



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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NMI April 2013 Visitor Arrivals Up 6%

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – April 2013 visitor arrivals to the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) were up 6 percent compared to April 2012. According to the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA), arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 32,521 visitors in March compared to 30,691 in April 2012.

Arrivals from Japan in April fell 18 percent to 9,438 visitors as end-of-month Golden Week travel out of the Japan market did not meet expectations, with Japanese travelers to both NMI and Guam staying away from booking high-cost peak period Golden Week packages to the Marianas. Bookings to the NMI have also been hit hard by the rapidly dropping value of the Japanese yen, which is making travel to U.S. dollar-based destinations increasingly expensive for Japanese. In just the last six months, the value of the Yen has plummeted by over 25 percent, making travel by Japanese to the NMI 25 percent comparatively more expensive than just six months ago.

Forward booking levels out of the Japan market continue to look relatively weak this summer. The MVA is actively working with key travel agent partners to launch promotions into the market targeting the pre- and post-summer peak season to shore up the summer weakness

that is being projected.

Arrivals from Korea rose 3 percent in April to 9,645 visitors as the Korea market resumes its steady growth. Asiana Airlines will boost its Busan-Saipan flights from four times a week to daily during the month of August targeting the summer peak season, using an Airbus 320 with 141 seats and bringing in an additional 1,833 seats to the Northern Marianas this summer ensuring continued growth out of the Korean market this summer.

Meanwhile, arrivals from China surpassed Japan for the first time since the MVA (then Marianas Visitors Bureau) began keeping arrival statistics in 1997, jumping 44 percent in April to 10,305 visitors. In conjunction with Century Tours, DFS Saipan, and other key China travel agents, the MVA is running a large-scale billboard, subway advertising, PR and travel trade campaign in Beijing from April to June in support of the Beijing flights and targeting the post-Lunar New Year low season. Saipan recently won the award as the most popular island destination of the year in China from Travel Weekly China, the leading travel trade publication in China. Continued rapid growth is projected out of the China market for the remainder of this year.

Arrivals from Russia were also up dramatically in April, registering a 131 percent increase in arrivals to 956. The Northern Marianas now receives bi-weekly direct charter flights from Vladivostok since October and weekly charter flights from Khabarovsk since March.

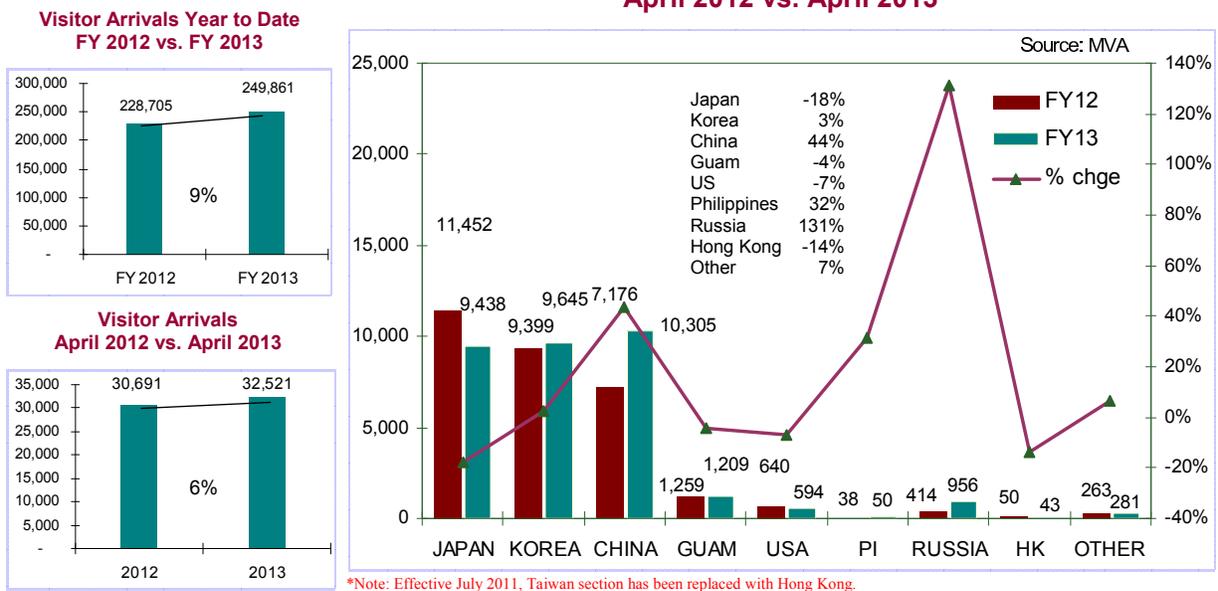
Japan, Korea and China Economic Highlights

The Japanese Cabinet office noted in April that private consumption and housing investment have expanded, along with modest growth in capital spending. In line with the government and Bank of Japan's aggressive steps, the yen continued to tumble in April against major currencies. At the end of the month, exchange rates stood at 97.73 to the U.S. dollar while today the yen has continued its dramatic fall, standing at under 102 yen, a drop of 25 percent in just six months.

The Korean economy showed a slower contraction in domestic demand and exports rebounded with positive growth, but the overall pace of recovery is more moderate than expected. The won/dollar exchange rate fell 1.95 over the past month to close at 1,106.19 as the dollar rallied on the back of acceptance by G20 countries for a weaker yen. According to the Korea Tourism Organization, the number of Korean outbound travelers in March was 1,113,946, an increase of 9.3 percent over the same month of 2012.

China's National Bureau of Statistics said the country's slower than expected first quarter growth will impede it reaching an annual GDP target of 7.5 percent. The United Nations World Tourism Organization said Chinese nationals spent a record US\$102 billion on overseas travel in 2012, taking it to the top of international standings and making it the first country to achieved nine-digit spending in U.S. dollar terms. The volume of international trips by Chinese travelers has surged from just 10 million in 2000 to 83 million in 2012, and their expenditure abroad has grown in tandem.

CNMI Source Market Arrivals April 2012 vs. April 2013



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 and Asiana Airlines. From Korea, Asiana provides direct flights from Seoul and Busan. United Airlines has daily flight connections from nine cities in Japan to Saipan via Guam. United States mainland connections can be made by United Airlines to Saipan via Guam, and Delta Airlines from the west coast to Saipan via Narita. For more information visit www.mymarianas.com.