



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

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*Tourism is Everybody's Business!*

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## **CHRISTMAS IN THE MARIANAS MOCHITSUKI FESTIVAL ON DEC. 22**

**Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI)** – The international flavor of Christmas in the Marianas continues this Saturday (Dec. 22) as the Marianas Visitors Authority, Team PDI, Friends of Paseo de Marianas and other tourism partners present the Mochitsuki Festival.

This annual festival highlights the preparation of *mochi*- glutinous rice – for the Japanese New Year. The festival will be held from 6-9 p.m. in downtown Garapan at Paseo de Marianas pedestrian mall and will feature *mochi* pounding, dance performances by Saipan Awadori Team and Okinawa Eisa Dancers of Japan, and a karate exhibition.

Last Saturday (Dec. 15) Koblerville Elementary School took first place in the Christmas Caroling Competition, followed by Dandan Elementary School in second place, Mount Carmel School in third, and Oleai Elementary School in fourth place. Other participating schools were Agape Christian School and Green Meadow School.

Japanese and other international cuisine will be sold by Country House, Moby Dick, Jhem's, Sierra's Pearl Shake, Okadaya, E'sy Kitchen, Hula Girl, Lyn's BBQ, Furusato, and Kinpachi Restaurant. Games, raffles, face painting and other activities are also being held each Saturday evening.

Major sponsors of the Christmas in the Marianas celebration are DOCOMO Pacific, DFS Galleria, Tan Siu Lin Foundation and Kinpachi Restaurant. The event is also supported by the Office of the Governor, First Lady's Vision Foundation, Women's Affairs Office, Division of Environmental Quality, Dept. of Public Safety, Dept. of Public Works, Dept. of Lands and Natural Resources, Div. of Parks & Recreation, Koblerville Youth Learning Center, CNMI Public School System, KKMP, Power 99, and IT&E.

Revelers young and old are invited to final night of Christmas in the Marianas with the Welcome to the New Year celebration on Dec. 29 with dance and music entertainment from 6-10 p.m.



Elementary school students show off their talent during the Christmas in the Marianas Caroling Competition on Dec. 15, 2012, at Paseo de Marianas, Saipan. The weekly Christmas celebration will continue on Dec. 22 with the Mochitsuki Festival.



Students of Dandan Elementary School perform during the Christmas in the Marianas Caroling Competition on Dec. 15, 2012, at Paseo de Marianas, Saipan. The weekly Christmas celebration will continue on Dec. 22 with the Mochitsuki Festival.

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 and Osaka in Japan by Delta Air Lines and Asiana Airlines. From Korea, Asiana provides direct flights from Seoul and Busan. China is served from Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. For more information visit [www.mymarianas.com](http://www.mymarianas.com).

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