



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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STARS & STRIPES SAILS FOR TINIAN HOT PEPPER FEST

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – Escaping to Tinian for the 8th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 18-19, 2012, has just gotten a bit more *pika* (spicy) for sports enthusiasts and those just looking for a weekend getaway, thanks to special boat charters.

Stars & Stripes is offering boat charters to the festival on both Saturday and Sunday of the festival weekend. The \$49 round trip fee includes the cost of bringing a bicycle, perfect for avid cyclers eager to tour the roads and trails of the island. The charter will leave Saipan at 6 a.m. on both days and return at 1 p.m. Children under age 4 may ride free on the boat charter. The Tinian Mayor's Office has been instrumental in organizing and backing the boat charter and arranging the bicycle Fun Ride on Saturday morning.

The Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association has also lent its support in promoting to the co-ed Tinian Hot Pepper Festival 4-Person Beach Volleyball Tournament 2012. Entrance in the 2-day friendly competition is free, with registration slated for 10 a.m. on Feb. 18. Cash prizes of \$150 (first place), \$100 (second place), and \$75 (third place) will be awarded.

Volleyball match details are available at www.nmivolleyball.org. For more information

or to purchase boat charter tickets, contact cyclist Bruce Bateman at bbateman@pticom.com.

The festival, organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority, will be held at Tachogna Beach and will also include cooking competitions, indigenous craft sales, and live entertainment including cultural dances, and Hapi the clown. Sample a variety of local dishes, catch the *umang* (hermit crab) races, dragon boat races, or join the hot pepper eating competition, itself.

For more information or to register for the volleyball tournament, contact the MVA Tinian office at 1.670.433.9365 or e-mail Vida Borja at vborja@mymarianas.com or Frank Tudela at 1.670.664.3210 or e-mail ftudela@mymarianas.com.

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.

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