



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

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*Tourism is Everybody's Business!*

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**NMI September 2011 Visitor Arrivals Down 15%**

**FY 2011 Visitors Arrivals Down 8%**

**Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI)** – September 2011 visitor arrivals to the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) were down 15 percent compared to September 2010.

According to the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA), arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 25,408 visitors in September compared to 29,917 in September 2010. Overall, visitor arrivals were down 8 percent in FY 2011 to 338,106 visitors.

Arrivals from Japan dropped 30 percent to 11,872. In September, the NMI was scheduled to receive four flights a week on Fly Marianas but unfortunately a high percentage of these flights were cancelled due to operational issues. In addition, in September the NMI received two daily flights from Narita compared to three daily flights in September 2010. This situation is expected to improve when Delta Air Lines launches a third weekly flight again on December 29, 2011, supplementing the current two daily flights from Narita with four new flights a week using a Boeing 757 with 182 seats.

Meanwhile, arrivals from the primary market of Korea dropped 15 percent in September to 6,746 arrivals. However, Korean visitor numbers are projected to increase significantly from

November onwards, with a large number of additional air seats being added into the market to the NMI from both Seoul and Busan. Asiana Airlines will commence Busan-Saipan charter flights from November 2011 to March 2012, representing a gain of 6,198 seats during this period. Also, Asiana Airlines has already just boosted its Incheon-Saipan service from 10 to 14 weekly flights beginning October 31, and in tandem with the increase in the number of weekly flights to double-daily service, has also increased the size of the aircraft on the route to Boeing 767s with 250 seats each. This will drive an additional 2,263 seats out of Seoul to the NMI in November. Finally, Asiana has also upgraded its nighttime service to an Airbus 330 with 275 seats from Oct. 1 to Dec. 4, resulting in a gain of 4,312 seats. These important airlift developments out of the Korea market in response to demand bode well for arrivals to the NMI from Korea during the coming two months. Overall arrivals from Korea in FY 2011 were virtually unchanged from the previous fiscal year.

The secondary market of China saw 4,519 arrivals in September, a 93 percent increase compared to the same month last year. Arrivals from China increased 15 percent overall in FY 2011 to represent 14 percent of total visitor arrivals to the Northern Marianas. The significance of the China market continues to grow in importance; in FY 2010 arrivals from China comprised 11 percent of total visitor arrivals.

Arrivals from Russia continued their year-to-year growth that began in December 2010, posting a gain of 5 percent in September 2011 to 216 visitors. The lucrative market was up 18 percent to 5,092 visitors in FY 2011.

The MVA also reported a 187 percent growth in arrivals from Hong Kong in September to 89 visitors. Total visitor arrivals from Hong Kong reached 1,881 in FY 2011.

Arrivals from other markets were down in September: United States (-39 percent to 545), Guam (-3 percent to 1,217), Philippines (-2 percent to 40) and Other Areas (-18 percent to 164).

### **Japan and Korea Economic Highlights**

The Japanese Cabinet Office's monthly economic report remained unchanged in September 2011 from August, maintaining its assessment that the economy is recovering and will continue to do so. In September, the Japanese currency remained at historically high levels against the U.S. dollar.

The Japan National Tourism Organization announced the provisional number of Japanese outbound travelers in August was 1,792,000 pax, a year on year jump of 9.1 percent and the highest August total ever, signaling a strong rebound from the earthquake as Japanese took advantage of the favorable exchange rates. The latest Japan Travel Trade Barometer released by NTA-TMI shows that travel from Japan to the U.S. is well on the path to recovery. Overall, the U.S. mainland continues to outperform Hawaii and Guam.

According to Samsung Economic Research Institute's recent outlook, the Korean economy in 2012 will move to 3.6 percent growth as exports, domestic demand and government stimulus lose momentum. According to the Korea Tourism Organization, the number of Korean outbound travelers in August was 1,247,222, an increase of 0.9 percent compared to the same month in 2010. The total number of Korean outbound travelers from January to August was 8,652,734, an increase of 3.1 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 Nagoya, Japan. For more information visit [www.mymarianas.com](http://www.mymarianas.com).

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