



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

PERRY JOHN P. TENORIO
MVA MANAGING DIRECTOR

For Immediate Release-April 26, 2012

For further information, contact:
Perry John P. Tenorio, Managing Director
Marianas Visitors Authority
Telephone: (670) 664-3200/3201 Facsimile: (670) 664-3237
mva@mymarianas.com
www.mymarianas.com

NMI February 2012 Visitor Arrivals Up 8%

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – February 2012 visitor arrivals to the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) were up 8 percent compared to February 2011.

According to the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA), arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 36,332 visitors in February compared to 33,659 in February 2011. Overall, visitor arrivals are up 6 percent this fiscal year to 161,981 visitors.

Arrivals from Japan dropped 12 percent to 15,335 in February, as the NMI received two daily flights from Narita for most of the month, compared to three daily flights in February 2011. However, due to high demand during the peak travel season, Delta Air Lines operated a third weekly flight, and Asiana Airlines re-launched daily service from Osaka in December.

Arrivals from Korea were up 24 percent to 12,537 visitors. Delta Air Lines operated Busan-Saipan charter flights from Jan. 5 to Feb. 26, 2012 on Thursdays and Sundays, while Asiana Airlines has continued to operate its Busan-Saipan charter flights launched in November.

Arrivals from China increased 58 percent in February to 6,208 visitors. The number of airseats more than doubled in February 2012 compared to February 2011 due to last year, when

the Northern only had two flights per week from Shanghai plus three charters from Beijing.. So far this fiscal year, the Northern Marianas has received over 80 percent more visitors from China as the same period last year. Increased arrivals from Korea and China helped offset decreased arrivals from Japan during the month.

Arrivals from Russia were down slightly at 2 percent to 367 visitors, while Guam also registered a 1 percent dip to 978 visitors.

However, arrivals were up in February from the United States (10 percent to 594), the Philippines (9 percent to 49), Hong Kong (33 percent to 52), and Other Areas (26 percent to 213).

Japan and Korea Economic Highlights

The Japanese Cabinet Office's March report evaluated that the economy continues to pick up slowly. On March 29, 2012, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development estimated that Japan's GDP will grow 3.4 percent in the January to March quarter, the highest growth of any of the G7 countries including the United States, Germany and France.

The Japanese yen continued to come down in value against the U.S. dollar thanks to signs of recovery in the world's largest economy and the Bank of Japan's February expansion of its asset purchase program. This, however, has made travel to US-dollar denominated destinations such as the NMI more expensive for Japanese.

The Japan National Tourism Organization's preliminary total showed that 1,570,000 Japanese traveled overseas in February 2012, the highest February total ever. This figure marks a 12.9 percent jump from February 2011 and the eighth consecutive monthly increase in overseas travel.

Meanwhile, growth is slowing for the Korean economy, which is experiencing moderate inflation.

The won/dollar exchange rate increased 8.01 in February from the previous month to close at 1,132.89, as disappointing economic data of major economies caused appreciation of the dollar versus the Korean won.

According to the Korea Tourism Organization, the number of Korean outbound travelers in February was 1,150,334, an increase of 5.1 percent compared to the same month in 2011. The

total number of Korean outbound travelers from January to February was 2,351,116, down 0.36 percent from the same period of 2011.

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.

###