



**MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY**  
**News Release**

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*Tourism is Everybody's Business!*

**CHRISTOPHER A. CONCEPCION**  
MVA MANAGING DIRECTOR

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For further information, contact:  
Christopher A. Concepcion, Managing Director  
Marianas Visitors Authority  
Telephone: (670) 664-3200/3201 Facsimile: (670) 664-3237  
[mva@mymarianas.com](mailto:mva@mymarianas.com)  
[www.mymarianas.com](http://www.mymarianas.com)

**MVA: EASY TO GET TO TINIAN HOT PEPPER FESTIVAL**

**Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI)** – It's easy than ever this year to get to the 13<sup>th</sup> Tinian Hot Pepper Festival, slated for Feb. 18-19, 2017, in the home of the legendary Chamorro chief Taga.

Organizers and supporters are offering extra flights and ferry transportation between Saipan and Tinian, as well as a free shuttle between the airport, seaport, and festival grounds at Tachogna Beach.

“With the closure of the Tinian Dynasty, it's imperative to make it more convenient for people to get to and from the Tinian Hot Pepper Festival, whether it's a day trip or an overnight visit,” said Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) Managing Director Christopher A. Concepcion. “Tinian is a welcoming, clean, and historically rich destination, and we want to make it as easy as we can for visitors to enjoy this unique event hosted by Tinian.”

Star Marianas Air, in cooperation with the MVA and Tinian Mayor's Office, will extend its normal hours of operation during the festival. On Feb. 17 and Feb. 18, scheduled flights will be extended by three hours, with the last flights leaving Tinian at 9:30 p.m. To supplement its

regularly scheduled flights that leave Saipan hourly at the top of the hour (starting from 7 a.m.) and Tinian hourly at the bottom of the hour (starting from 7:30 a.m.), Star Marianas will be operating additional aircraft to provide a Saipan – Tinian shuttle service. Advanced bookings are accepted, but travelers can also show up at the airport on Saipan or Tinian and expect to be transported in a timely fashion. To minimize airport waiting times, interested travelers are encouraged to contact Star Marianas Air's reservations team at 433-9996 or 9998 to find out if a particular time of the day is expected to be busier than others. For more information visit [www.starmarianasair.com](http://www.starmarianasair.com).

In addition, the MVA will offer ferry service on Feb. 17-20, 2017. The ferry schedule is: Feb. 17, departing Saipan at 6 p.m. and departing Tinian at 8:30 p.m.; Feb. 18, departing Saipan at 9 a.m. and departing Tinian at 6:30 p.m.; Feb. 19, departing Saipan at 9 a.m. and departing Tinian at 5 p.m.; and Feb. 20, departing Saipan at 8 a.m. and departing Tinian at 12 p.m. The Super Emerald ferry will depart at Commonwealth Ports Authority 1 Dock at the Port of Saipan, and passengers must check in one hour before departure.

Ferry round trip cost is \$20 (ages 3-11), \$35 (ages 12 and older), and free for children ages 0-2. For one way, the cost is \$10 (ages 3-11), \$18 (age 12 and older), and free for children ages 0-2. Advance ticket purchase is required and will be accommodated on a first come, first served basis. Passengers are allowed up to 70 lbs. of cargo, including bicycles (a \$10 fee will be charged for additional cargo). Ticket purchases may be made at the MVA Office in Tinian and Saipan. Cash payments only will be accepted.

In addition, the MVA will provide free shuttle transportation between Tinian International Airport, Port of Tinian, and the festival grounds, only. Due to limited resources, shuttle transport to other venues will not be available. Car rental is also available.

Individuals arriving via the ferry will be shuttled directly to the festival grounds, and those departing via the ferry can catch the shuttle leaving the festival beginning 1 1/2 hours before ferry departure time. Individuals arriving or departing at Tinian International Airport can call for a shuttle at 670.433.3216 or visit the MVA information booth at the festival grounds for assistance.

Toilets, showers, and limited power are available for campers. However, campfires on the beach are prohibited, according to the MVA's Tinian office. Available hotels on island

include Fleming Hotel, Lion House, Lorilyn's and Street Motel. Some hotels offer airport shuttle, as well.

Activities will include the 65K Pika Bike Race on Feb. 18 at 6 a.m., cooking competitions, indigenous craft sales, and live entertainment including cultural dance. Sample a variety of local dishes, catch the *umang* (hermit crab) races, join numerous sports activities (including beach volleyball and dragon boat races), or join the *donni sali* eating competition, itself. Festival times will be from 2-11 p.m. on Feb. 18 and from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Feb. 19.

Tinian is also accessible within minutes of Saipan via airplane or via connecting flights from Rota and Guam. For more information, contact the MVA Tinian office at 1.670.433.9365 or e-mail Vida Borja at [vborja@mymarianas.com](mailto:vborja@mymarianas.com).

The Northern Mariana Islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota are a chain of idyllic islands in the West Pacific, offering a friendly, fun and exciting vacation in paradise. They are an excellent destination for families, adventure and sports-minded travelers, as well as business people looking for a tropical haven. Adventurous travelers from Asia, Australia, Europe, North and South America and elsewhere looking for new travel discoveries will find them in the Mariana Islands, just three hours travel from most cities in Japan, and four to five from other parts of Asia and Australia. The Northern Marianas are served daily from Tokyo-Narita in Japan by Delta Air Lines with seasonal flights by Asiana Airlines. From Korea, Asiana Airlines, Jeju Air, Jin Air and Eastar Jet provide direct flights from Seoul-Incheon, and Asiana also provides service from Busan. From China, direct flight service from Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong to Saipan are available. Philippine Airlines provides nonstop service from Manila to Saipan and connects with many cities in China and Southeast Asia. United Airlines has daily flight connections from six cities in Japan to Saipan with one stop. United States mainland connections can be made to Saipan via Tokyo-Narita, Seoul-Incheon or Guam. Visitors from Russia and Taiwan usually arrive via Seoul, Tokyo or Manila. Interisland travel is provided by United Express (Cape Air) and Star Marianas Air. For more information on the Marianas, visit [www.mymarianas.com](http://www.mymarianas.com).

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