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VIRTUAL CULTURE BULLETIN

EDITION DEDICATED TO CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

EMIRATI CULTURE: A PORTRAIT THAT UNITES
AUTHENTICITY AND MODERNITY

AMBASSADOR IBRAHIM SALEM HUMAID ALI ALALAWI

THE SUCCESSFUL PERUVIAN
PARTICIPATION IN EXPO DUBAI 2020

MINISTER MARCO ANTONIO SANTIVÁÑEZ PIMENTEL

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AS A BRIDGE
BETWEEN PERU AND THE UNITED ARAB
EMIRATES

THIRD SECRETARY CARLA BENDEZÚ PAJUELO

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*SECOND SECRETARY PEDRO JAVIER SEDANO
BÉJAR*

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EMIRATI CULTURE: A PORTRAIT THAT UNITES AUTHENTICITY AND MODERNITY

H.E. EMBAJADOR IBRAHIM SALEM HUMAID ALI ALALAWI
AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES TO PERU

The United Arab Emirates is a country that shines with vibrant diversity, combining its ancient Arab and Islamic heritage with an openness to the cultures of the world. In the Emirates, modern skyscrapers coexist with traditional markets, and authentic traditional arts intertwine with major and sophisticated international exhibitions, creating a unique cultural identity that has become a source of inspiration and admiration around the globe.

Identity and Languages

The Arabic language is the cornerstone of national identity, while English is widely spoken, as the United Arab Emirates is home to more than 200 nationalities, in addition to its geographical location and economic openness. This linguistic and cultural diversity has enabled the UAE to become a



AL AYYALA DANCE, AN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE BY UNESCO

bridge between East and West, as well as a global platform for cultural dialogue.

Heritage and Popular Identity

Emirati folklore is a repository of values and customs passed down through generations.

- **Folk Arts:** The most prominent is the Al Ayyala dance, declared Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 2014, symbolizing unity and dignity.
- **Councils known as “Majlis”:** The Emirati Majlis is considered cultural heritage on the UNESCO list since 2015, as it embodies the values of communication and community dialogue.
- **Traditional Clothing:** It reflects pride in identity. Men wear the white kandura and the bisht on special occasions, while women wear the black abaya and the shayla as symbols of authenticity and elegance.

Emirati Customs and Gastronomy

Hospitality remains a deeply rooted value in society. Visitors are always welcomed with Arabic coffee and dates. Family gatherings

and the Majlis are celebrated as spaces of communication.

The community also celebrates religious and national holidays with rituals that foster a spirit of solidarity and cohesion.

Emirati cuisine is rich in traditional dishes such as harees, thareed, qaymat, and balalit, which are often offered to visitors as symbols of generosity and hospitality.

Artistic and Cultural Events

Emirati culture is not limited to preserving heritage; it has expanded to become a global platform for creativity and the arts:

- **Fine Arts:** The UAE hosts major exhibitions such as Art Dubai and the Sharjah Biennial, making the country a destination for artists and collectors from around the world.
- **Music and Contemporary Arts:** The country attracts international music festivals and classical concerts, such as the Abu Dhabi Music Festival.
- **Cinema:** The Dubai International Film Festival has helped position the UAE on the global cinematic map, while Abu Dhabi continues supporting international film production by attracting major producers.
- **Museums and Cultural Centers:** The Louvre Abu Dhabi, Dubai's Etihad Museum, and Expo 2020 Dubai are living examples of cultural convergence, affirming the UAE's role as a platform for human dialogue.



EMIRATI MAJLIS, A UNESCO CULTURAL HERITAGE SINCE 2015

- **Heritage Festivals:** The Sheikh Zayed Heritage Festival and the Sharjah International Book Fair continue to be prominent events that reflect the richness and depth of the UAE's cultural landscape.

Tolerance and Coexistence

The UAE embodies a global message of tolerance and coexistence. The Abrahamic Family House in Abu Dhabi is a symbol of this vision, bringing together Muslims, Christians, and Jews under one roof in an unprecedented cultural experience. The celebration of events such as the International Day for Tolerance reflects the country's commitment to peace and the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

Balance Between Authenticity and Modernity

Despite its vast urban and technological development, the UAE has not abandoned its cultural roots. Its wise leadership has balanced the preservation of cultural heritage with modernization, making culture

one of the main pillars of the UAE 2071 objectives. This approach has turned the Emirati identity into a global reference point, demonstrating that progress does not mean abandoning authenticity; instead, it enriches it and transforms it into a source of inspiration for future generations.

Conclusion

Emirati culture is a complete canvas of desert and sea values, folk arts and global modernity, Arab hospitality and human diversity. It is the story of a nation that has managed to transform its past into a strength for the present and to turn its present into a platform for the future. Today, the UAE is not only a global economic hub, but also a home for culture, arts, and tolerance, a message of civilization that enriches



the human landscape and invites the world to a partnership based on understanding and shared creativity.



SHEIKH ZAYED FESTIVAL IN ABU DHABI



The Burj Khalifa is the tallest building in the world, standing at 828 meters and located in Dubai. Inaugurated in 2010. Its design, inspired by the Hymenocallis flower, has made it an icon of the United Arab Emirates' modernization.



CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN PERU AND THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

THIRD SECRETARY CARLA BENDEZÚ PAJUELO
EMBASSY OF PERU IN ABU DHABI

In an increasingly interdependent world, cultural diplomacy has become a fundamental pillar of contemporary foreign policy. Through culture, countries not only project their identity and values, but also build bonds of trust, understanding, and cooperation. In the case of Peru and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), two nations geographically distant but close in development aspirations, culture has become an effective bridge that fosters mutual understanding and enables sustainable collaboration.

Since the opening of the Embassy of Peru in Abu Dhabi in 2025, the bilateral relationship has gained new institutional momentum (Agencia Andina, 2025). This achievement not only represents political and economic progress, but also a strategic opportunity to project Peru's cultural identity on a global stage in constant transformation. In parallel, the Emirates have strengthened their cultural diplomacy ecosystem; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs now has a specialized office for cultural and public diplomacy, responsible for promoting intercultural dialogue and cooperation through art, education, and innovation (UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2025). This framework offers favorable conditions for Peru to integrate its heritage and creativity with high-impact cultural platforms.



SPEECH BY AMBASSADOR ALBERTO FARJE DURING THE INAUGURATION OF THE EMBASSY OF PERU IN ABU DHABI

Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power

Cultural diplomacy operates at the intersection of strategic interests and symbolic exchange. Unlike public diplomacy, which seeks to communicate policies or persuade, cultural diplomacy prioritizes experience, creation, and the recognition of diversity (Nye, 2004). In this sense, Peru holds a cultural repertoire that allows it to exercise what Joseph Nye coins *soft power*, the ability to attract and influence without coercion.

In the UAE, soft power materializes through internationally renowned institutions such as the Louvre Abu Dhabi, the Etihad Museum, and the Sharjah Art Foundation, which receive millions of visitors each year. According to the Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism, the Louvre Abu Dhabi alone registered more than 1.2 million visitors in 2023 (DCT Abu Dhabi, 2024).

For Peru, this cultural ecosystem opens a window of collaboration where artistic and gastronomic exchange can position the country as a reference in cultural diversity and sustainable creativity.

The Abu Dhabi Festival, organized by the Abu Dhabi Music & Arts Foundation (ADMAF), welcomed more than 20,000 attendees in its 2023 edition and expanded its “Global Stage” program to 12 countries, including partnerships with Latin American embassies (Zawya, 2023; ADMAF, 2025). These spaces constitute ideal platforms for the dissemination of Peruvian art and the promotion of sustained cultural exchanges.

Gastronomy as a Tool for Intercultural Dialogue

Peruvian gastronomy is, without a doubt, one of the most powerful tools of cultural diplomacy. It has been recognized as Cultural Heritage of the Americas by the OAS and awarded multiple times at the *World Travel Awards*, which explains its notable global expansion: today there are over 500 Peruvian restaurants in more than 60 countries (PROMPERÚ, 2023).

During Expo 2020 Dubai, the Peru Pavilion integrated gastronomy as a central element of its cultural narrative.



THE PERU PAVILION AT EXPO DUBAI 2020

More than 1.7 million visitors learned about Peruvian cuisine through demonstrations, tastings, and workshops (Business Wire, 2022a; BIE, 2023). This event made it possible to measure the impact of Peruvian gastronomic soft power, as participation increased exports of Peruvian gourmet products to the Gulf by 35% the following year (PROMPERÚ, 2023).

Retail diplomacy initiatives have been another fundamental pillar. The “Taste of Peru” campaign, in collaboration with LuLu Group—the UAE’s leading supermarket chain—enabled the introduction of 40 new Peruvian products into the Emirati market (PROMPERÚ, 2022). In November 2025, with the opening of the Embassy of Peru in Abu Dhabi, the event Taste of Peru resumed its name as a comprehensive multi-gastronomic and cultural experience.



THE “TASTE OF PERU” EVENT, ORGANIZED BY THE LULU GROUP AND PROMPERÚ DUBAI, SEEKS TO BOOST THE IMPORT OF PERUVIAN PRODUCTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF.

This new edition not only highlights the excellence of Peruvian cuisine, but also incorporates cultural expressions such as art exhibitions, displays of traditional textiles, and pisco, anticucho, and coffee tastings. The objective is to offer the public a holistic experience that combines flavor, art, and heritage, and to establish its institutionalization as a permanent annual event in the cultural calendar of the United Arab Emirates.

Likewise, comparing Peruvian and Emirati cuisine reveals how two traditions geographically distant can share a similar spirit. In both cases, the use of spices and seasonings plays a central role: cardamom, cinnamon, and saffron in the Emirates evoke the legacy of ancient spice routes, while in Peru, ají amarillo, cumin, and pepper give life to dishes such as *arroz con pollo* or *ají de gallina*. These similarities show that both Peruvian and Arab cuisines understand flavor as a profound, multisensory experience, where aromatic and spicy notes combine to express identity and territory.

Similarly, both traditions understand food as a social and symbolic act. During Ramadan banquets or Iftar gatherings in the Emirates, as in Peruvian pachamancas or patronal festivals, the table becomes a space of encounter and community. This collective dimension of gastronomy reflects a shared value: food not only nourishes, but also celebrates family unity and belonging. Thus, gastronomic diplomacy between Peru and the UAE

draws not only from flavor diversity, but from a shared vision of cuisine as a vehicle of hospitality, identity, and cultural dialogue.

Music and Dance

Music and dance form another key dimension of cultural diplomacy. Peruvian folklore, with its diversity of rhythms, instruments, and styles, is an expression of mestizaje and cultural resilience. During Expo 2020 Dubai, the National Folkloric Ballet of Peru offered a series of performances featuring marinera, huayno, and festejo, drawing applause from audiences of more than 10,000 attendees over the various program days (Business Wire, 2022b). These performances served as a showcase of Peruvian identity and a space for dialogue with Arab musical traditions.

Traditional Peruvian music, in its diversity, is a vehicle of memory and identity. According to Chasqui (2023), andean instruments such as the quena, charango, and zampoña not only evoke the landscapes of the highlands, but also a worldview that understands sound as a link between nature and community. In many southern



“WAYRA” SHOW, FEATURING DANCES SUCH AS MARINERA NORTEÑA, IO PATATI, HUAYLARSH DE CARNAVAL, AND NEGRERÍA DE YAUYOS.
SOURCE: PROMPERÚ

andean communities, musicians describe their art as a form of dialogue with the land and surrounding spirits, where the wind that plays the quena becomes a metaphor for life and time. This spiritual sense finds resonance in the musical traditions of the United Arab Emirates, where percussion, choral singing, and instruments such as the oud and darbuka play ceremonial roles that reinforce social and religious bonds (Chasqui, 2023).

The relationship between both traditions is strengthened by the search for balance between the ancestral and the contemporary. In Peru, genres such as marinera, huayno, or festejo have evolved into new fusions incorporating jazz, electronic, and pop influences without losing their communal essence. In the UAE, modern reinterpretations of nabati chants and Bedouin rhythms now interact with global urban music. This adaptive phenomenon reveals how living cultures maintain their identity through innovation, opening paths for collaborations between Peruvian and Emirati musicians exploring new shared soundscapes (Chasqui, 2023).

Furthermore, the educational dimension of music as a diplomatic tool deserves attention. For example, various cultural programs promoted by Peru's Ministry of Culture encourage teaching the cajón, the Peruvian guitar, or traditional dance in international spaces. Similar initiatives could be replicated in the UAE through workshops and artistic residencies in schools, universities, and cultural centers. By integrating music as part of bilateral cultural exchange, it not only strengthens mutual understanding, but also fosters respect for expressive forms that unite both peoples through rhythm, emotion, and creativity (Chasqui, 2023).

Music, like gastronomy, is a universal language that generates empathy and understanding. Its capacity to connect emotionally makes it an ideal tool for creating long-lasting ties between peoples with different histories but kindred sensibilities.

Visual Arts and Heritage as Shared Narratives

In the realm of visual arts, Peru has found in the UAE a fertile stage to showcase its artistic and patrimonial richness. The Peru Pavilion at Expo 2020 was a paradigmatic example of integrated cultural diplomacy: its architecture, inspired by Andean textiles, symbolized continuity between past and future. The exhibition received the Expo's Gold Award in the architectural design category (Business Wire, 2022a; PROMPERÚ, 2021). It presented folk art pieces, traditional textiles, and a live demonstration of weaving the Q'eswachaka bridge, an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (UNESCO, 2013/2021).

More recently, contemporary Peruvian artists have begun participating in fairs such as Abu Dhabi Art and in collective exhibitions in Alserkal Avenue in Dubai, a creative epicenter in the region. These opportunities have allowed Peru to showcase its artistic talent in dialogue with Arab, Asian, and European artists, consolidating a shared narrative of identity and modernity.

In visual arts, Peru shares with the UAE a deep appreciation for craftsmanship and traditional trades. Chasqui (2023) notes that Peruvian textiles, ceramics, and carvings are not merely aesthetic objects but carriers of knowledge, techniques, and stories passed down through generations.



CREATION OF SADU TEXTILES



CREATION OF ANDEAN TEXTILES

Similarly, in the Emirates, calligraphy, palm weaving, and goldsmithing preserve the value of handmade work as an expression of identity. These affinities allow imagining joint curatorial projects centered on memory, sustainability, and the beauty of artisanal labor. In both contexts, art stands as a universal language capable of building bridges between tradition and contemporaneity (Chasqui, 2023).

Future initiatives include the possibility of establishing a binational artistic residency program between Peruvian museums and cultural centers in the UAE, with emphasis on sustainability and textile art. One of these residencies will take place in January 2026 in the emirate of Ras Al Khaimah, where a Peru Villa dedicated to our country will host a series of Peruvian artists who will help link both cultures and showcase the richness of our art. This would contribute not only to cultural promotion but also to knowledge transfer and technical cooperation in heritage conservation.

Conclusion

Cultural diplomacy between Peru and the United Arab Emirates has demonstrated that culture can be an effective tool of

foreign policy, capable of building bridges of understanding and mutual respect. The reviewed examples, gastronomy, music, dance, and art, show that cultural ties generate not only visibility but also trust and long-term collaboration.

First, the quantitative results are clear: more than 1.7 million visitors to the Peru Pavilion at Expo 2020, a 35% expansion in gastronomic exports to the Gulf, and an increasing presence of Peruvian artists at international fairs. Second, the qualitative experiences—public recognition, shared emotion, and intercultural dialogue—demonstrate the transformative power of culture.

Looking ahead, the challenge will be to institutionalize these efforts through a 2025–2030 multiyear cultural cooperation agenda with clear goals for participation, training, and impact evaluation. Culture should not be understood only as a reflection of the past, but as a strategic investment in the present and the future. In this shared vision, cultural diplomacy will continue to be the thread that weaves understanding and friendship between Peru and the United Arab Emirates.



On April 28, 2025, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Elmer Schialer, celebrated in Abu Dhabi the inauguration of the Embassy of Peru in the United Arab Emirates, a milestone that strengthens the ties of friendship, cooperation, and investment between the two countries.



THE SUCCESSFUL PERUVIAN PARTICIPATION IN EXPO DUBAI 2020

MINISTER MARCO ANTONIO SANTIVIÁÑEZ PIMENTEL
FORMER CONSUL GENERAL OF PERU IN DUBAI

Peru participated for the first time in a universal exposition in Paris, France, in 1855, along with 27 other countries. It was the second universal exposition officially recognized by the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), after London (1851). Since then, Peru has consistently sought to take part in these global events to share its natural diversity and its long history as a vibrant civilization.

In more recent times, the Universal Exposition “Expo 2020 Dubai” had the particular distinction of being the first global exhibition authorized by the BIE in a country of the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia (MEASA) region, namely, the United Arab Emirates (UAE). For that reason, when the BIE officially announced on November 27, 2013, that the city of Dubai had been chosen to host the 35th universal exposition, fireworks were launched from the world’s tallest building, the Burj Khalifa, located in the heart of the city, as a sign of collective joy. The following day, a national holiday was declared for all educational institutions in the UAE.

Preparatory work for Expo Dubai 2020 by UAE authorities began almost immediately after the announcement, following the chosen theme: “Connecting Minds, Creating the Future.”

Subsequently, the decision was made to build a citadel in the middle of the desert on a 438-hectare site located along the road from Dubai to Abu Dhabi, not far from the major seaport of Jebel Ali. The master plan, designed by the U.S. firm HOK, was organized around a central plaza covered by a large dome called Al Wasl (“the connection” in Arabic), from which three large “petals” projected, forming the thematic districts: Opportunity, Mobility, and Sustainability. To provide the required infrastructure for the citadel, it was necessary to build a modern, well-lit highway, a new metro line, housing, commercial facilities, renewable energy sources, and a variety of local services.



AL WASL PLAZA

Peru's decision to secure a significant presence at Expo Dubai 2020 arose within the context of strengthened relations between South American and Arab countries, beginning with the launch of the South America–Arab Countries Summits (ASPA) in 2005. In fact, the Third ASPA Summit took place in Lima on October 1 and 2, 2012.

The year before the Third ASPA Summit, Peru's first representation in the UAE—the Consulate General in Dubai—began operations on May 1, 2011, with Minister-Counsellor Rómulo Acurio serving as the first Peruvian Consul General in Dubai.

These factors, combined with the growing importance of economic and commercial ties between Peru and the United Arab Emirates, as well as the excellent level of political relations, contributed to the decision to participate in EXPO DUBAI 2020 with a large, custom-designed Peruvian pavilion. Thanks to timely efforts undertaken at the start of the project, the Peruvian pavilion was strategically located in the "Mobility" district of the Expo, very close to the Al Wasl Plaza, an area with a high flow of visitors.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of the Peruvian pavilion at EXPO DUBAI was held in early November 2019, with the presence of the then Minister of Foreign Trade and Tourism, Edgar Vásquez.

The objective of the Peruvian pavilion was to promote new tourism flows to Peru, identify potential investors, and showcase our country's biodiversity and products linked to agribusiness,

fisheries, biocommerce, wood goods, home décor, and handicrafts. It also sought to promote alpaca fiber and cotton textiles; chocolate, specialty coffees, pisco, the "Superfoods Peru" brand, and many other products.

It should be recalled that the original opening date for EXPO DUBAI 2020 was October 1, 2020, but due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, UAE authorities announced a one-year postponement. Fortunately, the effective management of preventive measures in the UAE—such as mass and early vaccination, allowed for the gradual easing of restrictions, enabling Expo 2020 Dubai to become the largest global gathering held since the beginning of the pandemic, bringing together 192 countries and receiving more than 24 million visits.

Furthermore, as of September 9, 2021, Ms. Amora Carbajal Schumacher was appointed Commissioner and official Peruvian focal point for Expo Dubai. The Consulate General of Peru in Dubai worked closely with her on promotional activities in the Peruvian pavilion, in coordination with the pavilion operator "Continuous Events" and the pavilion manager, Mirella Oré.

The official opening ceremony of EXPO DUBAI 2020 took place on October 1, 2021, attended by the Commissioner and Executive President of PROMPERÚ, Amora Carbajal Schumacher, accompanied by the Consul General. That day, the Peruvian pavilion received delegations from Chile, Colombia, and other countries, who enjoyed live performances by the Ayacucho guitarist Manuelcha Prado and traditional danzantes de tijera.

1. The Peruvian Pavilion at EXPO DUBAI 2020

As previously mentioned, Peru participated in Expo Dubai with its own pavilion—a medium-sized structure (2,500 m² of built area) with a façade inspired by a pre-Inca mantle, designed by young Peruvian architects from “Habitar e - Arquitectura e Ingeniería” in collaboration with “Studio 17.”

The four-story building welcomed visitors through a ramp leading to a replica of the Q’eshwachaka Bridge. From there, the tour guided visitors through immersive experiences using giant screens covering the walls of the exhibition rooms, displaying high-quality videos and audio in English of Peru’s regions and natural landscapes. The experience was complemented by display cases exhibiting various objects and samples of native products. The tour concluded in the “Tree of Life” room, a stylized representation of the *yunza*, accompanied by Andean music that delighted the numerous visitors.

At the end of the visit, guests arrived at the Qoricancha restaurant, where Peruvian dishes and beverages were served daily. Cooking classes on Peruvian recipes were also offered. Additionally, the pavilion featured a VIP protocol lounge, an auditorium for temporary exhibitions, offices, a kitchen, and service areas.

The Peruvian pavilion hosted influencers, Emirati television, and international reporters, all of whom were pleasantly surprised by the rich display of culture and biodiversity. Notable coverage included reports by CNN, Khaleej Times, and Gulf News, which highlighted Peru’s cultural and musical expressions. In total, the pavilion registered 415 guided tours including 1,686 visitors from guided groups of 35 nationalities; 116 business delegations; and 42 family groups from Emirati royalty.

It is important to note that the pavilion served as a key commercial platform connecting Peruvian SMEs from different regions with business representatives



PERU PAVILION AT EXPO DUBAI 2020



The Peru Pavilion at Expo Dubai 2020, under the concept “Timeless Peru,” stood out for showcasing the country’s cultural heritage and biodiversity through immersive experiences. With nearly 1.7 million visitors, it was one of the most popular pavilions and received the Gold Award for best design in its category.

from around the world, supporting their internationalization efforts. In this regard, Peru's various tourist destinations and extensive export offerings were showcased during the Multisectoral Trade Mission held in Dubai.

The local pavilion operator team consisted of 22 staff members, in addition to 6 others working from Lima. The support team included 22 Peruvians and 72 collaborators from 26 nationalities.

Moreover, the management of the Peruvian pavilion achieved optimal compliance with the regulations and requirements of the EXPO DUBAI organization, receiving no observations throughout the six months of operation.



COMMISSIONER GENERAL AND EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT OF PROMPERÚ, AMORA CARBAJAL, TOGETHER WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF EXPO 2020 DUBAI, MR. NAJEEB MOHAMMED AL-ALI

The official ceremony with UAE authorities took place at Al Wasl Plaza, with more than 50 attendees. During the event, the flags of Peru and the UAE were raised, the national anthems were played, and speeches were delivered by the heads of the Peruvian and Emirati delegations. The host country was represented by Mr. Najeeb Mohammed Al-Ali, Executive Director of the Expo 2020 Dubai Office. Both delegations then visited the Peruvian and UAE pavilions. A TV Perú team filmed and broadcast videos of the event nine times on Channel 7.

Mr. Najeeb Al-Ali also hosted a luncheon for the Peruvian delegation at the EXPO DUBAI venue, with the participation of the UAE Ambassador to Peru, Mohamed AlShamsi.



CELEBRATION OF THE DAY OF PERU AT EXPO DUBAI 2020, LED BY THE COMMISSIONER GENERAL AND EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT OF PROMPERÚ, ALONG WITH PERUVIAN AUTHORITIES.

2. Celebration of the Day of Peru at EXPO DUBAI 2020

On March 7, 2022, "The Day of Peru" was celebrated at EXPO DUBAI, an event led by the Commissioner General and Executive President of PROMPERÚ, Amora Carbajal, alongside the Consul General in Dubai, Vice-Commissioner Igor Rojas, the Regional Governors of Apurímac and Piura, and Peru's Commercial Counsellors in India, Korea, Taiwan, and France.

In the evening, the dome of Al Wasl Plaza was illuminated with the red and white colors of Peru's national flag, and performances were given by Peruvian singer Sylvia Falcón and the National Folkloric Ballet. Later, a cocktail reception for 400 guests was held at the Peruvian pavilion, with the participation of Peruvian, Emirati, and international businesspeople, as well as members of the Peruvian community.

3. Events and Promotional Activities at the Peruvian Pavilion

During the operation of the Peruvian pavilion, numerous special events were organized to promote the diverse cultural expressions of each region of Peru. Highlights included the inauguration and ribbon-cutting ceremony of the Peru pavilion; the presentation of the exhibition “The Mochicas, Sovereigns of the Desert”, dedicated to the Lord of Sipán, which displayed exquisite replicas to 235,000 visitors; and The Day of Peru. Peru’s participation was strengthened by the commitment of talented Peruvians and the support of DP World, Pisco 1615, Flo Trading, Modenart Perú, Terracota Lab, and Adolf Finseth.

The first artistic participation was by Amazonian artist Elena Valera Vásquez (Shipibo-Konibo), invited by DP World to paint an Amazonian mural inspired by her community along the Ucayali River. She worked from October 8 to 21, 2021, inside the Peruvian pavilion. On Saturday, October 9, at the Terra Auditorium in the Sustainability District of EXPO DUBAI 2020, the talk “Cultures in Conversation – Climates and Biodiversity Week” took place, concluding with Elena Valera’s performance of an ancestral Amazonian chant, followed by a personal reflection on the deep bonds of respect, protection, and harmony between the Shipibo-Konibo people and the natural environment.

3.1. Exhibition “The Mochicas – Sovereigns of the Desert” (Lord of Sipán Replicas)

On Friday, December 17, 2021, the Consul General led the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the temporary exhibition “The Mochicas – Sovereigns of the Desert: Exhibition of the Replicas of the Jewels of the Lord of Sipán,”

attended by local authorities, Ambassadors accredited in Abu Dhabi, Consuls General in Dubai, media, Peruvian residents, and the general public.

Ambassador Francisco Alonso Escobar participated in the ribbon-cutting on behalf of EXPO DUBAI 2020. The Consul General then delivered remarks in English and Spanish, highlighting the value of the replicas of the Lord of Sipán’s jewels, exhibited for the first time in the UAE and the Arabian Gulf. The young Peruvian tenor Adonis Castro performed the Peruvian national anthem in Quechua. Guests toured the exhibition and enjoyed Peruvian gastronomy, including pisco sour and chicha morada.

The exhibition remained open until the night of Monday, January 7, 2022, when the closing ceremony was held with the presence of local authorities, diplomatic and consular corps, media, artists, Peruvian residents, and the general public. The event featured renowned Peruvian singer Tania Libertad alongside Mexican singers Guadalupe Pineda and Eugenia León. After the ceremony, guests were invited to a dinner of southern Peruvian cuisine at the “Qoricancha” restaurant on the pavilion’s ground floor.



EXHIBITION OF THE LORD OF SIPÁN AT EXPO 2020 DUBAI
SOURCE: PROMPERU

3.2. Exhibition “The Traditional Kimono Transformed into Fabric”

On Wednesday, February 9, 2022, the multipurpose hall of the Peruvian pavilion hosted the inauguration of the temporary exhibition “The Traditional Kimono Transformed into Fabric,” featuring twelve creations by renowned Peruvian designer Jorge Luis Salinas. The event was attended by the Consul General of Japan and his wife, Mr. Sekiguchi Noburu, as well as Mr. Takeo Tsukuda (JETRO), Deputy Director of the Japanese pavilion at EXPO DUBAI. Commissioner General and PROMPERÚ Executive President, Amora Carbajal Schumacher, spoke about the quality of the designs and the importance and influence of Japanese migration in Peruvian culture. The “Kimonos” exhibition received 455,000 visits.

3.3. Business Roundtables at the Peruvian Pavilion

On March 8 and 9, 2022, business roundtables were held at the Peruvian pavilion, organized by Peru’s Commercial Office in Dubai, with the participation of 40 Peruvian entrepreneurs and 55 entrepreneurs from various countries invited by Peru, with the goal of securing approximately USD 30 million in purchases.

3.4. Visit by the Wives of Consuls General in Dubai

On Monday, March 21, 2022, a visit to the Peruvian pavilion was organized for a group of more than 20 wives of Consuls General accredited in Dubai, in coordination with the pavilion operations team and PROMPERÚ. The Consul General delivered welcome remarks, after which his wife provided explanations about aspects of Peruvian culture highlighted during the guided tour.

The visit concluded with a Peruvian gastronomy lesson and tasting session led by the Qoricancha restaurant.

3.5. Temporary Exhibition “Abayat Peru”

On Saturday, March 26, 2022, the temporary exhibition “Abayat Peru” was inaugurated in the multipurpose hall of the Peruvian pavilion. The exhibit showcased a collection of garments inspired by the traditional loose dress worn by Muslim women, the abaya, designed by Peruvian José Miguel Valdivia, with hand-embroidered details by Leandrina Ramos and artisans from the Colca Valley. The garments were made using Peruvian materials such as baby alpaca and premium cotton. The exhibition also included color photographs by Adrian Sisa, from the Colca region. The exhibit remained open from March 23 to 31.

4. Promotion of Peruvian Gastronomy

Peru highlighted its renowned gastronomy throughout its participation, offering international visitors the chance to experience Peruvian products and regional cuisine, linking gastronomy with tourism and exports. As part of this effort, culinary demonstrations were held for children and adults, including visits from Emirati schools, allowing them to learn more about Peruvian foods and the best ways to enjoy them, especially as many of these products are gaining increasing acceptance in the UAE.

At the Qoricancha restaurant on the pavilion’s ground floor, as well as during the special dinners described below, the following statistics were recorded:

- 17,000 Cooking Master Classes were held to introduce Peruvian gastronomy to as many visitors as possible, free of charge.
- 5,000 Cooking Master Kids classes were conducted to teach younger generations about the value of “Superfoods,” with purple corn standing out due to its popularity in the UAE.
- Over 15,000 dishes were served at the “Qori Pacha” Peruvian restaurant on the pavilion’s ground floor to showcase culinary experiences from across Peru.
- Eleven chefs were invited from Peru to present special five-course menus highlighting cuisine from the coast, highlands, and rainforest.

4.1. Pacific Alliance Dinner

On Sunday, 28 November 2021, a Pacific Alliance (PA) dinner was held with the participation of the three Ambassadors of the Alliance, the Consul General, the Commissioners General to

the EXPO, as well as entrepreneurs from the four countries, in addition to Emirati authorities and representatives of EXPO DUBAI’s organization. The preparation of the dinner, which consisted of Peruvian and Colombian dishes, was carried out by Peruvian chefs Ivan Casusol and Jesús García, together with Colombian chef Alex Salgado. The Consul General delivered the welcome remarks, as the host country of the pavilion, to the fifty guests from the four PA countries. Subsequently, the Ambassadors of Colombia, Mexico, and Chile took the floor.

4.2. Dinner for the Anniversary of the Seven Wonders

On Tuesday, 8 February 2022, a Peruvian Amazonian gastronomy dinner took place at the Peruvian Pavilion at EXPO DUBAI, offered to more than 40 guests on the occasion of the anniversary of the declaration of the “Seven Natural Wonders of the World” by the “New 7 Wonders” Foundation, one of which is the Amazon River.



PACIFIC ALLIANCE DINNER

The dinner offered by our country was headed by the Executive President of PROMPERU, Amora Carbajal, together with the Consul General and representatives of the aforementioned Foundation. Attendees included representatives of the Swiss Foundation Bernard Weber and Jean-Paul de la Fuente, Mariana Fried, Philipp Wellmer, Jacqueline Duvoisin, André Meyerhans; the Ambassador of Argentina to the UAE, along with his Commissioner General and the director of his pavilion at EXPO DUBAI; the Commissioner General, Deputy Commissioner, and staff of the pavilions of Colombia, Brazil, the Philippines, Indonesia and Laos, among other guests.

4.3. Dinner Featuring Cuisine from the Lambayeque Region

On Saturday, 26 February 2022, a dinner featuring cuisine from the northern region of Lambayeque was offered, with more than forty guests in attendance, including directors of the pavilions of Costa Rica, Slovakia, Monaco, Slovenia, Finland, Luxembourg, Lithuania, Germany, entrepreneurs, consultants, and prominent members of the Peruvian community in Dubai.

This dinner, led by the Consul General, featured five representative dishes from the gastronomy of Lambayeque, which were explained in detail by Chef Agustín Jordán, leader of the tourist restaurant “El Cántaro” in the city of Chiclayo, who showcased local ingredients such as ray fish and loche squash.

4.4. Amazonian Dinner

On Sunday, 27 March, an Amazonian gastronomy dinner from the Ucayali region was offered at the Peruvian Pavilion at EXPO 2020 DUBAI, with numerous guests in attendance, including authorities from the

local EXPO DUBAI organization, pavilion directors, Emirati businesspeople, and members of the Peruvian community in Dubai. This was one of the last activities held at the Peruvian Pavilion before the conclusion of EXPO 2020 DUBAI.

This dinner, led by the Consul General, consisted of five representative dishes from the Amazonian cuisine of the Ucayali region, whose preparation was explained in detail by Chef Blanca Pérez Morey, owner of the tourist restaurant “El Tuyuyo” in the city of Pucallpa.

5. End of EXPO DUBAI 2020 and Gold Award for the Peruvian Pavilion for Best Design

Wednesday, 30 March 2022, marked the final day of EXPO DUBAI 2020 and the award ceremony held by the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), the entity that has supervised and regulated World Expos since 1931. The event took place at “Jubilee Park” in EXPO 2020 DUBAI, during an invitation-only dinner attended by the highest Emirati and BIE authorities, as well as representatives of the participating countries.

Peru was represented at the ceremony by Mr. Ricardo Limo, Advisor to the Executive Presidency of PROMPERÚ, and the Consul General. On that occasion, Peru received the Gold Award for Best Exhibition Design in the category of self-built pavilions of medium size (1,750 to 2,500 square meters), being the only South American country to win Gold, thanks to its concept “Timeless Peru,” an inspiring synthesis of Peru’s historical, multicultural, and megadiverse richness. The ceremony was broadcast live on EXPO 2020 DUBAI’s official television channel.

The awards were divided into five categories depending on the size and type of pavilion. The Official Participants' Awards recognized three aspects: architecture and landscaping (for pavilions built by participants), exhibition design, and theme interpretation.

"The selection of the winners of the Official Participants' Awards was carried out by an international jury composed of nine experts, both international and Emirati, who conducted two visits to each national pavilion, in January and March 2022. On the eve of the closing, these awards celebrate those who have made significant contributions to the success of the Universal Expo," stated Antoine Bourdeix, BIE Communications Director.

After Peru received the award, Mr. Ricardo Limo and the Consul General visited the Peruvian Pavilion to share the news with the operations team and the large staff who worked there. Mr. Adriano Konialidis, Vice President of the EXPO and responsible for the Latin American region's pavilions, also visited the pavilion.



6. Main Achievements and Results of Peru's Participation in EXPO DUBAI 2020

The active presence of the Qoricancha restaurant, located on the first floor of the Peruvian Pavilion, successfully promoted the flavors of all Peruvian regions, as well as Peruvian superfoods. The consortium DP World was an important partner in Peru's participation in EXPO DUBAI, contributing to the transport of the materials used and displayed at the pavilion. Thanks to this, Peruvian gastronomy further strengthened its presence in the UAE.



PERU WON THE GOLD AWARD FOR BEST EXHIBITION DESIGN IN THE CATEGORY OF MID-SIZED SELF-BUILT PAVILIONS

After EXPO DUBAI 2020, and with the easing of health restrictions, a dozen new Peruvian restaurants opened in Dubai, such as Macchu Picchu, Fusión Cebiche, Playa, Juan, Clay, Inti, Café Laredo, and Sushi Samba. Significantly, Peruvian chefs lead these kitchens, giving authenticity, identity, and excellence to the cuisine offered.

During EXPO DUBAI 2020, the local and international press published numerous reports on the activities held at the Peruvian Pavilion. The Emirati newspaper The National, in its Saturday 19 March edition, highlighted Peru in its article “Expo Dubai: Five Fantastic Pavilions You Must Not Miss,” praising the pavilion’s façade made with a national textile, the Qeswachaka Bridge, striking panoramas of snow-capped mountains, tropical forests, waterfalls, Inca constructions, superfoods such as quinoa and chicha morada, as well as the traditional yunza tree. Likewise, Emirates Woman included the Peruvian Pavilion among the eleven best pavilions.

Exhibitor Magazine launched an open online vote for the best pavilion at EXPO 2020 DUBAI, with results announced on 16 March 2022. The Peruvian Pavilion was chosen by the public as the most voted. Additionally, Peru led the positive comments among Latin American countries on the official Expo Dubai mobile app.

The achievements of the Peruvian Pavilion at EXPO DUBAI 2020 can be summarized as 1,767,380 visitors from 35 nationalities, making it the most visited Latin American pavilion.

There were 1,686 guided group tours, 116 trade delegations, 42 members of Emirati royal families, 77 press visits, 50 published articles, and 64 television features, in addition to abundant photos and videos produced at the pavilion. The temporary exhibition of the Replicas of the Lord of Sipán alone received 377,000 visitors in 45 days, surpassing the number the site museum in Lambayeque receives in an entire year.

Among the Emirati authorities who visited the pavilion were the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Minister of Energy, as well as more than 160 members of the royal family. Delegations from other parts of the world also attended, including the UK Minister of International Trade.

EXPO DUBAI 2020 exceeded expectations and is widely recognized as a success, despite the challenge of organizing the first World Expo in a MENASA country and overcoming COVID-19–related difficulties, including the closure of flight routes. It made history for its record number of participants, the quality of its infrastructure and technological advances, and its excellent organization, security, and health controls.

In this context, Peru stood out as one of the countries most committed to participating at the level expected by Emirati authorities, achieving a number of visitors that doubled the initial target.



PERUVIAN CULTURAL DIPLOMACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST: THE CASE OF PERU-KUWAIT RELATIONS

SECOND SECRETARY PEDRO JAVIER SEDANO BÉJAR
EMBASSY OF PERU IN KUWAIT

I. Context of the Peruvian-Kuwaiti relationship

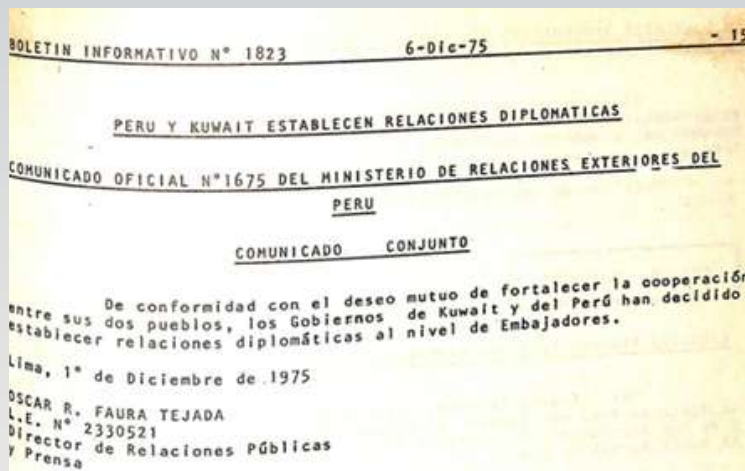
The first Peruvian approach to the Arabian Gulf region occurred through the establishment of diplomatic relations with the State of Kuwait on December 1, 1975. This was formalized through a joint statement from the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which highlighted the "[...] mutual desire to strengthen cooperation between our two peoples [...]" (MRE, 1975). The Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs reciprocated, as reported in Arab newspapers at the time. (Al-Seyassah, 1975).

Although it is true that this fact marked a milestone in Peruvian foreign policy, since it began to look at a new region of the world, it was not until 1989 that Peru opened its embassy in the State of Kuwait, becoming the

first Peruvian diplomatic mission in the Arabian Gulf; however, it was closed in February 1990. Months later, in August of that same year, Iraq invaded Kuwait, which ended on February 25, 1991, the date on which Liberation Day is celebrated.

In 2011, Peru made the decision to reopen its embassy in the State of Kuwait, in a gesture of resuming relations with the Arab country, and began a process of relaunching bilateral relations at the political, economic and cultural levels, for which it was necessary to develop a "[...] modern legal basis in relations" (Andina, 2010).

The aforementioned legal framework comprised a series of bilateral international instruments that established the basis for relations, initially in the economic and cultural spheres, through agreements such as the Reciprocal Protection of Investments (APPRI) and Cooperation in the field of cultural property. Since then, the relationship – although geographically distant – has gradually sought to build a scenario of greater closeness and strengthening. This was reflected in an official visit in 2012 by the then Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Peru, Ambassador José Beraún Aranibar, who was received by the then Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah. During this visit, the Emir expressed a desire to promote bilateral and even multilateral cooperation in the political-diplomatic, economic, and cultural fields.



JOINT OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUÉ No. 1675, IN WHICH PERU AND KUWAIT EXPRESSED THEIR DESIRE TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION BETWEEN THEIR NATIONS

During that same visit, the Peruvian Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs met with the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs of the State of Kuwait, H.H. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, who in June 2024 was appointed Crown Prince of Kuwait (El Correo del Golfo, 2024); also noteworthy on that occasion was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for the Establishment of a Mechanism for Bilateral Consultations and an Agreement on the Suppression of Visas for Diplomatic Passports, tools that would subsequently serve to boost the political-diplomatic relationship between Peru and Kuwait.

II. Political relations process and cultural diplomacy

Since the reopening of the Embassy of Peru in Kuwait in 2011, a series of actions have been initiated to establish, mainly, the necessary legal framework for cooperation and the strengthening of the bilateral relationship. For example, negotiations were initiated on international instruments such as the Agreement on the Protection and Reciprocal Promotion of Investments (APPRI), the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos and the University of Kuwait, the draft Memorandum between the National Library of Peru and the National Library of Kuwait, the draft Agreement between Peru and Kuwait on culture and art, the Draft Air Services Agreement, the Draft Agreement on Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters, the Draft Treaty on Judicial Assistance in Civil, Commercial, Labour and Administrative Litigation Matters. More recently, during 2023, negotiations began on the Draft Agreement for the abolition of visas in ordinary passports, as well as the Draft Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation.

Within this framework of gradual and steady bilateral development, perhaps—though not exclusively—cooperation and cultural exchange have been the factors that have lent a certain dynamism to the Peruvian-Kuwaiti relationship. In this sense, cultural diplomacy—understood in its broadest sense, as a part of so-called soft power, and exercised not only by state agents but rather by a diverse set of actors at both the national and supranational, local and international levels (Faucher & Zhu, 2025)—has been relevant in keeping the bilateral agenda active.— was relevant to maintain the bilateral agenda in an active manner.

In the Peruvian case, the approach was carried out through cultural diplomacy and its various aspects, such as the so-called “diplomacy of art” which has included aspects such as music, theater and dance, as well as gastronomic diplomacy and language diplomacy, circumscribed in the learning of language and literature as a vehicle for cultural propagation and political influence (Grincheva, 2024); thus, for example, cultural presentations in traditional Peruvian dance and music were carried out during 2013, photographic exhibitions of Peruvian history and identity, textile art exhibitions, and gastronomic samples, promoting interest in Peruvian culture and expanding the spaces and opportunities in the cultural sector, especially, in what concerns the orange economy, and seeking to achieve an economic impact on the work of cultural workers.

There is no doubt that the most important event, in terms of cultural relations, was the signing of the “Agreement between the Republic of Peru and the State of Kuwait in the field of Culture and Art” in November 2023 (MRE, 2023), currently being the main tool for cooperation and cultural exchange.

Proof of this was the exchange of Peruvian ancestral knowledge of weaving and dyeing alpaca wool shared with traditional Kuwaiti weavers Sadu, which was carried out under the framework of the aforementioned cultural agreement, in strict application of the facilities provided therein.

It is worth noting that, during that same year, within the framework of the First Meeting of the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism held in Kuwait, in addition to having an eminently political character –since it was carried out twelve years after the reopening of the Embassy of Peru– it also had an economic content with visits by the Peruvian delegation to the Kuwait Investment Authority, the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, ending with the signing of the cultural agreement between Peru and Kuwait at the headquarters of the National Council of Culture, Arts and Letters of Kuwait.

In this regard, and in order to locate the importance of the cultural aspect in the bilateral relationship, it should be remembered that a cultural agreement can be defined as:

[...] any instrument governed by public international law concluded between States of a bilateral or multilateral nature, the content of which deals with cultural aspects whatever their name (cultural agreement or convention, economic, scientific and cultural cooperation agreement, cultural cooperation agreement, cultural exchange agreement and the like); and which also incorporates in its content the strategic variables of the State's foreign cultural policy (Sedano, 2020).

Precisely, the possibility of these strategic variables of foreign cultural policy in these instruments makes it possible to facilitate the exercise of cultural diplomacy by agents, officials, institutions, among others, regardless of whether they are public or private.

In the case of the cultural agreement between Peru and Kuwait, it commits both States to cooperate in the field of culture and the arts, to foster mutual understanding, and to promote direct contacts in the fields of literature, the arts, cinema, translation, architecture, museums, cultural property, archives, among others.



SIGNING OF THE "AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF PERU AND THE STATE OF KUWAIT IN THE FIELD OF CULTURE AND ART" DURING THE FIRST MEETING OF THE BILATERAL MECHANISM BETWEEN PERU AND KUWAIT

The agreement also seeks to encourage the participation of cultural delegations, the promotion of the participation of artists in festivals, exhibitions, conferences or any cultural activity within their territories. The promotion of musical groups, artists and experts in art and music is also planned. It even establishes the exchange of researchers in restoration, the exchange of cultural publications, as well as the exchange of literary production.

It is, therefore, a general framework that encourages and facilitates diplomatic action in the cultural field, especially if "[...] cultural diplomacy is defined as the set of strategies and activities carried out by the State (and/or its representatives) abroad through cultural, educational and scientific cooperation (as well as exhibitions and cultural events) in order to carry out foreign policy objectives, one of which is to promote the values and culture of the country abroad, as well as highlighting a positive image of the country" (Rodríguez, 2015). Regarding the signing of cultural agreements as a policy strategy, it is known that they facilitate cultural exchanges and that they not only enhance the image of a country but also create opportunities for dialogue and respect between the parties (Almakaty, 2025).

Contrary to what might be thought, there is a political component in cultural relations, often indispensable for the construction of trust that later gives way to the facilitation of issues considered high politics from the realist perspective in international relations, and rather, both cultural aspects – considered low politics – and those of high politics are not unrelated, but the boundary between one and the other is blurred (Olsen, 2019), and is intertwined according to specific interests.

Cultural diplomacy, consequently, becomes an essential tool for the promotion of the State, through cultural exchange, in order to promote the understanding of a certain culture at the international level; in this sense, it is not only about the presentation of cultural or artistic expressions, but also about the construction of relationships and the creation of spaces for dialogue that bring nations closer together (Almakaty, 2025).

In the case of the Peruvian-Kuwaiti cultural relationship, the cultural exchange that emerged in the textile field is noteworthy. In July 2024, making use of the regulatory framework established in the cultural agreement in force between the two countries, two master weavers specialized in traditional Cusco textiles (Martina Quispe Quillo and Guillermina Mamani Huaman) visited the State of Kuwait to carry out the I Workshop on traditional Peruvian weaving and dyeing in alpaca wool, which took place for a week at the Sadu House, an entity that promotes the traditional fabric called "sadu", typical of the Arabian Gulf region, and deeply rooted in Kuwaiti culture (Times Kuwait, 2024).

On that occasion, an important cultural link was generated that, in addition to positioning Peruvian culture as one of ancestral character in the development of the technique and management of textiles, established a channel for strengthening ties between two cultures (Kuwait Times, 2024) with distant language and traditions that managed to establish communication through culture, being a clear example of how cultural diplomacy contributes to the construction and promotion of bilateral relations.

This phenomenon was recognized at the political level since, for example, it was part of the Official Visit of the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Peru, Ambassador Elmer Schialer Salcedo, to the State of Kuwait, who



I Workshop on traditional Peruvian weaving and dyeing in alpaca wool, which took place for a week at the Sadu House, an entity that promotes the traditional fabric called "sadu", typical of the Arabian Gulf region, and deeply rooted in Kuwaiti culture.

was received by the Secretary General of the National Council of Culture, Arts and Letters of Kuwait, Dr. Mohammad Aljassar, at the Sadu House. In his speech, Ambassador Schialer highlighted cultural exchange and cooperation as a sign of twinning between nations, as well as the importance of protecting and preserving intangible cultural heritage as a shared duty, and that cultural activities such as those carried out between Peru and Kuwait reaffirmed the commitment to deepen ties between our nations and to strengthen mutual understanding through cultural dialogue.



FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER, AMBASSADOR ELMER SCHIALER, TOGETHER WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF KUWAIT'S NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CULTURE, ARTS AND LETTERS, DR. MOHAMMAD ALJASSAR, AT SADU HOUSE.

Likewise, from the field of literature, cultural exchange activities were carried out with entities such as the Americani Cultural Center, Research Gate and Contemporary Art Platform of Kuwait. For example, the symposium "Glimpses of Latin American Literature: Peruvian Experience" stands out, in which the most recognized poets and writers of Peruvian poetry were presented

and introduced to the Kuwaiti public in general, who showed interest in indigenous themes and the work of authors such as César Vallejo, Manuel Scorza and José María Arguedas. The event motivated the participation of key actors within the Kuwaiti cultural sector such as Dr. Alanoud Al Sabah, writer and poet interested in Peruvian literature; the Kuwaiti poet Afrah Mubarak Al-Sabah who welcomed the initiative. On the other hand, subsequently, entities such as the Kuwaiti bookstore Alfkr would collaborate to pay tribute in memory of the work of the Peruvian Nobel Prize for Literature Mario Vargas Llosa, together with the valuable participation of Sheikha Alanoud Al Sabah and the Research Journey cultural center.

Although this type of relationship would appear to have only an eminently cultural content, it is not limited to that, that is, it transcends the artistic sphere and accompanies a message and a substantial political objective in the construction of trust between two States, a message of cooperation, friendship and openness towards the other, an example of how cultural activities serve as a platform for political dialogue, as well as cultural diplomacy instruments that impact political dynamics (Ji & Hao, 2025).

In the case of Kuwait, for example, the "Visit Kuwait" initiative has recently been launched, which is part of a strategic vision to position Kuwait as a tourist and cultural destination in the region, aligned with the objectives of the New Kuwait 2035 strategic plan and the modernization of the cultural, tourism and entertainment industries (Kuwait Times, 2025b). Part of these efforts can also be seen in the designation of Kuwait as the Arab Capital of Culture during 2025, through which a series of cultural activities have been developed aimed at the recognition of the country as an axis of culture and knowledge in the region (Kuwait Times, 2025a).

III. Potentialities of cultural diplomacy

While it is true that cultural relations between Peru and Kuwait are progressively advancing and developing, there are great opportunities to increase their dynamism, in particular, in terms of gastronomic diplomacy, the positioning of the Peruvian culinary tradition and the exploration of fusion with Arab gastronomy, and how through this policy objectives can be set, based on shared interests, as long as it is taken into account that even gastronomy has a political component at the time of decision-making, in the sense that – as Goufeng mentions, citing Spence's studies – during a meal, one becomes more open and accessible, which helps to establish friendly relationships with the other, and that, ultimately, it helps increase people's receptivity to the advice, recommendations, and requests made (2024), which could include actions of a political nature.

Similarly, there is a large field, not yet fully exploited, with respect to literary translations and bilingual Spanish-Arabic editions, both by Peruvian and Kuwaiti authors, as well as the exchange of these editions in the respective national libraries, universities and training centers. In the case of Peru, it is essential to encourage the establishment of sections dedicated to Peru and Peruvian literature in local libraries and entities linked to books, as well as to promote the exchange and interaction of international book fairs.

On the other hand, and taking into account the scope of the so-called orange economy, it is advisable to channel cultural management towards cultural production chains in order not

only to enhance cultural and creative expressions as such, but also to promote the economic development of the actors involved, whether they are artists, managers, or anyone else linked to the cultural sector, that is, recognize that their artistic work is also a form of employment, a source of income and a means of family sustenance.

IV. Conclusions

Cultural diplomacy serves as an instrument for the construction and development of bilateral relations, which gives content, shapes and strengthens not only cultural aspects, but also political and economic ones. In the Peruvian-Kuwaiti case, it can be said that the cultural sphere was the most active within the great variety of aspects that make up the bilateral relationship.

Among the most relevant recent milestones in cultural matters is the entry into force of the cultural agreement signed between the two countries, which serves as a regulatory framework and starting point for cultural cooperation, applied to various activities in the literary, textile, photographic and artistic fields, granting facilities and aid for the realization of cultural exchanges.

There are pending actions that can be reinforced in the light of the cultural policies of each country, its promotion strategies, as well as its prioritization, whether in the field of gastronomic diplomacy, or others, which obey the intrinsic objectives of the foreign policy approaches, and the goals set in the political, economic and cultural spheres themselves.

ALFAJOR (ألفاجور)

Alfajores originated in Al-Andalus during the period of Arab presence in the Iberian Peninsula. Their name comes from the Arabic term *al-hasú* (“filling”), which referred to sweets made with honey and nuts.

The recipe arrived in the Americas with the Spanish and was adapted in each region. In *Tradiciones Peruanas*, Ricardo Palma notes that alfajores are a legacy of Muslim Spain, which—according to Manuel Atanasio—were sold by street vendors during the viceregal period (Coloma, 2004).

Over time, the Peruvian version developed its own identity, characterized by a lighter dough made from flour and cornstarch, and the classic filling of *manjar blanco* prepared with milk.



INGREDIENTS:

- 200 g all-purpose flour
- 150 g cornstarch
- 200 g butter (at room temperature)
- 80 g powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- (Optional) ½ teaspoon baking powder
- Powdered sugar for dusting
- Grated coconut

Manjar blanco

- 1 can evaporated milk
- 1 can condensed milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- (Optional) 1 cinnamon stick or 1 clove to infuse, removed at the end

PREPARATION:

1. Prepare the dough. In a bowl, beat the butter with the powdered sugar until smooth and creamy.
2. Add the vanilla and mix.
3. Add the dry ingredients. Incorporate the sifted flour, cornstarch, and baking powder (optional).
4. Mix until you obtain a soft dough; avoid overworking it to prevent toughness.
5. Wrap the dough in plastic film and refrigerate for 20–30 minutes to firm up.
6. Roll out the dough to a medium thickness and cut out circles.
7. Preheat the oven and place the cookies on a tray lined with parchment paper. Bake at 180 °C for 15 minutes, or until the edges are lightly golden.
8. Allow to cool, then fill with a generous layer of *manjar blanco* between two cookies.
9. Sprinkle powdered sugar over the cookie and decorate the edges with shredded coconut (optional).

Manjar blanco

1. In a heavy-bottomed pot, combine the condensed milk and evaporated milk.
2. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon.
3. Continue cooking until it thickens and turns a light caramel color (about 25–35 minutes).
4. Add the vanilla at the end.
5. If you used cinnamon or clove, remove it before cooling.



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**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF PERU**

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