



Multi-coloured brogue patent Dr Martens.

PHOTO CREDIT: DR MARTENS

Trends for autumn-winter 2013-14

Bright coloured shoes appeared in all categories at GDS, the German fair that consolidates mainstream trends for Europe. An unending winter, with snow still causing havoc in March, had depleted stocks and winter boots, with a difference, were what many buyers were looking for. Wine-red shades predominated, followed by blues, with cognac, tans and yellows.

Rubber boots

Rubber boots keep feet dry and warm in winter. There are two main trends here: soft plain rubber or colourful prints. The soft and flexible rollable boots have a high natural rubber content, like the ones from Jade Luck of the Philippines. Bright prints and decorations are still popular with rubber-boot wearers, fun and cheerful in the rain. Desigual, the Spanish brightly decorated clothing brand, makes a big line of printed shoes and boots – with its prints perfect on rubber boots.

Decorations and prints

Bright colours, decorations and prints appear on shoes and boots for summer 2013 and also continue through to winter

Brands and designers are preparing for a bright winter. **Penny Leese** reports on some of the most eye-catching styles on show at GDS in Düsseldorf in March.

2013. There are prints, weaves and embroideries, often with an Arabic, eastern, Kilim-inspired look. Cheerful decorations make the wearer happy. Geometric and floral prints, too, are a recurring trend from mainstream brands like Dr Martens.

Warm and furry

Ugg boots may gradually be losing their sales gloss, but warm winter boots appeal to all types of consumers, men, women and kids, especially when there is snow outside the exhibition grounds, as there was during the three days of GDS in March. Warm sheepskin-looking boa or fur-top collars appear on men's and women's boots for a warm winter cosy look.

Warm and woolly felt makes feet cosy – a recurring look after



Metal wedge by New Rock.

PHOTO CREDIT: WTP

the endless winter that many Europeans have suffered this year. No longer is it enough to have some winter boots, but even the UK fashion hordes need warm footwear when it is still snowing in March.

Punky and studs

Rivets, buckles and studs are not going away. They are spiky and sharp, like on Dr Martens boots, or slim and subtle as on many more elegant flat ballerinas. Studs get brightly coloured too, and come in different shapes. Nat-2 has a collection of night-clubbing shoes with aggressive and coloured studs; made for a Munich night club called P1.

Metallic looks for winter cover all types of materials, from metallic textile shafts on winter boots, to sky-high anodised metal heels and wedges. More popular are the simple plain Chanel-type toecap in metal or metallic leather on simple ballerinas. Antique buckles, zips and D-rings act not just as function on winter boots, but also as decoration.

Sneakers

European-made sneakers are very different from those made in the Far East. The Italians, says Nicoline Van Enter, trends researcher and owner of the SLEM design school in the Netherlands, explains that the "Asians can't 'do' and 'finish'". European sneakers are becoming more and more complicated, in soft leathers with painted soles and hand-polished leathers.

Waterproof

Waterproof membranes keep feet dry, for kids and adults too. The trend for waterproof membrane footwear for adults is for it to look more normal.

Men's hand polished

Men's boots, too, are hand polished; classic styles are updated with an antique patina. Polido leather is making a

comeback, especially in the 1980's Bordeaux shades. Even simple, traditional-looking brogues have darkened, hand-polished toes.

Kids

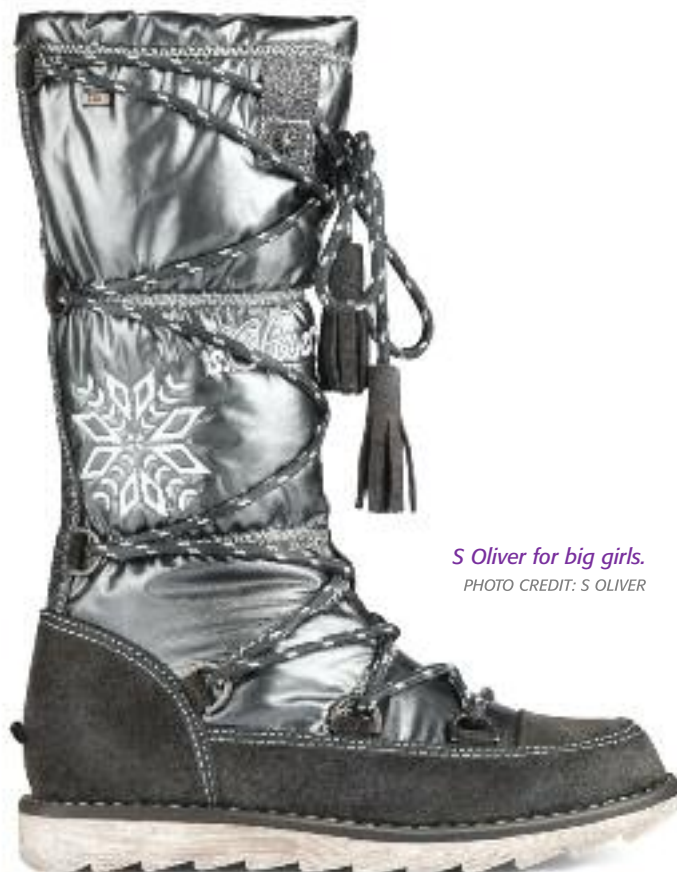
There is a big kids' shoes hall in GDS, with many brands, not just from Spain, Portugal and Italy, but also from Scandinavia (mostly made in Portugal). Styles are colourful, leather and functional. For winter, TEX membranes are a must for kid's boots for the German-speaking market (Germany, Austria, and Switzerland). But that doesn't mean boring: the boots can be colourful, feminine and glitzy too (Silver metallic from S Oliver), or in all-over real leather with wool lining, like Bundgaard, made in Portugal.

Gimmicks

There are often fun accessories and gimmicks to be seen at GDS. Kool Laces are elastic laces that are fixed in place, in bright colours. They are made from stretch rubber elastic, so there is no need to tie a bow.

Something that attracted a great deal of interest at the fair was the offering of shoe photography systems. A "Pack Shot Booth" can take photographs of a rotating shoe on a white table at all angles using stop-motion photography. Since the unit is closed, the photography can be done in-house, with no longer any need to call in a professional photographer for catalogue or e-shop photos. The photos can be used directly, so there is no need to send them away to Bangladesh in the evening for the backgrounds to be cleaned up, ready for use in Europe the next morning. Some systems also photograph in the round, taking photos of the top and bottom of the shoes – an ideal system for web selling.

The next GDS is September 11-13. 



S Oliver for big girls.

PHOTO CREDIT: S OLIVER