



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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MVA INTRODUCES SAIPAN TROPICAL EKIDEN

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – The Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) is marking its 40th anniversary with the introduction of new signature event for the Northern Marianas, Saipan Tropical Ekiden.

The Saipan Tropical Ekiden on June 4, 2016, will be a 3-hour relay marathon featuring two categories: General Division for any age (at least one member age 18 or older is required when minors are included in the team), and Composite Division for ages 18 and older.

“Ekiden” is Japanese term referring to a long-distance relay running race. The racing style is popular among schools in Japan.

“The Marianas Visitors Authority is very excited to be introducing a new annual signature event aimed at drawing more visitors to the Northern Marianas, and this type of sporting event is highly recommended by our Japan office,” said MVA Acting Managing Director Judy Torres. “We hope local runners will also be attracted to this unique team race format, which encourages both children and adults to exercise together for health and enjoyment.”

Each team will continuously run a 2K course from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. beginning at Garapan Fishing Base and through downtown Garapan, switching to the Saipan Beach Pathway for the latter part of the race into the evening. General Division teams may have two to 10 members. Composite Division teams may register in groups of up to four members, who may be combined with other groups to form teams of five to 10 members.

Registration for CNMI and U.S. residents is \$20/person for high school students and adults and \$10/person for elementary and junior high students. A U.S. or CNMI Driver's License or CNMI ID is required. Entry fee includes the awards ceremony and barbecue following the race, memorial towel, and Certificate of Completion.

The race is organized by the MVA and Japan-Saipan Cultural Exchange Association and supported by Hori Production and ORLAIGH.

“It’s a new type of race for Saipan, emphasizing friends and family, fun, and camaraderie,” said MVA Community Projects Manager Martin Duenas. “We encourage interested participants to review the race fact sheet on our website to get familiar with the format, and give us a call if you have any questions.”

Applications and a fact sheet are available under the Events Calendar at www.mymarianas.com. For more information, contact MVA Community Projects Specialist Ed Diaz at ediaz@mymarianas.com or 670.664.3200/01.

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 daily flights from Seoul and Busan and Jeju Air provides daily service from Seoul. From China, direct flight service from Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, to Saipan is available. United Airlines has daily flight connections from nine cities in Japan to Saipan with one stop. United States mainland connections can be made by Delta Air Lines to Saipan via Tokyo Narita, and United Airlines via Guam. Russian and Taiwanese visitors usually arrive via Seoul. For more information, visit www.mymarianas.com.

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