



artesanías de colombia s. a.

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COLOMBIA.*

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INTERNATIONAL
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CUERPO INTERNACIONAL
DE SERVICIOS
EJECUTIVOS
(“CISE”)

REPORT No. 2 (FINAL) OF

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SIGFRIED S. y ETHYL G. ALPER
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E X E C U T I V E

T O

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ARTESANIAS DE COLOMBIA S. A.
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C L I E N T

DATED: May 20, 1971

PROJECT No. 3072

Report # 2

Mr.& Mrs.Sigfried S.Alper

to

Artesanias de Colombia

May 20th,1971

Project #3072

May 21st,1971. Project # 3072 ARTESANIAS DE COLOMBIA Bogota,Columbia

Report by: Ethyl G.Alper and Sigfried S.Alper of above project from March 5th to May 21st,1971.

Ethyl G.Alper and Sigfried S.Alper arrived in Bogota on February 21-71

This report is of the progress made in the project from the time of the first report written on March 5th,1971.

It should be read inconjunction with that report which made suggestions as to how the operation could be improved.

In the first report we suggested the unsaleable goods in the warehouse be disposed of to make room for current merchandise. We have been advised by the client that this has been done and on our recent visit to the warehouse the merchandise in stock looks fresh and there is stock of articles to fill orders.

We suggested more buyers be hired to cover the market. The client advises that this has been done.

We suggested showcase displays be made for hotel lobbies and the airport so travelers will be aware of the existence of Artesanias. Drawings of these showcases have been approved and they are now being constructed.

Numerous meetings have been held with Capt.Duque at the airport and the status of a display there is still being negotiated.

While we have not been able to get shops at the hotels yet a great step has been taken by the Alpers who obtained permission from both Mr.Stauffer,the Manager of the Tequendama Hotel and Mr.Howard the Manager of the new Bogota Hilton Hotel to allow Artesanias de Colombia to install artisans in the lobbies of each hotel who will make typical wares for the tourists to see. It is our opinion that this will be of great value to Artesanias de Colombia,as the average tourist has never seen a rug woven or a fabric woven by hand. At this display there will be a bi-lingual young lady who will give information and cards of Artesanias de Columbia,with the store locations written on the cards.

We suggested the leather luggage be individualized and that an additional line of luggage be made.

A very exciting line of waterproof,canvas luggage with leather trim has been designed by the Alpers. We have numerous samples and photos of this auxiliary line will be included in the new catalogue which is just about to go to press.

The leather Tulas(Duffle bags) which come in various sizes,are so oversold and the leather so difficult to obtain that we hope the new bags will help fill the gap until we can supply our customers with the leather bags. The new bags are not substitutes but additional items to supplement the line.

We are working on obtaining leather and having the Tulas made instead of buying them from the makers.

Artesanias de Colombia is working on getting the approval of the duty free \$10 gift item which can come into the US duty free.

We hope this will be approved in the near future as we think this one thing will benefit Artesanias immeasurably and be the means of dollars coming into the economy easily.

The Alpers are returning to New York on the 21st of May and hope to be able to convince the Colombian Trade Center, to allow a display of Artesanias de Colombia products to be displayed on the street floor of this building. The Colombian Trade Center is situated on East 57th Street in New York City, in the heart of the BEST retail trade area in New York. We have had a meeting with Mr. Gomez of the Pro Expo Bureau, and have asked him to aid us to gain this goal.

We suggested the gold jewelry be expanded and additional items be added to the line carried in the stores. Tourists will buy jewelry more readily than other items as it is good value, distinctive and easy to carry while traveling.

There are more jewelry items in stock now and we saw other items that are to be added to the line.

Gold filigree is distinctive and made in one section of Colombia by descendants of the Spanish who came here after the Moors had invaded Spain and taught the Spanish how to make this Middle East finely spun thread of gold into exquisite delicate jewelry. This art has been taught from father to son for many generations and the end products reflect the skill of the artisans.

We suggested that the merchandise in the warehouse have a perpetual inventory record.

The client advises that this has been done.

We also suggested that the prices in the stores be reevaluated as stores carrying similar wares price their things higher than ours. Mr. Napoleon Silva is in charge of this repricing and Alpers made a tour of the city and investigated all the tourist stores carrying typical merchandise and reported on the prices which are all more than Artesanias de Colombia charges.

Artesanias de Colombia were anxious to have the Alpers see the places where the arts and crafts are made since products are produced according to the climate and vegetation grown and naturally the animals that inhabit each area.

The Alpers escorted by members of Artesanias de Colombia have been to all the stores of Artesanias, in Medellin, Cartagena, and Bogota and also two of the Ateliers constructed by Artesanias de Colombia. These are work centers at which the rural citizens can work in ceramics, wool weaving, leather work, iron work or horn and where the products they make can be displayed and sold. These centers are located in Raquira, La Chamba, Pereira, Barbosa and Sandona.

The Alpers visited Raquira which is in Boyaca and is a very impressive center with classrooms, looms, ovens for ceramics and areas for iron work instruction. There are display areas too for the sale of the handicrafts made. The buildings are beautiful, in Spanish Colonial style which blend with the town in which they are situated.

In Boyaca are other artisan outlets for ceramics which are distinctive in green glaze and wool weaving done by local artisans on looms that must be one hundred years old and produce end products that would be acceptable in any market in the world.

Macrame knotting is also indigenous to Boyaca and the workrooms visited had exciting products, being made. The climate in Boyaca is cool like Bogota and the sheep provide wool that the local artisans shear, card, dye and weave into small saddle rugs of beautiful design and colors. In this area, leather is tanned by the same process as must have been used in Biblical times. It is soft, creamy and supple.

We visited La Chamba which is in tropical climate and where the famous "Chamba Ware" comes from. This center like the others melts into the surrounding countryside with its thatched roofs and bamboo window treatments. Here, they make the ceramics of black and natural terra cotta color clay, into cooking utensils and other objects. Women work on the ceramics, without wheels or molds and the products are delightful and useful articles. The men at La Chamba work on horn products and instructors are provided by Artesanias to guide them and channel their efforts into saleable articles.

We suggested that the road from the main highway to La Chamba which is about ten miles long and in dreadful condition, be improved so visitors will easily reach La Chamba to buy products. We also suggested, they have a small drink area where the tourist could buy a cold drink while shopping there.

We have investigated the stock in the stores and while the stores had little stock previously, now we find the stock is much improved.

In our investigation of the stores, we inspected the store in Cartagena and found the store on the top of the fort to be inaccessible and suggested that this store be closed and the new store which is in the best shopping section of the city, be concentrated on for future business. This is a lovely store, well lit and stocked.

The store in Medellin is a three level store and very well designed. It is in the center of the city and tourist shopping area.

When we visited Medellin, we also took a six hour trip to Carmen de Biborral where they make distinctive ceramics. This is a large factory that has been making dishes and other decorative as well as utilitarian objects for many years. The raw material from which the clay is made is indigenous to this area and we watched the entire process from the rough stone to the finished product, the baking, hand decorating and packing of the products for delivery to different parts of Columbia. We have none of this ware in the stores and we were told that it is so saleable that they can't keep it in stock. It is our opinion that these wares should constantly be on order to replenish the stocks in the stores.

In the office, we have suggested that they have tags and labels made for all the merchandise and that handicrafts also carry descriptive information about the origin of the product and its significance if any. Marcella is working on designs of tags and Mr. Velez is getting prices on printing and weaving them.

We drew up form letters in English to be used by the secretaries when they answer English letters. We went over the file of all letters written and correspondence had to compose typical letters for all problems. The English letters they have used are stilted and while in the original Spanish, they are beautiful and flowing, in translation the letters are not clear.

Any English letters are to be answered by the Alpers and we are happy to do so as we feel a letter is the first representative of Artesanias de Columbia and should be dignified and concise.

On March 24th, 1971 Dr. Echavarría asked the Alpers to visit the Womens Jail in Colombia with Susana de Goenaga. The purpose of the visit is to see the handicrafts they make there and suggest how they can improve them so that Artesanias could buy them for the stores. The jail maintains a store in the Bavaria Building to sell the products made and we visited there too. They have many objects like Macrame bags, embroidered napkins, horn decorative pendants and chains

and rugs of all sizes. We went to the jail which was a surprise in that it is a pleasant open area with buildings built around courtyards in which games were going on amidst much laughter. The inmates are mostly young women and we were told that they are serving terms for all kinds of offenses. They have childrens playgrounds and we saw a young woman carrying an infant. Nuns teach the women to sew on machines, weave rugs, embroider various objects. The Alpers suggested improving some of the designs and promised to contact them when they returned from Medellin next week.

Actually, this requires a whole project and arts and crafts teaching to women who have no desire to create handicrafts but do so as part of their sentences. The rugs are quite well done and orders can be placed for them to weave rugs in special patterns.

While we visited Medellin and the store we also went to see the trade school operated by Fabricato Para El Desarrollo Social. They teach both trades and handicrafts here and also maintain an employment agency to place the graduates in private industry. This is a good idea and can help these people gain skills and improve their living standards and earnings.

The new catalogues are being worked on and the Alpers suggest that these be photographed by the best photographers in Colombia as the catalogue is the only salesman the customer sees and the only sample he is presented with. We have been told that they bought the photography equipment and that Marcella, Hernan and Charles Hendricks took the pictures. They are all finished now and we hope they will be good but it really is not the way the job should have been done. When you think of the cost and labor of compiling a catalogue for a mail order firm in the US, this is far short of it. The old catalogues are dreadful blurred black and white photos. The new one is to have color photos and Alpers suggest tear sheets that can have order forms incorporated with the pictures and the back of the sheet to have the name and address of Artesanias de Columbia, so that the customer can fold the sheets and make an envelope of it for easy ordering. Dr. Del Castillo liked the idea and says he will use it. Alpers proof read all the English to be used in the catalogue and translated the descriptive categories into English too.

Alpers suggested Artesanias de Columbia sponsor yearly competitions in jewelry design, horn work, weaving of rugs and textiles, ceramics and other handicrafts, and award prizes for the winning designs and exhibit the designs in traveling exhibitions in Colombia. Then, reproduce the winners with designations on the articles that they are reproductions of the winning design in the enumerated category. The originals could be sold as the traveling exhibition moves from city to city and as it is sold it can be marked with an asterick like in an art show when a painting is sold. Delivery to be made to the buyer when the exhibition is over. In this way Artesanias could minimize the cost of the exhibition and competition and reap excellent publicity

Ethyl Alper wrote an article that was published in the Andean Times which is a bi-monthly English newspaper printed in Colombia. The article is entitled "Operation Artesanias!" (Article on page following) She also wrote an article to be published by the Hilton Hotel Magazine called "Hail, Artesanias de Columbia". (Copy annexed)

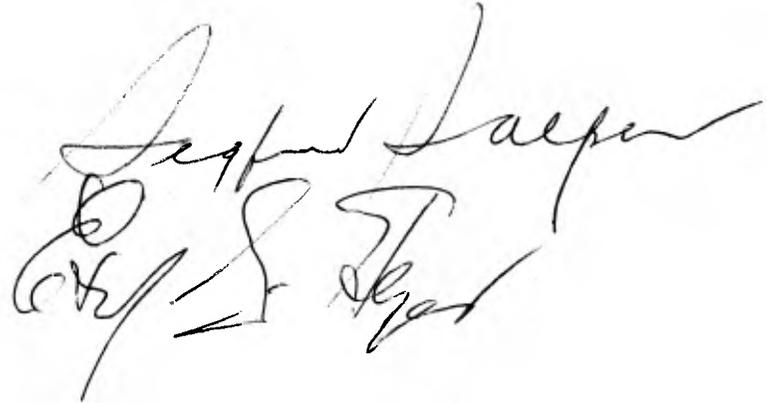
The Alpers were invited to the Board of Directors meeting of Artesanias de Columbia. Dr. Angullo an official of Turism was there and Mrs. Alper suggested she would write an article for a Columbian Handicrafts trip, like we have golf or opera or other special interests

trips. He liked the idea and promised to sponsor the trip. When the article is complete it will be presented to Dr. Echavarria first and if he approves it will go to the Turismo Bureau.

The Alpers contacted the editor of Ladies Home Journal to do a feature on the arts and crafts in Columbia. The editor, Mr. Nathan Mandelbaum promised to come to Columbia with the Alpers when they return here in July

WE have great confidence in the future of Artesanias de Columbia under the leadership of Dr. Federico Echavarria and we feel that this government agency will be one of the most important in the development of the Columbia.

We are looking forward to our return and the further progress of Artesanias de Columbia.



Joseph Alper
C. S. Alper

OPERATION ARTESANIAS

Continued from previous page

this distribution is not easy since the locations have varying climates, and products that are saleable in San Andres (a beach resort) are not marketable in Bogota (a spring-like climate).

To encourage the rural population to produce saleable merchandise without becoming industrialized, Artesanías de Colombia has established several rural centers: two have been completed and three are under construction. Those completed are located at Ráquira (Boyaca) and La Chamba (Tolima). Soon to be completed, centers at Risaralda (Pereira), Barbosa (Antioquia) and Sandona (Nariño).

These centers will provide a work and display area for the local artisans. Instructors, ovens for firing, looms and iron work ateliers are among the conveniences provided by Artesanías in these centers.

The buildings at Raquira are architecturally very pleasing and there are facilities for weaving, ceramics, ovens and wheels, classrooms for instruction and display areas for the finished merchandise.

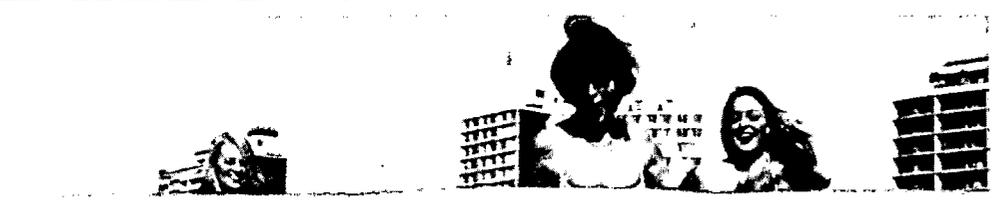
Every section of the country produces different products. Each has been so isolated from its neighbors that individual skills were developed untouched by the influences of adjacent towns or hamlets. The terrain is mountainous and travel is limited to burros or newly cut mountain roads.

The patronage plan of Artesanías de Colombia is in keeping with that of sculptors and artists in 17th and 18th century Europe, conserving individual talent in the face of limited financial resources and the industrial revolution. Handcrafted articles are rapidly becoming a past art in the United States and Europe. Where they still do exist, they should be nurtured and protected.

The young, enthusiastic people who are the moving force of Artesanías de Colombia are making this project a success, and, in so doing, raising the standard of living of Colombia's rural community.



La Chamba, Artesanias de Colombia (photo by Fotograficas Ponton).



THE FIRST "COLMAO"
OF COLOMBIA

THE ANDEAN TIMES

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DIR. W. PINNEY

OPERATION ARTESANIAS

How does one go from the First Century to the Twentieth in one jump?

In this age of advanced technology, it is difficult to comprehend that some areas of the world have diametrically opposed conditions existing within the boundaries of their countries. On the one hand Colombia has modern cities, scientific and industrial skills, technology in construction, chemicals and medicine. On the other hand, it also has rural areas, undeveloped and untouched by what we like to think of as "civilization" —communities that live and work as they did when Bolivar fought for the independence of Gran Colombia, or even before. The separation of these two cultures is only a few miles.

Colombia, rich in so many ways, is struggling to raise the standard of living and wage scale of the agrarian masses. The industrial revolution experienced by the Western world

Continued on next page

ARTICLE BY EGA TO GO INTO HILTON MAGAZINE

HAIL, ARTESANIAS DE COLUMBIA !.

In the northernmost tip of South America is a capsule civilization that contains all the climates of the world, all the vegetation, all the technical skills, all the handicrafts, all the products of almost every country in the urban centers of Europe, Eastern and Western countries.

If you start at Bogota, you will find a city of perpetual springtime with towering skyscrapers, excellent food and hotels, magnificent museums and concert halls. Notable among the museums is the GOLD MUSEUM which has a display of huacas (gold artifacts found in graves of ancient civilizations in this country) mounted with theatricality equal to the most outstanding impressario.

Towering modern design skyscrapers pierce the 9000 ft. altitude, against a backdrop of lush green mountains reminiscent of Hong Kong or San Francisco and just as exciting and stimulating.

Other cities like Medellin, Cali and Cartagena are also charming and interesting to the traveler. Their climates differ from Bogota since they are lower in altitude and naturally, warmer in climate, while Cartagena is at sea level and still has the old Spanish forts and Hispanic atmosphere.

Counterpoint to this is the discovery that in spite of all this urban civilization, there also exists something this is becoming extinct in the machine, mass producing Western and European worlds, namely, handicrafts made and produced as they were hundreds of years ago by craftsmen whose skills were learned from their forefathers for many generations and passed on from father to son.

To develop these skills and give an outlet for the end products and thereby raise the standard of living of the rural population, Artesanias de Colombia was created by the government as a non-profit organization, energetically directed by Dr. Federico Echavarria. The objective of Artesanias de Colombia is to buy, distribute and sell these handicrafts in stores operated by Artesanias de Colombia in

Bogota, Medellin, Cartagena and San Andres, and also to export these products to outlets all over the world.

To improve the quality of the products, Artesanias de Colombia has built five ateliers centers in different parts of the country where artisans can improve their techniques, work, display and sell their wares.

Two centers are operating now. One is in La Chamba which is south of Bogota in tropical climate. They specialize in making Chamba Ware which is a type of ceramic not available in any other district. Instructors are available to improve their arts and crafts and make available to the artisan new models in horn and leather products. Another center is at Raquira (Boyaca) which is situated in Boyaca, famous as an art center for ceramics of another type and also for weaving and artistic expression in rug making and exquisite macrame knotting. The climate in Raquira is cool like in Bogota as opposed to the warm atmosphere of La Chamba. Each center is architecturally designed to conform with the buildings around it. La Chamba with its vaulted thatched roofs, blends with other tropical buildings adjacent to it, while Raquira, which has climate like Bogota, has ceramic tile roofs like others in the village. Both centers have instructors, workrooms, display and selling areas to give the artisans an opportunity to dispose of their products.

Other centers are being completed at Pereira (Risaralda), Barbosa (Antioquia) and Sandona (Narino).

Because of the mountainous terrain and inaccessability of different communities, each hamlet is a separate entity untouched by its neighbors and develops arts crafts and skills as varied from the next village as if the products were made by another nation or civilization. Varying altitudes produce different temperatures, vegetation and accordingly different natural products used by artisans in the creation of arts and crafts.

It is interesting to note that these artisans do not pursue their crafts as a means of livelihood, but do the normal rural chores, working in their leisure time on these varied handicrafts.

It is a tremendous task Artesanias de Colombia has set for itself. To teach, sell, display, and distribute these wares, to encourage and stimulate the creative talents of the artisans is a monumental undertaking.

If imagination, hard work and diligence are catalysts, Artesanias de Colombia must succeed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Edy E. S. S.', written in a cursive style.