



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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For Immediate Release-February 16, 2012

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TINIAN FUN RIDE AND PUBLIC BOAT TRIP THIS WEEKEND

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – In conjunction with special boat charters from Saipan for the 8th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival this weekend (Feb. 18-19), the bike Fun Ride will be held on Saturday morning, featuring many of the island's scenic roadways and byways.

The Fun Ride will commence at the Tinian dock upon arrival and traverse Marpo Valley, Unai Masalok and the Japanese-era Communications Building. Riders will then have the option of returning south to San Jose village on Broadway or taking an extended course north through North Field before returning to the village via 8th Ave. There will also be a road bike course for those who prefer to bike only on pavement.

Stars & Stripes is offering boat charters to the festival on both Saturday and Sunday of the festival weekend. The \$49 round trip fee (\$25 one way) includes the cost of bringing a bicycle or any other luggage, perfect for avid cyclers eager to tour the roads and trails of the island. The charter will leave Saipan at 6 a.m. on Saturday and return promptly at 1 p.m. on Sunday. The boat will also return from Tinian to Saipan Saturday at 10 a.m. and will depart Saipan for Tinian again Sunday at 9 a.m. Tinian residents may also take this boat to Saipan for the same price. Children under age 4 may ride free on the boat charter. The boat charter is open to both bikers and non-bikers; anyone can ride and enjoy the boat trip, the "Pika" Festival and

beautiful Tinian.

For more information about the Fun Ride or to purchase boat charter tickets, contact cyclists Bruce Bateman at bbateman@pticom.com, 670.287.0687, or 670.664.3215 or Paul Plunket at pbpcp@yahoo.com or Paul.B.Plunkett@uscg.mil. 670.236.2976 or 670.235.2443. 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 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival, organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority and co-sponsored by the Tinian Mayor's Office, 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. The contest will award \$150, \$100, and \$75 to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place, respectively, in both men's and women's divisions.

Registration is also being accepted for 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 Saturday. 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 on the Tinian Hot Pepper Festival 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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