Press release

Press release from RIKA Innovative Ofentechnik

European pellet stove pioneer RIKA Innovative Ofentechnik celebrates 75 years

Micheldorf, 24 June 2026 – What began in 1951 as a small metalworking shop in Kirchdorf an der Krems is now an international leader in the design and development of premium wood-burning, pellet and combi stoves. In 2026, RIKA Innovative Ofentechnik celebrates its 75th anniversary and looks back on the milestones that shaped the family business.

From metalworking shop to European market leader

Karl Riener Sr founded RIKA in 1951 in a workshop measuring just 60 m². The business initially made metal fittings such as railings and latches for truck sideboards. It went on to supply leading Austrian companies, build specialist equipment for international shooting competitions and manufacture telephone boxes for the Austrian postal service.

A vision for the modern wood-burning stove

In the 1980s, the Riener family saw the potential of modern wood-burning stoves, then found mainly in Scandinavia. In 1982, RIKA launched its first wood-burning stove, setting the course for the business it is today.

Inspired by his travels in the United States, Karl Riener soon developed a “European” pellet stove that set a much higher standard for quality and ease of use. RIKA became the European market leader in pellet stoves and helped establish wood pellets as a sustainable fuel across Europe. “My father was always a visionary and a pioneer, long before people talked about sustainability,” says his son Stefan Riener, who joined the company in 2023. “He paved the way for a whole new way of heating.”

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Overcoming a crisis and shaping the future

In the late 1990s, financial irregularities at a distribution partner threatened RIKA's survival. Through considerable personal commitment, the business found a new direction, expanded its facilities and grew internationally. RIKA went on to reach a series of technological milestones, from online stove control to voice control. Its achievements earned it the prestigious Energy Globe Award, among other honours.

The third generation takes the lead

Karl Philipp Riener joined RIKA in 2019, followed by his brother Stefan in 2023, bringing a third generation into the company's management. Both bring international experience and share a strong attachment to their family's history and its roots in Upper Austria. "I always knew I wanted to carry on the family business," says Karl Philipp Riener. "The knowledge and experience built up over decades are invaluable." His brother Stefan also sees the company's future in building on that tradition. "I grew up with RIKA and our stoves. I wanted to bring home what I'd learned abroad, with great respect for what had already been built."

International growth and a first step outdoors

In recent years, RIKA has focused on developing its brand and growing internationally. In 2025, the company introduced its first outdoor heating product, the TERRA pellet patio heater. It also unveiled new technologies for the next generation of stoves.

Looking ahead, true to its roots

Seventy-five years on, RIKA remains true to its values of Austrian craftsmanship, high quality, lasting innovation and long-term thinking. As Karl Philipp Riener puts it, "We keep asking what else a stove can be. Indoors or out, it can be a piece of furniture, a design object or a source of warmth that makes you feel at home. There are so many possibilities." RIKA Innovative Ofentechnik looks to the future with confidence. The spark that first lit this Upper Austrian family business now burns across generations.

Read the full company story in 75 years of RIKA: From family business to innovation leader.

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Karl Philipp, Karl and Stefan Riener



Stefan, Karl and Karl Philipp Riener

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About RIKA
RIKA Innovative Ofentechnik GmbH is one of the leading manufacturers of high-quality wood-burning stoves and the European market leader in pellet stoves. Founded in 1951 in Micheldorf, Upper Austria, the family business is run by Karl Riener and his son Karl Philipp Riener. At the heart of RIKA's passion for stoves is the desire to bring warmth and comfort to everyday life. Its ambition to set new standards in quality, innovation and design has shaped both the form and function of its stoves. Today, the range includes wood-burning, pellet and combi stoves as well as designer fireplaces. Decades of experience in stove manufacturing and innovations such as Europe's first pellet stove have earned RIKA its reputation as an industry pioneer. Through its "Green Innovation" label, RIKA voluntarily commits to meeting all requirements for sustainability certification under the most stringent international guidelines. Its honours include the Energy Globe Award, the world's foremost environmental award. RIKA now employs more than 300 people and has an international dealer network.

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