



**MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY**  
**News Release**

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*Tourism is Everybody's Business!*

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MVA MANAGING DIRECTOR

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**NMI March 2013 Visitor Arrivals Up 13%**

**Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI)** – March 2013 visitor arrivals to the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) were up 13 percent compared to March 2012. According to the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA), arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 40,666 visitors in March compared to 36,033 in March 2012.

“We continue to see strong recovery and growth in arrivals from all of our major markets. This is good news for the local economy and the community,” said MVA Managing Director Perry Tenorio. “We are now projecting 7 percent growth in arrivals this fiscal year compared to last.”

Arrivals from Japan in March rose 9 percent to 18,210 visitors, boosted by five charter flights from Nagoya. Forward booking levels from Japan for the next three months are looking somewhat weak due to the rapidly dropping Japanese yen which is making travel to U.S. dollar-based destinations increasingly more expensive for Japanese, and due to the continuing threat from North Korea which describes the Marianas/Guam as a potential target.

Arrivals from Korea were essentially unchanged from last year at 9,395 visitors. Asiana Airlines operated charter flights from Korea twice weekly using an Airbus 330 with 290 seats for the winter season from Jan. 10 to Mar. 29.

Meanwhile, arrivals from China posted another month of double-digit growth, rising 33 percent in March to 9,021 visitors, the second highest month of arrivals so far this fiscal year. In conjunction with Century Tours, DFS Saipan, and other key China travel agents, the MVA China office launched a large-scale billboard, subway advertising, PR and travel trade campaign in Beijing in support of the Beijing flights and targeting the post-Lunar New Year low season. Given the success of the campaign, the MVA is now launching Phase 2 of the campaign to run from April to June.

Arrivals from Russia more than doubled in February, registering a 140 percent increase in arrivals to 1,648. 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**

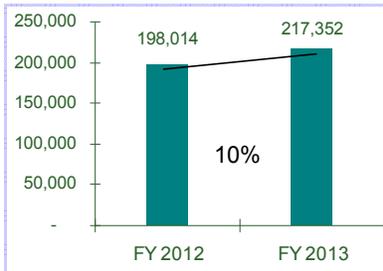
The Japanese Cabinet Office upgraded its overall economic assessment, noting improvements in industrial production, business investment, corporate profits and the employment situation. This is the first time since mid-2009 that the economic assessment has improved for three consecutive months. In March, the value of the yen continued to decline against the U.S. dollar, standing at 94.22 to the U.S. dollar by the end of the month. Industry publication Travel Journal compiled data on international air capacity to and from Japan for the current schedule, which lasted until March 30. Altogether, there were 732,172 seats on 4,946 flights per week, a capacity increase of 5.21 percent versus one year ago, while Saipan/Guam increased 2.37 percent to a combined 24,403 seats per week.

The Korean economy showed a slight weakening with both domestic demand and exports contracting. Private consumption decreased relatively sharply, but consumer sentiment remained stable overall. The won/dollar exchange rate closed at 1,104.24 as expectations for a US economic recovery continue and dollar demand rises for dividend season. According to the Office of Travel and Tourism Industries, the number of Korean outbound travelers to the U.S. from January to October was 1,041,857, a 7.8 percent increase compared to 2011.

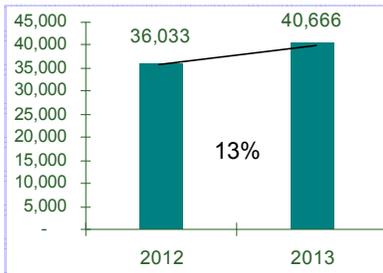
The Chinese government announced that its GDP growth target will remain around 7.5 percent this year and it aims to control inflation within 3.5 percent. The Chinese yuan lost 18 basis points to 6.2741 against the U.S. dollar on March 22, according to the China Foreign

Exchange Trading System. U.S. officials said Chinese tourists now represented the fastest-growing group of visitors with numbers expected to double in the next three years.

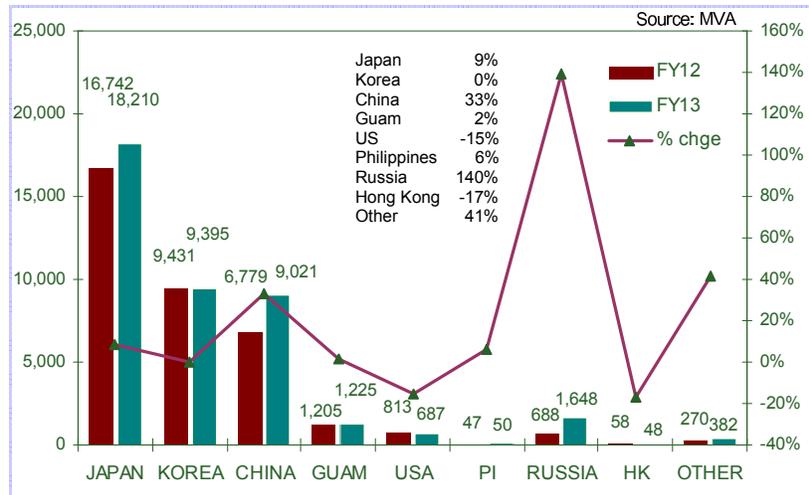
**Visitor Arrivals Year to Date  
FY 2012 vs. FY 2013**



**Visitor Arrivals  
March 2012 vs. March 2013**



**CNMI Source Market Arrivals  
March 2012 vs. March 2013**



\*Note: Effective July 2011, Taiwan section has been replaced with Hong Kong.

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](http://www.mymarianas.com).

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