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DELFIN AMAZON CRUISES CELEBRATES TWENTY YEARS OF PERUVIAN HOSPITALITY AND AMAZONIAN CRAFT

Founded in 2006 by Aldo Macchiavello and Lissy Urteaga, the pioneering river cruise company marks two decades of relationships with the people, cultures and landscapes of the Peruvian Amazon.

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Delfín Amazon Cruises celebrates its twentieth anniversary this year, marking two decades of intimate river journeys and a distinctly Peruvian approach to hospitality. From its first vessel to its recognition as the world's first cruise company admitted to Relais & Châteaux in 2017, Delfín has built an experience shaped by Amazonian knowledge, cuisine and craftsmanship. Its anniversary honours the founders, crew, artisans and community partners who have made that experience possible.

[Delfin History](#)

[Relais & Châteaux milestone](#)



Founded by Aldo Macchiavello and Lissy Urteaga, Delfin began with the idea of welcoming travellers into the Amazon with the warmth and intimacy of a family home. Local woods, natural fibres, art and handmade objects shaped the atmosphere aboard. The surrounding region supplied both the inspiration and the expertise, establishing a design language that continues to distinguish the company's three vessels.

The founding vision.

While Aldo oversaw the first vessel's development, Lissy travelled into Pacaya Samiria with Delfin's first guide, Adonay Rodríguez. Together, they explored waterways, developed itineraries and met women whose knowledge of weaving and natural dyes would become integral to Delfin's identity. These early encounters began a relationship between hospitality and craftsmanship that has continued for twenty years.

This early exploration also shaped the first Delfin vessel, designed to take guests further into the reserve. With just four suites, **Delfin I** offers an intimate and highly exclusive experience, while its smaller size allows it to navigate deeper into the waterways of Pacaya Samiria, reaching areas that larger vessels cannot. From the beginning, its design reflected Delfin's approach to the Amazon: going further into the landscape to create a more personal connection with the river, its wildlife and the people who call it home.

Delfin's founding story.

What began with six women grew into a network of hundreds of artisans across the Amazon. Lissy worked with makers using palm fibres and colours drawn from fruits, leaves, roots and bark, creating opportunities for their work to be displayed and sold to travellers. More than eight artisan markets were established within the reserve, expanding the places where women could present their work and connect directly with customers.

Delfin's artisan programme.

The significance of this work lies in its continuity. Sustained purchasing relationships and access to markets give weaving, dyeing and other inherited skills an ongoing economic role. For the women who practise them, these techniques connect family livelihoods with knowledge of the forest's materials. For Delfin, the resulting pieces have helped define how guests encounter the Amazon, through objects made by people whose lives and expertise belong to the region.

Craft and community relationships.

That connection is visible in the daily life of the vessels. Chambira animals and woven pieces appear in table settings, linking meals aboard to the communities where they were made. Among the participating groups is Las Achiras of San Francisco, led by Doris Nashnato Maytahuari, whose fibre birds have become a recognisable Delfin signature. These pieces also accompany the company to international trade gatherings, carrying the makers' work beyond the river.

The artisans behind Delfin's craft.



Lissy's contribution as co-founder and creative director has been to bring these relationships into the details of hospitality. Through repeated visits, collaboration and an enduring attention to materials and making, she has helped create an experience in which Amazonian artistry has a visible, practical place. The anniversary recognises the women whose skill and enterprise have shaped that work alongside her.

Lissy's creative direction.

Delfin's culinary history reflects the same commitment to regional talent. Chef Isaac Saavedra, born in Iquitos and involved with the company since its early years, has developed a cuisine that gives Amazonian ingredients the attention and technique they deserve. Aji charapita, macambo, paiche and regional herbs form part of a culinary vocabulary rooted in the forest and river. His work has helped bring Amazonian food to an international audience while retaining its connection to local tastes and knowledge.

Delfin's culinary story.



The company's admission to Relais & Châteaux in 2017 marked an international milestone for that approach. Equally significant is the continuity within the team: crew members who have remained since the early years, sharing their knowledge and shaping the personal welcome that guests associate with Delfin. The anniversary acknowledges the expertise accumulated across kitchens, decks, cabins and forest trails—and the people who pass it on.

Hospitality and crew continuity.

Beyond the vessels, Delfin's community work has included school supplies, healthcare and dental campaigns, and partnerships that provide work maintaining forest trails and guiding visitors. These relationships form a broader history of engagement from which its newer environmental and cultural initiatives have developed.

Community, education and care.

As the company enters its third decade, BioRest by Delfin brings ecological science and traditional knowledge together in biocultural restoration. The programme works with communities to reconnect native plants with their ecological, food, medicinal and craft uses.

These initiatives continue a principle established in Delfin's earliest years: the knowledge and participation of local people shape the quality and meaning of the journey. The next chapter builds on twenty years of learning how hospitality, cultural continuity and care for the forest depend on one another.

For Delfin, the anniversary is a recognition of what sustained relationships make possible. Its legacy lives in the work of an artisan, the judgement of a guide, the knowledge of a cook and the welcome of a crew member. Those contributions will continue to shape the company's future on the river.



ABOUT DELFÍN AMAZON CRUISES

Founded in Peru in 2006 by Aldo Macchiavello and Lissy Urteaga, Delfín Amazon Cruises operates Delfín I, Delfín II and Delfín III in the Peruvian Amazon. The world's first cruise company to join Relais & Châteaux, Delfín combines intimate river journeys, naturalist-led exploration, Amazonian cuisine and locally rooted design.



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