

# THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF LAUNDERERS

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## Travelling Scholarship Scheme - Girbau SA, 9-12<sup>th</sup> April 2018

In April I had the pleasure of escorting a wonderful group of laundry professionals on a Traveling Scholarship trip to Girbau headquarters in Spain. The trip was sponsored by The Worshipful Company of Launderers and affords up and coming members of the industry to visit locations within Europe to develop their knowledge and skills base. <https://lnkd.in/eqJZKJK>.

The trip combined a tour of Girbau Group's 3 manufacturing sites based in Vic, near Barcelona, specialising in the different product lines that cover all the processes of an industrial laundry.

Girbau has three divisions to serve clients' specific requirements, the **Commercial Laundry Division** for small and medium-sized laundries, the **Vended Laundry Division** for self-service laundries and the **Industrial Laundry Division** for laundries with high-volume operational requirements. Girbau's philosophy has always been one of promoting closeness with its clients. Thus in 1989 it embarked on an internationalisation process that continues to this day. It currently has 15 commercial subsidiaries around the world, together with an extensive distribution and service network in more than 100 countries.



The Traveling Scholarship guests were invited into the new Girbau Experience Centre which opened its doors earlier this year to offer customers, suppliers and partners a place to personalise and assess their laundry business in depth. A space created for guests to discuss anything from products, energy efficiency and financing and experience Girbau's latest laundry innovations; including exploring the new Portable Laundry Unit and The GirbauMax Virtual Reality Laundry.



The traveling scholars had a number of opportunities to get involved during a visit to a small family operated commercial laundry businesses, in the centre of Barcelona, where Shyju Skariah, Technical Projects Executive at Textile Services Association received a quick training session and then got hands on with a PB5132 Ironer.



Girbau were able to tailor the trip to include particular interests for each guest. One of those being an opportunity for Shyju to have an exclusive meeting with Girbau's standards development team to discuss eco labelling and performance standards for laundry machinery.



Shyju commented "WCL Traveling Scholarship in April 2018 has been a great 'Experience Centre' in itself; highly recommended for anyone that loves professional textile care. Girbau made all provisions available for the group to make it a success with flying colours."

One of the highlights for Phil Kalli, Managing Director of Ideal Manufacturing was seeing this beautiful self-service launderette in the centre of Barcelona; which looks more like an Art Gallery than your typical UK launderette. Incredibly, the site is also the venue of choice for a number of upcoming bands! <https://lnkd.in/ecuCzAV>



Guests were also invited into 'Calendra Laundry' which is fully equipped with Girbau equipment, including a small 6 stage Tunnel washer and operates as a private company where the employees partially own the company by a voting share. It mainly processes flatwork, table linen and towels for hospitals, restaurants and hotels in the local area and is operated at approximately 80% by people with differing degrees of disability and 20% who are in charge of managing, administration, transport, accounting, social psychologists and therapists. Jo Emmerson, Marketing Manager at Girbau UK said "I still class myself as a new member of the Girbau family with only 20 months service to date, but it was great to discover this amazing employee cooperative that benefits the community in so many ways."



Jordi Bosch, International Sales Director at Girbau commented, "It was a pleasure to host the WCL Travelling Scholarship and to welcome the guests into the heart of Girbau Group. It is mutually

beneficial exercise for Girbau; talented individuals benefit from the many years industry experience that Girbau can offer, and Girbau benefits from the fresh ideas of the younger generations that are demanding more innovative laundry solutions.” The event was deemed such a success that we look forward to hosting another trip in October!

Jo Emmerson

Marketing Manager

Girbau UK

[j.emmerson@girbau.com](mailto:j.emmerson@girbau.com) [www.girbau.co.uk](http://www.girbau.co.uk)

01707 390122 / 390795