



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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TINIAN HOT PEPPER FESTIVAL POSTPONED TO MAR. 11-13, 2022

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – Due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases in the community, the 18th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival slated for this month has been postponed to Mar. 11-13, 2022.

The Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) announced the decision today after consultations with the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp, CNMI COVID-19 Task Force, and festival co-organizer Tinian Mayor's Office.

“Due to the rising number of COVID cases in Saipan and elsewhere, there is a concern about what a sudden influx of visitors might mean for Tinian, so we have decided to postpone the festival in hopes things will be more stable in March,” said MVA Managing Director Priscilla M. Iakopo. “Community safety is always the MVA’s first concern at our signature events, and we are confident that postponing the festival is the right decision at this time. We encourage our community to complete their vaccination and boosters shots, if they haven’t already.”

Refunds for ferry seats are available by visiting the MVA office in San Jose, Saipan, or Tinian. The original ticket, receipt and valid photo i.d. must be shown for a refund. Alternately, ticket holders may rebook for available seats for the ferry in March, with restrictions, once the new ferry schedule is determined.

The festival, held at the Festival Ground in San Jose and affectionately known as “Pika Fest” among locals (“pika” means spicy), pays homage to Tinian’s small but famous “donne sali” hot pepper and includes a full weekend of activities including food sales, live entertainment, competitions, arts and crafts sales, and more.

For more information, contact MVA Community Projects Specialist Jack Aranda at 1.670.664.3200 or email jaranda@mymarianas.com or Tinian Field Operations Supervisor Vida Borja at 1.670.433.9365 or e-mail at vborja@mymarianas.com.

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, or Instagram @themarianas.

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