150 years on, Spain and Japan strengthen their commitment to one another

To mark the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Spain, Spain Synergy Media Specialists (SMS) interviewed Masashi Mizukami, the Japanese Ambassador to Spain.

How are you celebrating your time in Spain so far? What has been the most enjoyable Spanish cultural experience?

I am enjoying my time in Spain greatly since arriving and I am very happy to be here. The beautiful cities and sites across Spain is breathtaking. The Spanish people have been especially kind and welcoming. The culture and customs are very different from other cultures and there is a lot to learn and experience. I hope to return to the ambassador of Japan to Spain after my time here.

How would you describe the current relationship between Japan and Spain in terms of trade, economy and culture?

There are a number of Japanese companies active in the Spanish market and this number is expected to increase in the future. In terms of trade, Japan and Spain are major trading partners, with Spain being a significant market for Japanese exports. The exchange of goods and services is strong, with exports from Japan to Spain including machinery, electronics, and automobiles. Spain exports to Japan include wine, olive oil, and other agricultural products. In terms of culture, Japan and Spain have a long history of cultural exchange, with Japanese art, music, and literature being popular in Spain. Similarly, Spanish cuisine and architecture are also popular in Japan.

What steps can be taken to further strengthen ties between Spain and Japan?

Steps that can be taken include increasing business and cultural exchanges, promoting tourism, enhancing cooperation in research and development, and strengthening political dialogue. It is important to continue to promote mutual understanding and respect for each other’s cultures, as well as to foster economic partnerships for mutual benefit.

As Spain and Japan mark 150 years of relations, what role is the embassy playing to help celebrate this anniversary?

Several hundred events are being organized to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Spain. Events are being organized directly by the embassy, including a fashion show, an art exhibition, and a cultural festival. Additionally, the Japanese Embassy in Tokyo is also organizing events such as the 150th anniversary of bilateral trade and cultural exchange in Japan.

What message do you have for our readers regarding the 150th year celebrations and the future of the Spain-Japan relationship?

I would like to see more Japanese visitors experience Spain and, likewise, more Spanish visitors experience Japan. We want to promote understanding and appreciation of each other’s cultures and to continue to strengthen the ties between Japan and Spain.

How do you see the current relationship between Spain and Japan developing?

The current relationship between Spain and Japan is strong and growing. Spain is an important market for Japanese exports, and Japan is a key investor in Spain. In terms of culture, there is a growing interest in Japanese cuisine, art, and literature in Spain. The future relationship between the two countries is likely to continue to be characterized by strong economic and cultural exchanges.

HiKOKI: A brand-new name for Hitachi Power Tools

As a global leader in the professional power tool industry, HIKOKI Power Tools, headquartered in Osaka (formerly Hitachi Koki), which was renamed HiKOKI in 2018 when the brand name was dropped in Japan, is at the forefront of technological innovation. Following the acquisition of the brand by the Koki Group in 2018, HiKOKI is derived from the English word “high,” and the Japanese word “koki,” meaning “industrial machines.”

Following the headquarter relocation of the brand, the sales company formerly known as “Hitachi Power Tools” was renamed “HiKOKI Power Tools Iberica.” HiKOKI Power Tools Iberica has a strong sales network across Spain and Portugal and is backed by the Koki Group’s established technology and research and development activities. The company was built through face-to-face and one-on-one sales operations over the last 28 years. “We keep these methods to strengthen our relationships with customers and partners, delivering innovative products to the traditional and professional segment,” says Jose Guzman, Commercial Director and Masaya Shira, General Director of HiKOKI Power Tools Iberica.

Jose Guzman, Commercial Director and Masaya Shira, General Director of HiKOKI Power Tools Iberica.

HiKOKI MV 520 18V, one of the new face-to-face and one-on-one sales models.

After Chile, France and India, Spain is the fourth largest market in terms of volume of power tools. The demand for power tools in Spain is driven by the construction and real estate sectors, as well as the automotive and manufacturing industries. HiKOKI has a strong presence in the Spanish market, with a network of authorized dealers and service centers across the country. The company’s focus is on providing high-quality, high-performance power tools that are designed for professionals in the construction, automotive, and manufacturing industries. HiKOKI’s MV 520 18V, which was launched in 2018, is one of the new face-to-face and one-on-one sales models.

José Guzman, Commercial Director and Masaya Shira, General Director of HiKOKI Power Tools Iberica.

Felix Solis Avantis raises a glass to Japan’s healthy wine market

In 2014, Japanese wine magazine WANDSZ! has regularly ranked Felix Solis Avantis as a number one supplier to Japan. Felix Solis Avantis’ Wine Club was one of the first in Japan. Felix Solis Avantis’ wine is also widely recognized by the world’s most exclusive wine list: the Wine Spectator’s “Top 100 Wines of the World” and the Wine Advocate’s “Top 100 Wines of the World”.

Felix Solis Avantis is a winery in Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Spain, that produces high-quality wines in the traditional style of Jerez Sherry. The winery was recently recognized as the world’s largest sherry producer by the Guinness World Records. Felix Solis Avantis’ wines are available in Japan through a number of distributors and retailers, including Hachinohe Sake and Wine, and are marketed under the brand name “Felix Solis Avantis”.

Felix Solis Avantis’ wine is known for its exceptional quality and craftsmanship, with a focus on using traditional techniques to produce wines with a depth of flavor and complexity. The winery’s commitment to sustainability and responsible farming practices is also recognized by various organizations and certifications. Felix Solis Avantis’ wines are enjoyed by wine enthusiasts around the world, and the winery continues to innovate and expand its offerings to meet the changing tastes and preferences of consumers.

How has the current relationship between Spain and Japan developed over the past 150 years?

Spain and Japan have had a long and evolving relationship over the past 150 years. Initially, Japan was seen as a relatively unknown and mysterious country to Spaniards, with few direct economic or cultural ties. However, over time, as Spain saw Japan as a potential trading partner and as a source of inspiration for its own modernization efforts, relationships began to develop. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Japan began to gain recognition as a rising power, and Spain saw an opportunity to expand its presence in Asia. This led to increased trade and cultural exchanges between the two countries.

In the mid-20th century, the relationship between Spain and Japan experienced a significant shift. Spain was increasingly focused on developing its own economy and modernizing its society, while Japan was also undergoing rapid development and modernization. This led to closer economic cooperation and political engagement, with Japan becoming a key player in the global economy and Spain looking to Japan as a model for industrialization and economic growth. Today, the relationship between Spain and Japan is characterized by mutual respect and a shared commitment to fostering economic, cultural, and political ties.

What steps can be taken to further strengthen the current relationship between Spain and Japan?

Several steps can be taken to further strengthen the current relationship between Spain and Japan. These include increasing economic cooperation, promoting cultural exchange, and deepening political dialogue. By working together to address common challenges and to seize new opportunities, Spain and Japan can continue to build on their strong foundation and realize the full potential of their relationship.