise not to do that. Asia is the future, together with other countries in Latin America, such as Brazil and Mexico. The main driver in the future will be Asia, led by China and India. But all the countries in the surrounding area will benefit, Thailand as well.

Are there any countries in Asia, like India maybe, that you're looking at secondarily? Countries that now aren't really buying boats but that you're trying to think about for further down the line?

As you mentioned, India is one of these. The problem with India is that the infrastructure is not there now. The potential buyers in India are quite sophisticated. Most of them know boating – they have a boating background or grew up in the UK or US – so they know boating very well already. But there are few places you can moor a boat in India. Other than India, we're looking at Thailand and the local Thai market. Singapore and the surrounding area. Malaysia and Indonesia, and Australia. I think that also South Korea has a lot of potential. In the near future, possible also Japan and maybe Vietnam.



*“They are not just boats to show off, they are boats to be used and to go out to sea.”*

and operate the boat properly so the owner can enjoy it and it's a pleasant experience.

So Ferretti Group provides all the after-purchase services that a buyer might want?

Yes, through our dealers. So we need to find the right partners and the right staff, in order to provide service from the buying process to the after-sale which is the most important part.

You're based in Italy, but the region you're responsible for is Asia Pacific. How often are you out here?

Most of the time. As you can see on my name card, I have it in Chinese as well. Our main office in Asia is in Shanghai.

How important is PIMEX compared to other Asian boat shows for you?

PIMEX is very important. Like is said, China is about

What are some of the selling points that you make for Ferretti when you are in competition with other brands?

Because the Ferretti Group owns eight brands, we have a variety of products for many different sectors. I don't like to talk about competition. I can say that we provide a boat of quality design and construction, usability, and luxury. I like to focus more on the luxury aspect though. The boats do not depreciate, they keep their value. They are not just boats to show off, they are boats to be used and to go out to sea.

What are the two 80ft models you have here for PIMEX?

At PIMEX we are displaying a Pershing 80 and a Ferretti 881. In Phuket, outside the show we also have some other Pershings and Ferrettis, and we're making a couple deliveries before the end of the year as well. ■