



# 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, Synergy Media Specialists (SMS) interviewed Masashi Mizukami, the Japanese Ambassador to Spain.

**How have you enjoyed your time in Spain so far? What has been your most enjoyable Spanish cultural experience?**

I am enjoying my time in Spain greatly since arriving and I am very happy to be here. The country's rich history and the diversity found in Spanish culture are outstanding; the historical influences of Christians and Muslims are noteworthy and the beautiful nature found across Spain is breathtaking. Throughout history, Spanish people have been open and welcoming to other cultures and there is a great amount of interest in Japanese culture. As the ambassador of Japan to Spain, I am very happy to be 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 they are achieving success here in Spain. In terms of economic activities, many Japanese companies are working in partnership with Spanish companies. Japanese companies un-

derstand the requirements of managing large projects and are very active in infrastructure development. Following the tsunami in Japan and the large construction projects being undertaken for the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo, the Japanese domestic construction sector is very strong. Today, many Japanese

businesses are strengthening their partnerships with their Spanish counterparts and are working on major infrastructure projects in third countries. Spanish people are very interested in Japanese culture and engage in various activities and events. As ambassador, I appreciate the interest being shown in Japanese culture and continue to support these efforts to bring Spain and Japan closer together.

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

Several hundred events are being organized to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Spain. Several events are being organized directly by the embassy, including a fashion show by Junko Koshino and performances by the acclaimed kabuki group Heisei Nakamura. In addition, the Spanish Embassy in Japan is also hosting events.

**What steps can be taken to further strengthen the ties between Spain and Japan and what opportunities will be created by closer ties?**

I have no doubt many Spanish people have a strong interest in Japan, and today there are also many Japanese people living in Spain. We want to encourage Spanish visitors to Japan to experience the country and see the many attractions found across Japan. I am confident our relationship will continue over time and become deeper as both sides strengthen their commitment to one another.

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

I would like to see more Japanese visitors experience Spain and, likewise, we invite Spanish visitors to spend time in Japan. The events marking the 150th anniversary of bilateral ties are sure to bring our two countries closer together. ♦



The Port of Barcelona is playing a leading role in further strengthening Spain-Japan ties.

## The Port of Barcelona: Connecting Spain and Japan

In addition to Spain and Japan celebrating their 150th anniversary of diplomatic ties this year, the Port of Barcelona is celebrating 150 years as Spain's leading combined container, cruise and car-carrier port.

Today, the Port of Barcelona has an international reputation as an integrated logistics hub where port, airport and logistics facilities are available. The port's location provides compa-

Shipping and logistics is a trust-based business and by establishing strong partnerships, delivering quality services and focusing on connectivity, the Port of Barcelona has become a reputable partner for Japan.

**Japan**  
"Catalonia has successfully attracted 70 percent of Japanese direct investment into Spain," states Port of Barcelona President, Mercè Conesa. "The Port of Bar-

celona is playing a leading role in further strengthening Spain-Japan ties." The Port of Barcelona has had a presence in Japan through a permanent representative for a quarter of a century and its ties to the Japanese business community continue to thrive.

By developing relationships with Japanese origi-



Mercè Conesa, President of The Port of Barcelona

nies with access to a market of 400 million consumers in less than 48 hours through direct rail services into Europe.

The Port of Barcelona has become a leading Spanish, European and international maritime and logistics center, and in terms of value of goods, the port is No. 1 in Spain.

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**BARCELOC: Barcelona European Logistics Center**

Through BARCELOC, the Port of Barcelona and local administrations are positioning the Barcelona area as a logistics hub for leading Japanese companies, by offering favorable tax incentives, industrial specialization and logistics partnerships. BARCELOC is a business-oriented public service, offering customized and tailor-made guidance on Japan's potential investments in Barcelona. The service is free of charge and rendered neutrally and confidentially. ♦  
www.portdebarcelona.cat



## HiKOKI: A brand-new name for Hitachi Power Tools

As a global leader in the professional power tool industry, HiKOKI Power Tools, headquartered in Japan (formerly Hitachi Koki), has been at the forefront of product innovation and design since 1948. 2018 marks the company's 70th anniversary.

Hitachi Koki opened up a new chapter in October 2018 when the brand name Hitachi became HiKOKI. Pronounced "hai-koh-key," HiKOKI is derived from the English word "high" and the Japanese term "koki," meaning "industrial machines."

Following the headquarters' changing of the brand name, the sales company located in Barcelona, Spain was renamed HiKOKI Power Tools Iberica.



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

face and one-on-one sales operations over the last 28 years.

"We keep these methods to strengthen our relationships with customers and expand our reputation for delivering innovative prod-

ucts such as the cordless MV (MultiVolt) series, and AC brushless hammers," said Jose Guzman, commercial director. "Now we are HiKOKI," said Masaya Shirai, general director. "We are in a

strong position to grow our business and enhance the trust-based relationships that we have developed under the Hitachi brand. As HiKOKI, we will strengthen our core business to be even closer to professional

users and offer power tools that help them and make their jobs easier."

**An alliance with Spanish football team SD Eibar**

Recognizing the Spanish passion for football, HiKOKI Power Tools Iberica sponsors SD Eibar. The team plays in the LaLiga First division and is based in Eibar in the Basque region of northern Spain.

With this alliance, the HiKOKI logo can be seen on the sleeve of each player's shirt, in the stadium, in training camps and on the scoreboard during matches.

"We are very excited to have this great opportunity to launch our new brand and logo through the networks associated with Spanish football," concluded Shirai. ♦

www.hikoki-powertools.es  
www.koki-holdings.co.jp  
www.koki-holdings.com  
www.sdeibar.com/en



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

Founded in 1952 by Felix Solis Fernandez, Felix Solis Avantis is recognized internationally as an award-winning, high-quality and competitive Spanish wine producer.

The winery was recently awarded sixth place in the Top 100 Best Wineries of the World by the World Ranking of Wines and Spirits and second place in the Best Wineries of Spain category.

"Sixth place in the world recognizes our philosophy, which is to make excellent

wines that are also good value for money," said Felix Solis Ramos, director of export and marketing. "The enjoyment of good wines does not have to be reserved for the few."

One of the most relevant figures in the world of wine, James Suckling, recently awarded 93 points to Felix Solis Avantis' Vina Albali Gran Reserva Seleccion Privada 2011. The excellent score reflects the extraordinary quality of one of the most exclusive Felix Solis Avantis wines.

After Chile, France and Italy, Spain is the fourth-largest wine supplier to Japan. With a growing number of Spanish bars and restaurants opening in Tokyo and other cities, more Spanish wine is being consumed in Japan.

Felix Solis Avantis has sold wine in the Japanese market for many years, and by 2015, the winery was selling 5.4 million bottles to Japan; notably Vina Albali and Los Molinos.

The winery opened a Tokyo office in 2007, and since



The enjoyment of good wines does not have to be reserved for the few.

2014 Japanese wine magazine WANDS has regularly ranked Felix Solis Avantis as a number one supplier to Japan.

In the last contest of the Japan Wine Challenge, Centola 2017 received a gold medal while Vina Albali Crianza 2015, Vina Albali Gran Reserva Seleccion Privada 2012 and Pul-

po 2017 all received silver medals.

Having tasted success in Japan, the country will remain an important market for Felix Solis Avantis wines for years to come. ♦  
www.felixsolisavantis.com



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## Japanese brands meet Spanish design

"The Japanese market is important for us," said Pablo Rubio Ordás, CEO and founder of branding and digital agency Erretres.

"In 2013 we made a strategic decision to work with Asian clients, specifically in Japan, and help Japanese companies compete internationally. We executed hands-on research to extract valuable insights when we worked with EKO Instruments and SIDO."

"After initiating a rebranding for EKO Instruments to redefine the company's values, reposition the brand globally and encourage international expansion, their business grew by 80 percent in Europe. For SIDO, we delivered rebranding and repackaging solutions that led to the company successfully reaching a younger demographic."

"We also worked with Hitachi Spain to develop publishing and communication solutions for their air conditioning division and with NTT Data, through Everis, to create a strategy, branding initiative and website for their new international consultancy agency."

"Communication in Japan often focuses on the



functional benefits of the products rather than the 'human factor.' Through our expertise, we balance out the functionality and emotion to create designs with impact. We launched a series of events 'Japanese Technology Meets Spanish Design,' one of which was incorporated into the latest 'Erretres Open Lab' (EOL), a platform for professionals to discuss and synthesize great ideas."

"We have held several conferences in Japan in the

past, and our first international EOL event was held in Tokyo in September. We have also been communicating in Japanese through our website and social media platforms. We intend to accelerate our activities in the Japanese market and share our exciting adventures in Japan," Ordás said. ♦  
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