



Shakira's Fundación "Pies Descalzos" and Costa Cruises together for the construction of a school in Colombia

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In Barcelona Shakira and Neil Palomba, President of Costa Cruises, announced the official start of the project with a symbolic "First brick" delivery ceremony. The school will be built in Cartagena (Colombia), with scheduled delivery in June 2019, providing education and support to 1,300 local students and the entire close communities involved.

Genoa, 18 October 2017 – International superstar **Shakira** and [Costa Cruises](#) top management celebrated in Barcelona the official start of the donation project to the [Fundación Pies Descalzos](#) for the construction of a school in Colombia. The project is aimed at helping local children and their families and providing a quality education for disadvantaged children as well as a community center for their families.

During the presentation event, Neil Palomba, President of Costa Cruises, delivered the first stone of the school, a brick that represent the "Brick of Happiness", to Shakira to symbolize the beginning of the project. The construction will start in Cartagena in 2018 when the brick will arrive on board a Costa cruise ship after a journey from Barcelona to Cartagena. During the sailing both Costa ship's crew and guests will have the chance to leave a dedication and a special message.

The new school will be built in Cartagena between the districts "Ciudad del Bicentenario" and "Villa de Aranjuez", and is scheduled for delivery in June 2019, providing education and support to 1,300 local students from 6 to 18 years. It will follow the "public quality education" model provided by the Fundación Pies Descalzos, including also nutrition and health programs and special training activities for parents and the community at large. The center will be equipped with state of the art facilities, such as library, auditorium, dininghall, sports areas, laboratories (professional development, scientific and technological), areas dedicated to early childhood, and more than 40 classrooms and halls.

Fundación Pies Descalzos is a Colombian NGO (non-governmental organization) founded by international artist Shakira in 1997 with the main objective to promote quality public education for children in vulnerable situation in Colombia.

The strong relation between Costa Cruises and Shakira, testimonial of the Italian brand for the "Happiness Squared" campaign since 2015, includes also the active participation of Costa to the philanthropic program set up by the Foundation she created.

"I'm so happy to know that a company like Costa Cruises understands the value of receiving a high-quality education in order to promote a more productive society. - said Shakira - I'm looking forward to working with them to guarantee access to a top-quality education and state of the art facilities to open a school for 1,300 children in Cartagena in my native Colombia".

"As a strong company operating worldwide we have the duty and the opportunity to support the communities in the different continents – said Neil Palomba, Costa Cruises President - Starting late 2014 we established the Costa Crociere Foundation as the natural evolvement of the social and environmental footprint Costa Cruises has carried on over the years. Today our engagement towards the Fundación Pies Descalzos allows us to provide help to children and their families also in South America".

This donation initiative fits perfectly into the context of community support activities on the different continents that Costa already conducts through its Costa Crociere Foundation. Costa sustains Mercy Ships organization for the delivery of essential medical services in Africa; in Asia the Costa Crociere Foundation provides its financial support for the education of 500 disadvantaged children in the Philippines; and in Europe the Foundation is strongly engaged in promoting the social and environmental betterment of the communities through 21 projects. Earlier this year, for instance, a kindergarten for 125 children affected by the earthquake in central Italy has been inaugurated in Norcia and is now fully operating thanks to the support of Costa and its Foundation.

[Costa Cruises](#) is an Italian company that is part of Carnival Corporation & plc, the largest cruise group in the world. For 69 years the ships of the Costa fleet have been travelling the world's seas offering hospitality and authentic Italian style holidays, distinguished by exquisite food, fine wines, unique shopping experiences, and a comprehensive selection of famous Italian brands. Currently the Costa fleet has 15 ships in service, all flying the Italian flag. Two new latest generation vessels are expected in 2019 and 2021. They will be fuelled by liquefied natural gas (LNG), the world's "cleanest fossil fuel", and a real environmental innovation. Costa represents Italian excellence, and every day surpasses the expectations of its guests with a unique and unforgettable holiday experience. It does this thanks to the approximately 19,000 employees around the world who work to provide the best of Italy on board, with 140 different routes, 250 destinations and 60 ports of embarkation.

About Shakira - Over the course of her career, Colombian singer-songwriter and GRAMMY® winner Shakira has sold over 60 million records worldwide and has won numerous awards including two GRAMMYs®, eight Latin GRAMMYs®, and several World Music Awards, American Music Awards and Billboard Music Awards, to name a few. She is the only artist from South America to have a number one song in the US, and has had four of the 20 top-selling hits of the last decade. At the age of 18, she founded the Pies Descalzos (Barefoot) Foundation which currently provides education and nutrition to over six thousand impoverished children in Colombia and is expanding its work to other countries, including newly launched projects in Haiti and South Africa. In October 2011, Shakira was named a member of President Obama's Advisory Commission on Educational

Excellence for Hispanics. Shakira served as coach on the 4th and 6th season of "The Voice," NBC's hit reality vocal competition series that searches for the nation's best voice. Her tenth studio album "Shakira" was released in 2014, featuring hits such as "Can't Remember to Forget You," with Rihanna and "La La La (Brazil 2014)" which she performed at the finals of Fifa's World Cup 2014 in Brazil. In 2016, she starred as Gazelle in Disney's record-breaking film "Zootopia," as well as contributing to its soundtrack with "Try Everything". In June, she launched "La Bicicleta" with fellow Colombian artist Carlos Vives, which broke records in Colombia when it remained #1 for 18 consecutive weeks and spent 13 weeks at #1 in Spain, as well as reaching #1 on US Latin iTunes. The video, shot in Shakira and Carlos's hometowns of Barranquilla and Santa Marta, respectively, has over one billion views on Vevo to date. It was followed up by the seductive track "Chantaje" (Blackmail) feat. Maluma. With over 1.8 billion views on YouTube, it is one of the platform's biggest Latin hits in history. It also reached #1 on the "Latin Airplay" chart and was certified Double Platinum in Spain. Following "Chantaje," the music video for "Déjà vu" has reached over 251M views, "Me Enamoré," co-directed by Shakira has over 325M views, and her most recently released video, "Perro Fiel" featuring Nicky Jam, is already at 50 million views. Shakira recently released her 11th studio album, "El Dorado" which was recorded primarily in Spanish. Upon release, the album charted #1 on iTunes in 37 countries.

For further information:

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