



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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SAIPAN-DA! TO GREET HOLIDAY TRAVELERS

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – In the spirit of Christmas, the Northern Marianas mascot Saipan-da! will be working around the clock on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day to put smiles on the faces young children arriving at Saipan International Airport.

Saipan-da!, with two beautiful *Chamoritta* helpers, will make his annual appearance at the airport to give Saipan-da! backpacks to children ages 11 and under, as part of the holiday outreach of the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA).

An estimated 800 backpacks are expected to be distributed to children arriving from Japan, Korea, China, and Russia over the two-day period.

“Saipan-da! tells us his gifts are ready, and he can’t quite contain his excitement about meeting all the children visiting us on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day,” said MVA Marketing Manager Bruce Bateman. “Santa won’t be only one busy, that’s for sure!”

Saipan-da! is a unique character cross between a *sai* (rhinoceros) and a panda. The character is well known in Japan and well-liked by both children and adults.

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.

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