



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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18TH TINIAN HOT PEPPER FESTIVAL A REFRESHING GOOD TIME

Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – Rain showers couldn't put a damper on festivities at the 18th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on March 11-13 2022, in The Marianas.

The annual signature event of the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA), organized in cooperation with the Mayor of Tinian & Aguiguan, kicked off with a soft opening on Friday (March 11) and, despite scattered showers, provided a refreshing good time for residents and visitors throughout the weekend.

The 50K Pika Bike Race was held early Saturday morning with 35 registered bikers and finished without a hitch. As a follow-up to his 2021 1st place finish, Joel Buco (01:40:22) again led the pack in the Men's Open Category, and Jully Rose Felipe (02:07:27) earned 1st place in the Women's Open Category.

Later that day Jessica Cabrera of Tinian repeated her winning form of 2021 by chomped through 100 "donne sali" peppers first to top the Female Hot Pepper Eating Contest. The following day Christian Bulanadi of Tinian took the Men's title. The JC Café Pikalicious Burger Eating Contest tested competitors with giant, "donne sali"-laced patties, with Thomas Hoffman placing first. Bernard Lopez served up the tastiest dish in the Estufao Pika (spicy chicken stew) Cooking Contest.

The “Umang” (hermit crab) Race for boys and girls was topped by Tristan Manglona and Jayden Reyes for having the fastest crabs to exit the circle. David Bamba and Carmen Dela Cruz stepped their way to 1st place in the Cha Cha Dance Competition. For the second year, first place in the Booth Decoration Contest went to Sweetie’s Corner.

“Once again, the Tinian Hot Pepper Festival was a great success, and we sincerely thank Mayor Edwin Aldan and his staff in partnering up with the MVA. To all sponsors, volunteers, and visitors, because of you, the MVA is able to put this Pika event together. Without you, we would have not made this event possible,” said MVA Managing Director Priscilla M. Iakopo. “Rain or shine, everyone seemed to have had a great time, and we look forward to next year’s event.”

Exclusive Sponsors for this year’s festival were Tan Holdings Corp. and Tan Sui Lin Foundation. Gold Sponsors were Bank of Guam and IT&E. Silver Sponsors were Triple J Bar K, Tinian Shipping Company, and JC Café, and the Bronze Sponsors were McDonald’s Saipan and Saipan World Resort. The event was also supported by CNMI Office of the Governor, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp, CNMI COVID-19 Task Force, Tinian Fishermen’s Association, JC Café, Bikers Association of Tinian, Dept. of Public Safety, Dept. of Fire Emergency & Medical Services, The Super Emerald and Star Marianas Air.

The Tinian Hot Pepper Festival was held at the Fiesta Grounds in San Jose village and is usually held every President’s Day weekend in February, although this year’s festival was postponed to March due to the spread of the omicron variant. Ferry service and airport shuttle service were also provided during the festival.

For more information on Tinian, visit www.mymarianas.com.



The 18th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival was held on March 11-13, 2022,, in San Jose, Tinian, in The Marianas. The annual signature event of the Marianas Visitors Authority is jointly organized with the Office of the Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan.



Tinian High School JROTC cadets post colors at the 18th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival opening ceremony on March 11, 2022, in San Jose, Tinian, in The Marianas.



Sweetie's Corner, winner of 1st place in the booth decorating contest, joins nine other food and drink vendors at the 18th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival was on March 11-13, 2022, in San Jose, Tinian, in The Marianas.



Taotao Taga Tinian Cultural Dancers perform on opening night at 18th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival held on March 11-13, 2022,, in San Jose, Tinian, in The Marianas.



Mayor of Tinian & Aguiguan Edwin Aldan, second right, and his wife hit the dance floor at the 18th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on March 11, 2022, in San Jose, Tinian, in The Marianas. The annual signature event of the Marianas Visitors Authority is jointly organized with the Office of the Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan.



Thirty-five bikers join the 50K Pika Bike Race on March 11, 2022, at the 18th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival in San Jose, Tinian, in The Marianas.



David Mediola spikes as Cody Kramer, in black, and a teammate defend during the Beach Volleyball Contest on March 12, 2022, at the 18th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival in San Jose, Tinian, in The Marianas.



FitBeat Dancers work out to the beat on March 12, 2022, at the 18th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival in San Jose, Tinian, in The Marianas. The annual signature event of the Marianas Visitors Authority is jointly organized with the Office of the Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan.

The Marianas is an archipelago of 14 islands - including Saipan, Tinian, and Rota - in the Western Pacific. The Marianas are home to indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian people, as well as over 20 different ethnicities from around the world who live and work in this harmonious tropical paradise. Ancient latte stone limestone monoliths, traditional nature-based ocean navigation not reliant on modern technology, and a culture seasoned by East and West influences are just a few of the experiences found in The Marianas, where pristine sea, sand, and skies are only a 3-4 hour flight from major Asian gateway cities. The Marianas is the first destination with a travel bubble agreement with South Korea, where Asiana Airlines, Jeju Air, and T'Way provide direct flights to Saipan from Seoul-Incheon and Air Busan is operating weekly flights in February 2022 from Busan. United Airlines flies daily from Guam. Interisland travel to Rota and Tinian is provided by Star Marianas Air. For more information on The Marianas, visit www.mymarianas.com, Facebook/[VisitTheMarianas](https://www.facebook.com/VisitTheMarianas), or Instagram [@themarianas](https://www.instagram.com/themarianas).

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