



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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NMI June 2011 Visitor Arrivals Down 17%

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – June 2011 visitor arrivals to the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) were down 17 percent compared to June 2010, as the beach destination continues to feel the negative effects of the March 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear crisis in Japan.

According to the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA), arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 23,604 visitors in June compared to 28,372 in June 2010. Overall, visitor arrivals are down 5 percent this fiscal year to 251,992 visitors.

Arrivals from Japan dropped 36 percent to 8,645. In addition to travel being dampened by the earthquake, in June 2011 the NMI received only two daily flights from Narita compared to three daily flights in June 2010. Overall arrivals from Japan this fiscal year are down 14 percent. The industry in Japan, however, is already seeing a gradual recovery in July and August and arrivals from the key Japan market are expected to gradually improve as the peak summer season begins. Flights from Osaka resumed in mid-July and will continue through August.

Meanwhile, arrivals from the primary market of Korea dropped 21 percent in June to 7,064 arrivals. In addition to travel from Korea being negatively impacted by the Japan earthquake, Asiana Airlines decreased the number of daytime flights from Incheon to Saipan from four to two flights weekly in May, resulting in a loss of 1,250 seats during June. In addition, flights from Busan were terminated in early June. Targeting the upcoming summer

peak season, however, Asiana has already restored the number of Incheon to Saipan daytime flights from two to four weekly starting July 19. Asiana is also adding an extra charter flight via Airbus 321 with 144 seats on August 3.

The secondary market of China saw 5,129 arrivals in June, a 123 percent increase compared to the same month last year. This was largely due to two additional weekly charter flights by Sichuan Airlines from both Shanghai and Guangzhou.

Arrivals from the lucrative market of Russia posted a seventh consecutive month of gain, rising 15 percent to 558, while arrivals from the Philippines also rose 15 percent to 45. Arrivals from all other markets were down in June 2011: Guam (-23 percent to 1,363), Taiwan (-25 percent to 9), and Other Areas (-42 percent to 208). Arrivals from the United States were down 44 percent to 583, as the Northern Marianas was visited by a military ship in June 2010.

Japan and Korea Economic Highlights

The Japanese Cabinet Office upgraded its monthly economic report for the first time since the devastating earthquake in March, noting upward movements are observed in the Japanese economy while difficulties continue to prevail due to the aftermath of the earthquake.

The latest package tour booking survey by travel industry publication Travel Journal shows positive signs for this summer. Out of the eight major wholesalers included in the survey, two companies are seeing more bookings than last year for June and July, and three companies are welcoming more bookings in August. Travel Journal believes this finally signals a recovery in family and corporate travel. Some wholesalers remarked they expect additional increases in the coming weeks as workers' are paid their summer bonuses and more last minute demand comes in.

Venture Republic, the company behind destination comparison website Travel.jp, did its own survey on summer travel, and found that 48 percent of Japanese plan to travel domestically, compared to 16 percent who plan to go overseas. As for purpose of travel, 26 percent of overseas travelers said they wanted to visit beach resorts, closely followed by historic buildings/monuments at 26 percent and gourmet/food at percent.

In Korea, the Ministry of Strategy and Finance said the Korean economy will grow by 4.5 percent this year, down from the 5 percent projected in December last year. According to the Korea Tourism Organization, the number of Korean outbound travelers in May was 1,014,409, a

decrease of 0.9 percent compared to the same month in 2010. The total number of Korean outbound travelers from January to May was 5,110,225, an increase of 3.5 percent compared to the same period of 2010.

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 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 from Asia and Australia. The Northern Marianas are served from Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka in Japan by Delta and Asiana Airlines. From Korea, Asiana Airlines provides direct flights from Seoul and Busan. Fly Guam/Fly Marianas provides direct flights from Hong Kong and soon from Nagoya, Japan. For more information visit www.mymarianas.com.

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