

The Marianas Update



CNMI, KOREA ESTABLISH TRAVEL BUBBLE

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and the Republic of Korea have formally established a travel bubble to take effect on July 1, 2021. The agreement facilitates the safe resumption of air travel between the two countries during the COVID-19 pandemic and was signed today (June 30, 2021) by Governor Ralph DLG Torres on behalf of the CNMI and Vice Minister Seong-Kyu Hwang of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MOLIT) of the Republic of Korea.

The travel bubble applies to nationals, foreign national families of nationals, permanent residents, and families of permanent residents. Those who wish to travel between the two countries under the travel bubble agreement must complete vaccination against COVID-19 at least 14 days ahead of departure with vaccines approved and provided by their respective governments (Pfizer, Moderna, Janseen, AstraZeneca). In general, people are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine.

The agreement was signed in Seoul, where Governor Torres is leading the CNMI delegation negotiating with the South Korean government and business leaders to reestablish tourism to the Western Pacific beach resort destination. The delegation includes Board Chairwoman Viola Alepuyo of the CNMI Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA), who lauded the agreement.

“Because of the CNMI’s Level 1 designation by the CDC, the high number of vaccinated community members, and it being lauded as one of the safest places during this worldwide pandemic, the Korean government chose the CNMI as the first destination to enter into a Travel Bubble Arrangement,” said Alepuyo. “Today’s agreement between MOLIT and the CNMI is the biggest step forward in rebooting the CNMI tourism industry. This travel bubble is the bridge we need for Korea travelers choosing our destination as tourism resumes worldwide. In consultation with the Governor’s COVID-19 Task Force and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation, we are confident that the safety measures established by this travel bubble agreement—essentially full vaccination—is the safety choice to keep our island community safe.”

Approved travelers must have remained in their country of embarkation for at least 14 days prior to departure. Travelers under the travel bubble must travel on direct nonstop flights between the Republic of Korea and the CNMI operated by either country’s national carriers. The agreement is for group tours between Seoul Incheon International Airport and Saipan International Airport. Other entry or exit points including Rota and Tinian may be added by mutual consent.

Travelers must also undertake a RT-PCR COVID-19 test within 3 days before departure, and obtain a certificate of having tested negative for COVID-19 from the accredited laboratories by the health authorities of each country. For the return journey, both Korean and the CNMI governments shall provide convenience for travelers to be tested for COVID-19 three days before their departure.

Upon arrival at each destination, travelers will be subject to an on-arrival RT-PCR COVID-19 test. They will be exempt from quarantine and allowed to travel as long as they test negative on their on-arrival test. However, travelers may be placed on a controlled itinerary as required by health measures of both destinations.



KOREA TRAVEL AGENCIES LAUD MARIANAS' SAFETY, CLEANLINESS

Major South Korean travel agencies are lauding the safety measures and cleanliness of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) as the destination launches a travel bubble with the Republic of Korea effective tomorrow, July 1, 2021. A delegation from the CNMI led by Governor Ralph DLG Torres met today, June 30, 2021, with company executives from Korea's three largest travel tour companies: HanaTour, Mode Tour, and Yellow Balloon Tour. Governor Torres was joined by representatives of the CNMI COVID-19 Task Force, members of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers and the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA).



HANA Tour

The CNMI's hard work in beautifying our islands was recognized by HanaTour's introduction when they described the CNMI as "Clean, Safe and Romantic!" During the meeting, the Hana Tour executive team, the largest tour travel company in Korea, was led by Co-CEO Jim-Kook Kim and Co-CEO Mi-Sun Song. They were very enthusiastic and excited to help boost the tourist population traveling to the CNMI because they consider the CNMI as "the Cleanest and Safest destination in the world." HanaTour is the largest tour travel company in Korea.



Yellow Balloon Tour

Mr. Song Seokwon, Yellow Balloon Tour's Senior Management Director, with his executive team met with the CNMI delegation. They were excited to meet Governor Torres and appreciated his leadership in bringing the CNMI Delegation to meet with Yellow Balloon's Executive Team. Yellow Balloons' Team was excited to hear about the TRIP program and was optimistic about their success in selling tour packages to the CNMI. Pre-COVID, Yellow Balloon holds the record for the highest sales of travel tours to the CNMI.

ModeTour

The meeting with the Mode Tour team was led by CEO Mr. Intea Yu. CEO Yu told Governor Torres during the meeting that they were extremely impressed with his leadership in handling the COVID-19 Pandemic and overcoming the challenges facing the CNMI. He recognized the Governor's hard work and committed that he and the entire Mode Tour team will work just as hard to promote the CNMI as a preferred destination. The two delegations discussed the challenges and how to overcome them and committed to working together to ensure the success of the CNMI Tourism Resumption Investment Program – or TRIP..



KOREAN MEDIA, INFLUENCERS VISIT THE MARIANAS

Representatives of major travel agencies and six media and social media channels in Korea have visited The Marianas to learn more about the destination for this month's resumption of direct international flights between the two destinations. The group arrived in Saipan on July 17, 2021, as part of a larger familiarization (FAM) tour, spending five days at the designated hybrid quarantine resort.



Media, CEOs and agents of major travel agencies, and representatives of airlines left on Saturday (July 24), while a film crew and social media influencers will return to Korea on July 31. Participants included Naver bloggers Joanlee and Ellena Park Eunha, Naver blogger and Instagrammer Ryufill-foto, YouTube and Instagram channels youlakk and Yo:oN the Road, and Instagrammer _peppermint.b. The total estimated ad value of the media FAM tour is over \$117,000. TV travel show Eudiny, also part of the FAM tour, has remained in The Marianas another week and will produce nine 1-3 minute video clips on the destination.

Community safety remains our top priority, so all members of the FAM tour spent their first five days in quarantine before exploring Saipan, Rota, and Tinian on their last two days,” said Marianas Visitors Authority Managing Director Priscilla M. Iakopo. “Overall, the feedback we received is that they were very satisfied with their trip, which aimed to provide them the experience and reassurance of what The Marianas can offer their customers and followers.”.



A travel bubble between the Republic of Korea and The Marianas aims to facilitate the safe resumption of air travel between the two countries during the COVID-19 pandemic; it is the first travel bubble agreement for Korea. The travel bubble applies to nationals, foreign national families of nationals, permanent residents, and families of permanent residents. Those who wish to travel between the two countries under the travel bubble agreement must complete vaccination against COVID-19 at least 14 days ahead of departure with vaccines approved and provided by their respective governments (Pfizer, Moderna, Janseen, AstraZeneca). In general, people are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine.

THE MARIANAS ADOPTS WTTC “SAFETRAVELS” PROGRAM

The Marianas is among the latest destinations around the world to launch the “SafeTravels” program of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC)

Safe Travels Marianas Program



The Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) has registered as the lead agency for issuing the SafeTravels Stamp in The Marianas. The program is free and available to all businesses in The Marianas who align their COVID-19 Safety Guidelines and Protocols with the Safe Travels Program guidelines. Business may now apply online at www.mymarianas.com.

Upon application and submission of business health and hygiene protocols, the CNMI COVID-19 Task Force will review each application. Businesses will be contacted by email for more information or to schedule an inspection at the business location. Once approved, businesses will receive a business safe travel logo package and window decals

“The foundation of restoring consumer confidence in travel lies in destinations being proactive about health and safety protocols. The Marianas is pleased to be a part of the WTTC Safe Travels global protocols, building on a strong foundation laid by our government and public health officials in ensuring the protection of our island community and the visitors who wish to experience life in The Marianas. Our island spirit of “Un Familia (One family) Un Guinaiya (One love), and Tipiyeew (Unity)” has served The Marianas well in bringing government, businesses, and our community together to successfully keep our shores safe. We look forward to extending that spirit to our visitors through WTTC’s recommended standards and we are grateful for the partnership.”

PRISCILLA M. IAKOPO
MANAGING DIRECTOR



Hafa Adai & Tirow Pledge Program

The Marianas Visitors Authority and Saipan Chamber of Commerce launched the Hafa Adai & Tirow Pledge program during May Tourism Month, inviting businesses, organizations and individuals to make a vow to help promote the indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian cultures of The Marianas.



Governor Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold Palacios led an official launch ceremony on May 28, 2021, at the CNMI Office of the Governor in Saipan, where other representatives of both the public and private sectors also took the pledge.

Similar ceremonies were held on in June on Tinian led by Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan Edwin Aldan and on Rota led by Mayor Efraim Atalig.

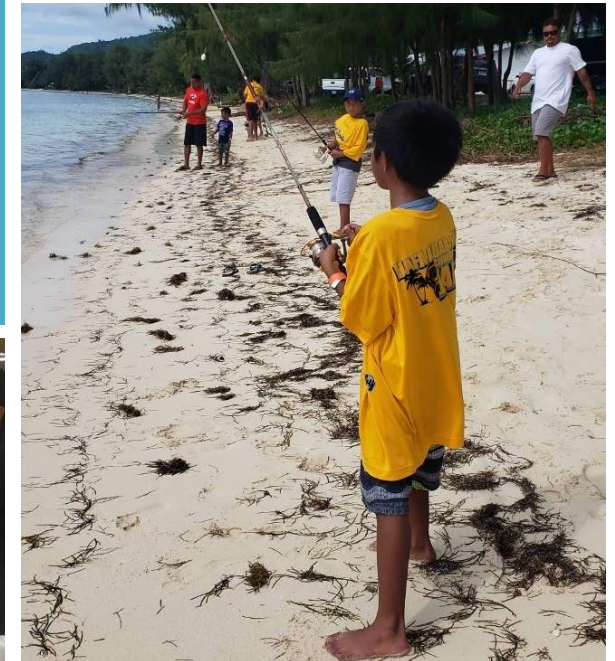
The Hafa Adai & Tirow Pledge encompasses the action of “Ta Fan Un Kurason/Sibwe Tipiyeew” (be united), uniting public and private sectors and individuals in a commitment for the preservation and promotion of the Chamorro and Carolinian language, culture, and traditions. The program involves making effort every day to make a difference in the survival of these cultures in one way or another, including taking continuous steps to “go local, look local, and think local” in the areas of language, arts, traditions, history and values. The program welcomes all businesses, organizations, and companies interested in strengthening the core values and traditions of indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian cultures.



Sugar King bested six others to win top place and \$1,000 during the Battle of the bands at Saturday's (July 31) Hafa Adai & Tirow Summer Jam n The Marianas. A total of \$6,500.00 was given away to individuals who had received their COVID-19 vaccination and registered for the free raffle at the event. The event, organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA), was held at Guma Sakman in Susupe, Saipan, and celebrated the reinstatement of international flights to The Marianas. "The turnout at Saturday's event was a true testament from our community. They have missed our fun-filled events," said MVA Managing Director Priscilla M. lakopo. "Temperature checks were conducted for everyone upon entry, and the response to the entertainment, food and drinks, and especially the cash raffle was very enthusiastic A huge thank you to Turnkey Solutions for donating \$1,500.00."



HAFA ADAI AND TIROW SUMMER JAM





Local cuisine, live entertainment, arts and crafts!

AUGUST 27, 2021 4:00 PM TO 10:00PM

AUGUST 28 & 29 2021 5:00pm to 10:00pm

GARAPAN FISHING BASE, SAIPAN

Friday, August 27: 6:00pm Eskabeche Cooking Contest

Saturday, August 28: 6:00pm Kadun Pika Cooking Contest

Sunday, August 29: 7:00pm Buñelos Kamuti Eating Contest

1st Place \$500, 2nd Place \$250, 3rd Place \$150, & 4th Place \$100



#vaccinatecnmi

COVID 19 Protocols will be followed.

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**UPCOMING
EVENT**

**22ND TASTE OF THE MARIANAS
INTERNATIONAL FOOD FESTIVAL**

August 27-29, 2021



The 22nd Annual Taste of The Marianas International Food Festival & Beer Garden will be held on Aug. 27-29, 2021, on the island of Saipan, bringing some of the best island cuisine and entertainment together in what is expected to be the island's largest gathering in over a year.

The event will be held at Garapan Fishing Base from 5-10 p.m. with food and beverage vendors confirmed. The annual signature event of the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) will return following a hiatus in 2020 due to COVID-19. The evening event will again feature affordable dishes from local hotels and restaurants, live entertainment, and arts and crafts sales.. Local arts and crafts will also be available for sale.

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