



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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For Immediate Release- Sept. 13, 2016

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NMI VISITOR ARRIVALS CATAPULT 63% IN AUGUST 2016

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – Visitors arrivals to the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) catapulted 63 percent in August 2016 compared to August 2015. According to the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA), arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 48,971 visitors in August 2016, compared to 29,996 visitors received in August 2015. The phenomenal percentage increase is due, in part, to lower arrivals in August 2015 following Typhoon Soudelor. Overall this fiscal year, visitor arrivals are 4 percent higher compared to the same period last fiscal year.

Arrivals from Korea more than doubled in August, jumping 154 percent to 21,528 visitors. With direct double daily flights from Seoul by Jeju Air and double daily service from Seoul by Asiana Airlines in the summer season, arrivals from Korea to the NMI are projected to remain extremely strong through the end of this year. In addition to new flights launched in June by Korean Air's low cost carrier Jin Air, Jeju Air is expected to launch new service from Busan to Saipan at the end of the year, driving continued rapid growth in Korean arrivals well into 2017. To continue boosting arrivals out of the Korean market, the MVA's Korea office launched a new Marianas Educational Seminar themed "Paradise For Everyone" on August 24 in Busan, targeting 80 key travel agents, with seven MVA partners attending the seminar. In addition, the Korea office appointed famous national network TV anchorwoman Park Ji-yoon and famous Korean singer Lee Jae-hoon as new tourism ambassadors for the NMI in Korea. Both celebrities will visit the

Marianas three times during the coming year, and in conjunction with their visits, the Korea office will conduct consumer events, media tie-ups, new collateral production, and social media campaigns leveraging their celebrity power to reach target audiences nationwide throughout Korea.

“The significant increase in visitor arrivals in August 2016 is largely due to the new flights coming in from Korea and the tremendous work of our office in Korea to build demand for the Northern Marianas and fill those flights,” said Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) Christopher A. Concepcion. “At the same time, we continue to work diligently to sustain our other markets, including Japan. We also cannot overstate the importance of the continuing destination enhancement projects we are now undertaking to keep the destination safe, attractive and fresh. More tourists mean more public and private income for the CNMI.”

Arrivals from China increased 47 percent compared to August 2015 to 18,786 visitors. The MVA’s China office continued to run an outdoor advertising campaign in the new market of Hangzhou until mid-September to boost the NMI’s destination awareness in support of new flights from Hangzhou launched by Dynamic Airways. In addition, MVA worked with Century Tours to co-host a series of travel trade seminars in Huhehaote and Tangshan to promote the NMI in new markets of north China. With heavy bookings by mainland Chinese visitors on PAL Express’ new flights via Manila, and on Hong Kong Airlines new flights via Hong Kong, the number of Chinese visitors to the NMI is expected to rapidly rise for the remainder of this year.

Arrivals from Japan fell 10 percent to 6,313 visitors as the NMI continued to feel the effect of Delta Air Lines cutting its second Narita to Saipan night flight in October, a move that dropped airlift from the Japan market to just one daily flight. Asiana Airlines, however, operated 10 charter flights from Narita and one charter flight from Osaka in August, boosting total air seats for the month to 6,957.

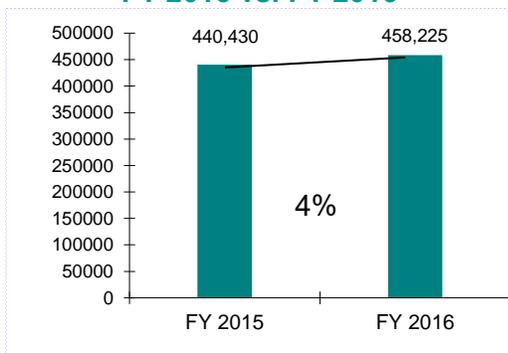
Source Markets Economic Highlights

Japan's government kept its assessment of the economy unchanged in August but offered a slightly more downbeat view on consumer inflation, as prices slid on weak household spending and the strong yen pushed down import costs. The strong Japanese yen caused exports to crash 14 percent year-on-year in July, their sharpest drop since 2009. At the same time, Japan's trade surplus

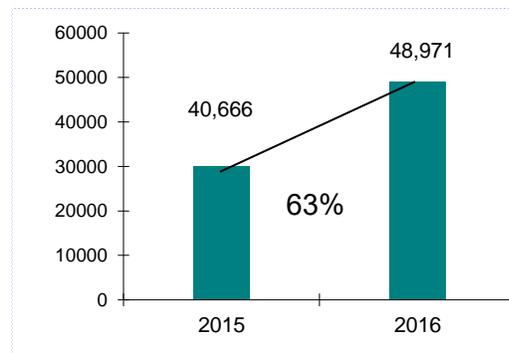
expanded to \$5.1 billion as a result of the Japanese yen's appreciation to 100.30 yen to the U.S. dollar.

South Korea has regained its title as the world's 11th-largest economy according to the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. South Korea's economy will grow at a slightly higher pace in 2017, the Bank of Korea projected. The average USD/WON exchange rate in August was 1,105.89 won, a slight decrease from the July rate of 1,142.40 won.

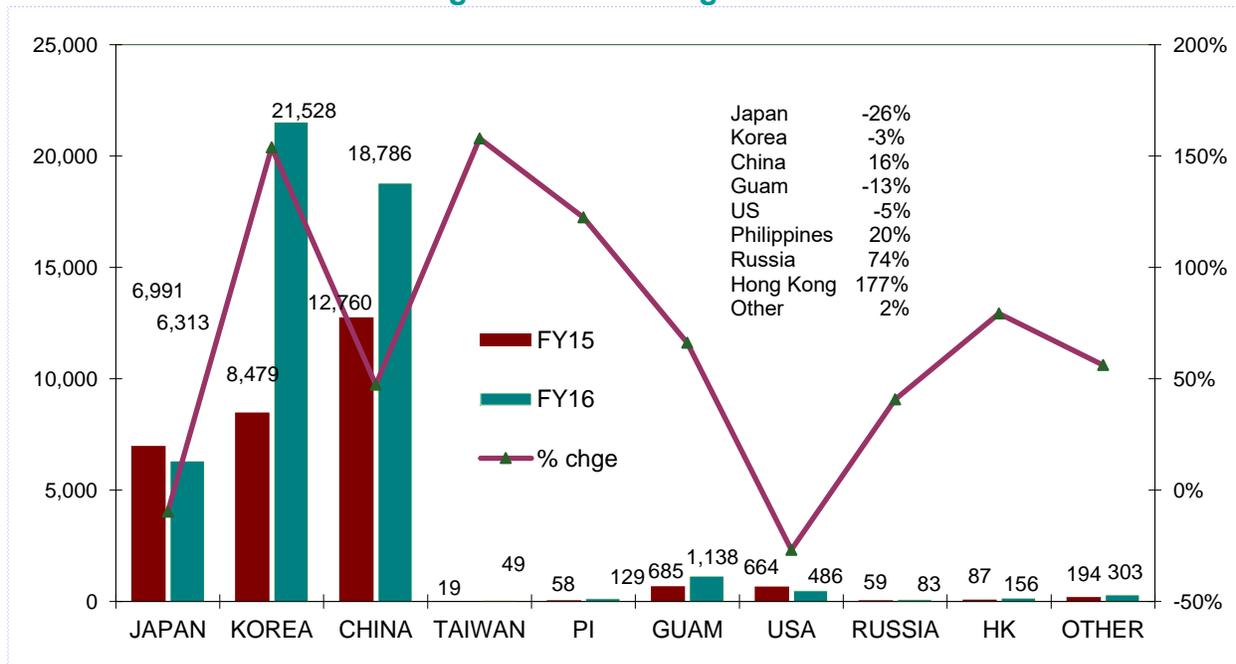
**Visitor Arrivals Year to Date
FY 2015 vs. FY 2016**



**Visitor Arrivals
August 2015 vs. August 2016**



**CNMI Source Market Arrivals
August 2015 vs. August 2016**



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 other parts of Asia and Australia. The Northern Marianas are served from Tokyo Narita in Japan by Delta Air Lines and Asiana. From Korea, Asiana, Jeju Air, and Jin Air provide direct flights from Seoul, and Asiana also provides service from Busan. From China, direct flight service from Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong to Saipan are available. Philippine Airlines provides nonstop service from Manila to Saipan and connects with many cities in China and across Asia. 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 to Saipan via Tokyo Narita, and by United via Guam. Russian and Taiwanese visitors usually arrive via Seoul or Manila. Interisland travel is provided by United Express (Cape Air). For more information, visit www.mymarianas.com.

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