



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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TOKENS, CREDIT/DEBIT CARDS ACCEPTED BY “TASTE” VENDORS

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – Enjoying yourselves at the 25th Annual Taste of The Marianas International Food Festival will be easier than ever this year with the acceptance of credit/debit cards by all food and drink vendors for the first time. Taste tokens will also still be accepted and may now be purchased at the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) office or at the festival.

Taste of The Marianas is an annual signature event of the MVA and will be held every Saturday night during May Tourism Month 2024 at American Memorial Park in Garapan, Saipan. The festival is a gourmet’s delight, offering some of the destination’s best cuisine and entertainment. The festival will feature affordable dishes from local hotels and restaurants, live entertainment, food eating competitions, cooking contests, arts and crafts sales, and more. Entry is free.

“We’re pleased to announce that the MVA is coordinating the use of a mobile card reader and contactless POS by all food and drink vendors at Taste of The Marianas this year, a big step forward in convenience for our festivalgoers, who can now skip the token line if they want to use a credit or debit card. No cash transactions between vendors and customers will be permitted. Tokens will also still be accepted and can be purchased with cash or credit or debit card,” said MVA Managing Director Christopher A. Concepcion.

The minimum purchase amount is determined by each vendor.

“Our goal is always to make our MVA signature events better, and this is one way to do that, especially as ‘Taste’ continues to grow in popularity and attendance each year,” said Concepcion. “At the same time, the virtual terminal allows nightly sales to be shared with the Dept. of Finance in lieu of issuance of receipts, and it helps the MVA quantify our return on investment for this event.”

Tokens may be purchased at the Marianas Visitors Authority office at 3366 Beach Road, Garapan,, Saipan, from 1-4 p.m. Monday through Friday (except holidays).

This year’s festival will include several contests: the Subway Sandwich Challenge on May 4, the Oh My Grill (OMG) International Food Challenge pitting top winners from The Subway Sandwich Challenge against celebrity food fighters from Korea and Japan on May 11, and the Marianas Chefs Competition on May 18. Rules and registration forms are available at <https://www.mymarianas.com/taste-of-the-marianas-2024/> and at the MVA offices in Saipan, Tinian and Rota. The HANMI-NMTech Pastry Chef Competition will be held on May 25. All contests start at 7 p.m.

This year’s festival eateries will include 38 Mitsubachi, Smokeout by Apu, Cup Bab Korean Restaurant, Ben-Ki, Yaya’s Baked Goods, CK Smokehouse and Salad, Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan, Fork and Spoon, Great Harvest Bread Co., Herman’s Modern Bakery, Lanlan Tea House, Island Grindz, Java Joe’s, Kanto 10, Kinpachi, Loco & Taco, Tupu Cane Juice, New Matty’s BBQ, Oh My Grill, Surf Club, T-Bar, The Hut, Vi- Lyn’s BBQ, Saipan World Resort, Ever Trust 123 Food, Aqua Resort Club, Pacific Islands Club and Coral Ocean Resort Saipan, MARPAC, Napu Brewing, and WSTCO.

Festival Gold Sponsors are American Memorial Park, Bridge Capital LLC and Dave Electronics Center. Silver Sponsors are Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan, EST Rental, IT&E, HANMI, Jonny's Bar and Grill, M&C LLC, Lanlan Tea House, Subway, Coca-Cola, and Foremost.

For more information, contact MVA Community Projects Specialist Ray Villagomez at rvillagomez@mymarians.com or at 1.670.664.3200.

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. From South Korea, Asiana Airlines, Jeju Air, and T'Way provide direct flights to Saipan from Seoul-Incheon. United Airlines flies three times a week from Tokyo-Narita, Japan, and daily from Guam. Interisland travel between Saipan, Tinian, and Rota 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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