



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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NMI July 2012 Visitor Arrivals Soar 19%

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – July 2012 visitor arrivals to the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) were up 19 percent compared to July 2011.

According to the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA), arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 32,478 visitors in July compared to 27,203 in July 2011. Overall, visitor arrivals are up 14 percent so far this fiscal year to 318,778 visitors.

Arrivals from Japan reached 10,988 visitors in July, 8 percent higher than July last year, as the Japan market continues to stabilize. Delta Air Lines launched an additional four weekly flights from Narita on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday beginning July 14 and continuing through Sept. 24. Asiana Airlines began operating daily flights from Osaka on July 16 and continuing through Sept. 3. These additional flights significantly boosted the number of Japanese visitors to the Northern Marianas during the peak summer season versus last year.

Arrivals from Korea posted a sixth consecutive month of double-digit increases, leaping 27 percent to 11,391 visitors. Asiana Airlines re-launched a second weekly service from Busan to Saipan on June 13 which had been suspended since June of last year due to lack of available aircraft. The supply of air seats to the NMI out of the Korea market are projected to continue to increase in the final quarter of the year, with Asiana Airlines boosting its Busan-Saipan service from two to four flights a week beginning Nov. 20. So far this fiscal year, visitor arrivals from

Korea are up 18 percent to 105,551 compared to the same period last year.

Arrivals from China have shown consistent growth each month this year compared to last year, jumping a phenomenal 50 percent in June to 7,480 visitors. So far this fiscal year, the Northern Marianas has received 78 percent more visitors from China as the same period last year due to the launch of new flights, including six weekly flights from Shanghai and Guangzhou. Continuous significant growth in Chinese arrivals is projected through October thanks to China's Summer and Autumn National Day holidays, as well as major media and travel agent promotions launched by the MVA's new China office.

Meanwhile, arrivals were down 4 percent from Russia to 430 in June. Arrivals from Russia have increased 13 percent so far this fiscal year, compared to last.

Arrivals were down in July from Guam (down 11 percent to 1,231), the United States (down 5 percent to 549) and Hong Kong (down 82 percent to 62), but higher from the Philippines (up 27 percent to 41), and Other Areas (up 13 percent to 216).

Japan, Korea and China Economic Highlights

The Japanese Cabinet Office's July economic report restated the positive news from previous months: industrial production, exports, corporate profits, business investment and private consumption continue to pick up. In July, the yen climbed in value against other major currencies. Travel agent JTB's nonprofit think-tank the JTB Foundation made a prediction that outbound travel from Japan will climb to as high as 19 million in the 2012 calendar year, an increase of 11.8 percent from last year.

Meanwhile, the Korean economy grew at its slowest pace in nearly three years from April to June. The won/dollar exchange rate fell 28.07 from previous month to finish at 1,128.67, as concerns over the Eurozone crisis reemerged. According to the Korea Tourism Organization, the number of Korean outbound travelers in June was 1,109,273, an increase of 5.3 percent compared to the same month in 2011.

The China National Bureau of Statistics reported that China's gross domestic product expanded 7.6 percent year-on-year in the second quarter, easing below 8 percent for the first time in three years and marking the sixth quarterly decline in a row. U.S. Department of Commerce figures show that Chinese tourists ranked 9th in overall visitor numbers in 2011, with growth of

337 percent in the past 10 years. The number of Chinese travelers making international trips was up by 22 percent in 2011 compared to 2010, and experts predict China is on track to overtake Germany and the U.S. as the world's largest outbound tourism market in the next few years. The profile of Chinese visitors is changing as they become increasingly more independent, confident, younger and more familiar with foreign cultures and customs.

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 Air Lines and Asiana Airlines. From Korea, Asiana provides direct flights from Seoul and Busan. China is served regularly from Shanghai, Guangzhou and seasonally from Beijing. For more information visit www.mymarianas.com.

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