

## AFGHANISTAN: History and Cultural Norms



The U.S. 20-year war in Afghanistan ended on August 31, 2021. Tens of thousands of Afghan evacuees were air-lifted out of the international airport in Kabul. The U.S. is resettling Afghan refugees, in many cities, after rigorous security vetting. We compiled a brief history and cultural norms below, about Afghans for our readers. It is imperative to have a multicultural perspective if you encounter an Afghan!

### Brief History & Background

Ahmad Shah Durrani unified the Pashtun tribes and founded Afghanistan in 1747. The country served as a buffer between the British and Russian Empires until it won independence from national British control in 1919. A brief experiment in increased democracy ended in a 1973 coup and a 1978 communist counter-coup. The Soviet Union invaded in 1979 to support the tottering Afghan communist regime, touching off a long and destructive war. The USSR withdrew in 1989 under relentless pressure by internationally supported anti-communist mujahidin rebels. A series of subsequent civil wars saw Kabul finally fall in 1996 to the Taliban, a hardline Pakistani-sponsored movement that emerged in 1994 to end the country's civil war and anarchy. Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, a US, Allied, and anti-Taliban "Northern Alliance" military action toppled the Taliban for sheltering Osama bin Laden.

The UN-sponsored Bonn Conference in 2001 established a process for political reconstruction that included the adoption of a new constitution, a presidential election in 2004, and National Assembly elections in 2005. In December 2004, Hamid Karzai became the first democratically elected president of Afghanistan, and the National Assembly was inaugurated the following December. President Karzai was reelected in August 2009 for a second term. In September 2014, Ghani and Abdullah agreed to form the Government of National Unity, with Ghani inaugurated as president and Abdullah elevated to the newly created position of chief executive officer. The day after the inauguration, the Ghani administration signed the US-Afghan Bilateral Security Agreement and NATO Status of Forces Agreement, which provided the legal basis for the post-2014 international military presence in Afghanistan. After two postponements, the next presidential election was held in September 2019. President Ghani remained in power until Kabul fell to the Taliban in August 2021.

### Afghan Social and Cultural Norms

Afghan society is deeply steeped in traditions, molded by Islam but also the cultures of Persia and Central Asia. Afghan tribes take great pride in their hospitality. Do not refer to Afghans as "Arabs" or "Middle Eastern". Afghanistan is not located in the Middle East. It is a South-Central Asian country composed of many different non-Arab ethnicities.

Afghans always shake hands with the right hand as the left is considered unclean. A handshake is a standard greeting among strangers. Male handshakes are quite gentle, but no weakness of character is implied

To Afghans, some physical gestures are considered extremely rude and offensive. These include winking, pointing at another person with the toe, heel, or any other part of the foot; moving objects with the foot; showing the sole of the shoe to others; raising one's voice in public; or using the "thumbs up" hand gesture.

Do not insist to an Afghan to tell you about their family. Many Afghans have been separated from relatives or had family members killed. To learn more about the Afghan culture and people, [CLICK HERE](#).

SEPTEMBER 2021

Division Director's Message



**U. Desmond Alufohai**  
Director

Protocol & International Affairs Division  
Miami-Dade Aviation Department

Fall season has arrived, and we are back! Fall symbolizes change, balance, preservation, and reconnection. It also brings a certain melancholy!

With the end of the historic U.S. 20-year war in Afghanistan, in August 2021, many Afghan refugees are bound for U.S. cities. It is imperative to have a multicultural mindset if you encounter an Afghan!

We extend our congratulations to Ralph Cutié, MDAD's new Director and CEO, and welcome David Whitaker, new President & CEO of the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Honorable Kazuhiro Nakai, Japan's new Consul General in Miami, Florida, SSA Anwar Shanahan, Alex Fuentes, TAI's new Deputy Airport Coordinator at MIA and our intern, Jonathan Ryans.

We are certain that you will enjoy the brief history of international diplomacy and learn about the Congress of Vienna of 1815. We take this opportunity to acknowledge all nations celebrating their national day or independence this month. We also salute Hispanic Americans for their invaluable contributions to this country.

Lastly, kudos to MIA - ranked as the best mega airport in North America for passenger satisfaction from July 2020 through July 2021 - by the prestigious J.D. Power company.

As always, please be safe!

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# BRIEFS & NOTES

## [MIA is first U.S. Airport to test COVID-19 Detector Dogs](#)



As part of its ongoing effort to help stop the spread of COVID-19, Miami International Airport is now getting help from some furry new friends: detector dogs specially trained with protocols created by the Global Forensic and Justice Center (GFJC) at Florida International University (FIU). Thanks to a resolution sponsored by Miami-Dade County Commissioner Kionne L. McGhee and approved by the Board of County Commissioners in March 2021, the Miami-Dade Aviation Department is partnering with the GFJC at FIU and American Airlines to host a 30-day COVID-19 detector dog pilot program at MIA, making it the first U.S. airport to test COVID-sniffing canines. The dogs are deployed at an employee security checkpoint.

After hundreds of training sessions at FIU's Modesto Maidique Campus in Miami this year, the detector dogs achieved accuracy rates from 96 to 99 percent for detecting COVID-19 in published peer-reviewed, double-blind trials. The two dogs in the pilot program at MIA – Cobra (a Belgian Malinois) and One Betta (a Dutch Shepherd) – have been trained to alert to the scent of COVID-19. The virus causes metabolic changes in a person that result in the production of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The VOCs are excreted by a person's breath and sweat, producing a scent that trained dogs can detect. The metabolic changes are common for all people, regardless of their individual scents. If a dog indicates an individual is carrying the odor of the virus, that person is directed to get a rapid COVID test.

## [MIA Ranked Best Mega Airport in North America by J.D. Power](#)



Based on surveys from U.S. or Canadian residents who traveled through at least one U.S. or Canadian airport from July 2020 through July 2021, Miami International Airport was ranked the best mega airport in North America for passenger satisfaction by the [J.D. Power 2021 North America Airport Satisfaction Study](#)<sup>SM</sup>, released on September 22. The annual J.D. Power study measures overall traveler satisfaction with mega, large, and medium North American airports by examining six factors (in order of importance): terminal facilities; airport arrival/departure; baggage claim; security check; check-in/baggage check; and food, beverage, and retail. This year, MIA ranked highest among mega airports in the bag claim and food, beverage, and retail categories.

## **2021 National Hispanic Heritage Month**



Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period starting on September 15 and ending on October 15. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988, on the approval of Public Law 100-402.

The day of September 15 is significant because it is the anniversary of independence for Latin American countries Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively. Also, Columbus Day or Día de la Raza, which is October 12, falls within this 30-day period. The United States is home to over 60 million Hispanic Americans all of which contribute to the culture and society, making them the largest minority group in the United States.

This month is used to embody and showcase those Hispanic Americans who have served, worked, and contributed to the American values as well as bring their own Hispanic culture into this wonderful country. Hard working Hispanic Americans have contributed a great amount of time and effort into this country's success. In doing so, they also created a life for themselves and their families. With such a large population of Hispanic Americans in the United States it is imperative that this culture is celebrated. Click the following link to view [President Biden's Proclamation on National Hispanic Heritage Month, 2021](#).

## **2021 National Suicide Prevention Month**



September is National Suicide Prevention Month and September 10, 2021, was [World Suicide Prevention Day](#). Suicide is the act of intentionally causing one's own death. About 700,000 people, or one-in-100, died by suicide in 2019, the second leading cause of death among people aged 15-29, according to the [World Health Organization](#). People who commit suicide do so at any phase of their lives. Each suicide, the report states, is a tragedy that affects families, communities, and entire countries, and leaves behind long-lasting effect.

The United States has one of the highest suicide rates among wealthy nations. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), there were 47,511 deaths by suicide in 2019 in the U.S., and suicide is the 10<sup>th</sup> ranked cause of deaths. [The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 180 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices.



# CONGRATULATIONS

## Ralph Cutié named new Miami-Dade Aviation Director and CEO



Miami-Dade Mayor Daniella Levine Cava announced the appointment of Rafael (Ralph) Cutié – who had been serving in the role as Interim Director – as the [new Director and CEO of the Miami-Dade Aviation Department](#) following a search. Mr. Cutié is a 30-year County veteran with more than 33 years of professional experience in the planning, organizing, directing, management and maintenance of large-scale facility and capital improvement engineering/construction projects. His experience within County government spans Miami-Dade Transit, the Office of Capital Improvements, and the Internal Services Department.

He has acted as Interim Director of the Aviation Department since June; prior to that role, he served as Assistant Director for Facilities Management and Engineering, overseeing the largest and most diverse division within the Aviation Department – comprised of more than 440 employees, an annual operating budget of nearly \$123 million and a reserve maintenance budget of \$30 million. This division – which includes facilities maintenance planning, engineering and construction, facilities maintenance and utilities, terminal maintenance, and general aviation airports maintenance – provides maintenance services as well as utilities, public works, and cargo area support to MIA and the County’s four general aviation airports, responds to emergencies and critical issues that require engineering expertise, and is responsible for all in-house maintenance-related engineering, architecture, construction, and interior design projects. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Construction Management from Florida International University (FIU).

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## David Whitaker - New President and CEO, Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau



[David Whitaker has been appointed the next President & CEO](#) of the destination marketing organization (DMO) for Greater Miami and Miami Beach. The appointment is a homecoming for Whitaker who served as a member of the GMCVB team for 17 years (1990 – 2007), most recently as the organization’s Executive Vice President & Chief Marketing Officer.

Mr. Whitaker left Miami initially in 2007 due to an appointment to the role of President & CEO of Tourism Toronto (now known as Destination Toronto), the DMO for Toronto, where he led the organization for eight years. During his tenure in Toronto, the organization was voted North America’s top convention and visitors bureau and convention center in a poll of over 650 meeting planners. Whitaker led successful bids to host an NBA All-Star Game, Pan American/Parapan American Games and World Pride in 2014. The organization was also central to promoting numerous major festivals including the annual Toronto International Film Festival and Caribana – one of the world’s largest Caribbean heritage celebrations.

Upon conclusion of his tenure in Toronto and over the past five years, Whitaker has served as the President & CEO of Choose Chicago, the DMO for Chicago. During his tenure in Chicago, he had the responsibility of promoting and selling the largest convention center in the United States, McCormick Place. Under his leadership, the DMO successfully bid on and hosted an NBA All-Star Game, an MLS All-Star Game, North America’s first Laver Cup international tennis tournament, a NCAA Frozen Four, and numerous international soccer and rugby events. Chicago, as a destination, has been voted in a prestigious poll of savvy readers of Condé Nast Traveler Readers’ Choice Awards as “Best Big City” to visit for an unprecedented four consecutive years (2017 – 2020), all of which occurred under Whitaker’s leadership.

He served on the executive staff of the United Way of Miami-Dade prior to his earlier stint at the GMCVB and is a proud graduate of the University of South Florida with a bachelor’s degree in Mass Communication & Public Relations. Mr. Whitaker and his wife, Lily enjoy long walks and even longer times cooking together. They are both avid boaters and taking in the performing arts.

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## Albert Fuentes - New Deputy Airport Coordinator, Travelers Aid International



Mr. Fuentes is the new Deputy Airport Coordinator for [Travelers Aid International](#) (TAI). He will facilitate the [International Visitor Leadership Program](#) (IVLP) connections for TAI. Mr. Fuentes served as an intern and Executive Assistant to the Marketing Division Director, Miami-Dade Aviation Department. He is particularly interested in learning more about the immigration process he and his family went through and how to make it easier for others. He graduated from Florida Memorial University with a Bachelor of Science in Aviation Management. In his free time, he does woodworking and gardening. Ask him what he's building next!

TAI’s mission is to aid people in transit who are in distress, through our direct services and through services provided by our member organizations. TAI operates customer service program at the following airports: DCA, IAD, JFK, EWR, BDL, and MIA.

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## Meet Protocol Intern - Jonathan Ryans



Mr. Ryans is a student at Florida Memorial University pursuing a bachelor’s degree in Aviation Management. He served as an intern at the Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport in 2019. He obtained an Associates in Science degree in Aviation Management from Broward College. His passion is to become an airshow pilot or a corporate pilot. He loves running, networking and socializing with people.

# WELCOME / BIENVENUE / BIENVENIDO

## The Honorable Kazuhiro Nakai, New Consul General of Japan in Miami



Mr. Nakai was appointed Consul General of Japan in Miami on August 7, 2021 and assumed his duties on September 16, 2021. Prior to Miami, he was posted in Geneva as Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission at the Japanese Delegation to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva from July 2018 to August 2021. He represented Japan in various disarmament meetings and served as Chairperson of the Meeting of Experts of the Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention (2019-2021).

He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1985. He has extensive experience in security, disarmament and non-proliferation having served in Tokyo as Director of the Biological Weapons Convention and Chemical Weapons Division (2003-2004) and Deputy Director of the Non-Proliferation Division (1994-1997). He was also appointed to the Diet of Japan's Lower House Research Bureau as Deputy Director of Security/International Terrorism Division (2008-2010).

Another unique feature of his career was his appointment in the Ministry of Education as Director of International Education (2010-2012). He was engaged in and responsible for the complete renovation of the Japanese school curriculum of foreign language, shifting its approach from a longstanding tradition of translation-orientated to communication-orientated. This work included radical developments, such as bringing forward the start of English language courses to the elementary level and organizing high school English language courses to be conducted fully in English. Before assuming this challenging assignment, he was the Director of the Cultural Affairs Division in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2006-2007), giving him a good base of experience working with staff across the Ministry of Education.

Mr Nakai's experience of overseas postings is also very extensive, covering Kenya (1988-89), Cambodia (1997-99), Canada (1999-2001), Pakistan (2001-2003), Kuwait (2012-15), New Zealand (2015-2018), and Switzerland (2018-2021). Mr. Nakai studied Politics, Philosophy and Economics at the University of Oxford (Worcester College). Prior to this, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Foreign Studies at Sophia University in Tokyo.

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## Anwar Shanahan - New Senior Special Agent, Miami Field Office



Effective July 2021, Senior Special Agent Anwar Shanahan was transferred to Miami Field Office Protection/Airport Squad. Mr. Shanahan began his career with the U.S. Secret Service in the New York Field Office in 2003. In 2011, he was transferred to the Dignitary Protective Division, where he was assigned to the protective detail of former Homeland Security Secretary, Janet Napolitano. In 2013, he was transferred to the Presidential Protective Division, working under Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump. In February 2019, he was transferred to the Miami Field Office. He was born and raised in New York, NY. Mr. Anwar graduated from Fordham University with a bachelor's degree in Political Science.

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## History of Labor Day in America



The [Technological Revolution and innovations](#) of the nineteenth century ushered in a period of rapid standardization and industrialization that profoundly changed daily life and society. Before, goods were manufactured on a small scale, with one individual typically guiding the process from start to finish. As technology improved and manufacturing became mechanized, the role of workers changed. Instead of guiding the process from start to finish, each worker now performed only one specific part. Even though this led to higher levels of productivity, profit, and prosperity, workers were often adversely affected by unsafe working conditions, long hours, and systemic exploitation. While labor activists were actively engaged in improving workers lives and working conditions, they were also pushing for a [federal holiday](#) to recognize the many contributions the American workforce had made to America's strength, prosperity, and well-being.

Although it is not clear who is the "Founder of Labor Day", two men have a solid claim to this title, [Peter J. McGuire and Matthew Maguire](#). On Tuesday, September 5, 1882, both attended the first Labor Day parade organized by the Central Labor Union in New York City. New York was the first state to introduce a bill to recognize Labor Day, but Oregon, on February 21, 1887, was the first to pass legislation recognizing Labor Day. By 1894, 23 states had enacted Labor Day, and on June 28, 1894, [President Grover Cleveland signed S. 730](#) into law, making the first Monday in September a national holiday. Today, Americans continue to celebrate Labor Day with parades, picnics and parties, keeping alive the spirit of the holiday as envisioned 140 years ago when the [first proposal](#) suggested that the day should be observed with a parade to exhibit "the strength and esprit de corps of the trade and labor organizations", then followed by a festival for the workers and their families. Click on the following link to view President Biden's Labor Day Proclamation: [A Proclamation on Labor Day, 2021](#).

# INDEPENDENCE AND NATIONAL DAYS (SEPTEMBER)

**September 1, 1991 – Uzbekistan:** Uzbekistan gained independence from the Soviet Union.

**September 2, 1945 – Vietnam:** In early 1945, Japan ousted the French administration in Vietnam. Just a few hours after Japan had formally surrendered to the Allies on September 2, 1945, Ho Chi Minh declared Vietnam's independence from France.

**September 6, 1968 – Eswatini:** Swaziland, as Eswatini was known until April 2018, achieved independence from the United Kingdom on September 6, 1968.

**September 7, 1822 – Brazil:** Prince regent Dom Pedro declared Brazil's independence from Portugal on September 7, 1822.

**September 8, 1991 –North Macedonia:** A referendum endorsed independence from Yugoslavia in 1991.

**September 9, 1991 – Tajikistan:** Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, Tajikistan gained independence on September 9, 1991.

**September 15, 1821 – Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua:** On September 15, 1821, envoys from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua signed the Act of Independence of Central America, proclaiming their independence from Spain.

**September 16, 1810 – Mexico:** Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, a Catholic priest, and the father of Mexican independence, urged his fellow Mexicans to take up arms against the Spanish. His proclamation, known as the "Grito de Dolores" marked the start of the Mexican War of Independence. Although the war did not end until 1821, September 16, is celebrated annually as Mexico's Independence Day.

**September 16, 1975 – Papua New Guinea:** Papua New Guinea was granted independence from the Australia-administered UN trusteeship.

**September 18, 1810 – Chile:** In 1810, a group of Santiago residents met in open council to name a governing board, taking the first steps towards independence from Spain. Although independence was not officially declared until February 12, 1818, and the last Spanish stronghold did not fall until 1826, September 18 is celebrated annually as Chile's Independence Day.

**September 19, 1983 – St. Kitts and Nevis:** In 1967, the island territory of Saint Christopher-Nevis-Anguilla became an associated state of the United Kingdom with full internal autonomy. After Anguilla seceded in 1971, the remaining islands achieved independence as Saint Kitts and Nevis on September 19, 1983.

**September 21, 1964 – Malta:** Malta was a British colony from 1814 until it gained independence in 1964. Since December 13, 1974, Malta has been a republic.

**September 21, 1981 – Belize:** British Honduras, a British colony since 1862, was renamed Belize on June 1, 1973. On September 21, 1981, Belize gained its independence from the United Kingdom.

**September 21, 1991 – Armenia:** Approximately 95% of Armenian voters voted for independence from the Soviet Union and the establishment of an independent state.

**September 22, 1908 – Bulgaria:** Prince Ferdinand declared Bulgaria's independence from the Ottoman Empire on September 22, 1908.

**September 22, 1960 – Mali:** As the colony of French Soudan, Mali was part of the Federation of French West Africa. In 1959, Soudan and Senegal joined to form the Mali Federation, which became fully independent within the French Community on June 20, 1960, but collapsed two months later when Senegal seceded. On September 22, 1960, Soudan proclaimed itself the Republic of Mali and withdrew from the French Community.

**September 23, 1932 – Saudi Arabia:** King Abdulaziz proclaimed the unification of the country as a kingdom on September 23, 1932.

**September 24, 1973 – Guinea-Bissau:** On this day, Guinea-Bissau declared its independence from Portugal.

**September 27, 1991 – Turkmenistan:** From 1924 until regaining its independence on October 27, 1991, Turkmenistan was a Soviet Republic. Since 2018, Independence Day has been officially celebrated on September 27.

**September 30, 1966 – Botswana:** In 1965, after 80 years as a British protectorate, Bechuanaland attained self-government. On September 30, 1966, it became the independent Republic of Botswana.



Your bags are packed, and ready to go... but do you have everything you need to board the airplane? Many travelers are not aware of international travel restrictions and requirements, such as visitor's visas, foreign entry, vaccination requirements, etc. Visit [The International Air Transport Association's \(IATA\) Travel Centre](#) before your next trip. The IATA Travel Centre provides accurate passport, visa, and health requirements information at-a-glance.

## ABOUT US

The core mission of MDAD's Protocol and International Affairs Division is -

*To facilitate the movement of official guests, delegations, dignitaries and VIPs through MIA and support the airport's international programs and initiatives.*

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For comments, suggestions, event announcements or to opt-out, please send us an email.

