



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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HEALTH MEASURES SET FOR TINIAN HOT PEPPER FESTIVAL

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – COVID-19 safety protocols and other mitigation measures have been set for the 17th Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 13-14, 2021, in The Marianas.

Despite five months of no community transmission of COVID-19 in The Marianas, the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) will implement a series of measures recommended by the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and COVID-19 Task Force at the festival.

“Public health and safety remains a top priority at this year’s Tinian Hot Pepper Festival,” said MVA Managing Director Priscilla M. Iakopo. “In cooperation with the Tinian Mayor’s Office and the various agencies in Tinian, we are working to make this year’s festival a safe and successful one.”

The Dept. of Public Safety will manage the entry of and take the temperature of all attendees at the festival site. Handwashing stations will be installed around the event area, and attendees are required to wear face masks. Clear shields will be installed at all booths to prevent direct contact between vendors and customers.

This year's event will also include the Pika 50K Bike Race, funded by the Tinian Mayor's Office, with cash prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in several categories. Bikers may contact Dawn Sarmiento at 1.670287.3667 to register.

The festival, affectionately known as "Pika Fest" among locals ("pika" means spicy), pays homage to Tinian's small but famous "donne sali" hot pepper. Activities will include food sales, live entertainment, competitions, arts and crafts sales, and more. The festival will be held from 4-10 p.m. on Feb. 13 and from 4-10 p.m. on Feb. 14. The 18th Tinian Municipal Council will co-sponsor prizes for the male and female categories of the crowd-favorite hot pepper eating contest. Other competitions will include "kadun pika" (spicy stew) cooking, cha-cha, tug-of-war, "umang" (hermit crab) race, and a home-made canoe race.

Ferry service between Saipan and Tinian is still under consideration due to budget constraints.

The Tinian Hot Pepper Festival will be held at the Fiesta Grounds in San Jose, Tinian, adjacent to Kammer Beach. Limited hotel accommodations are available at Tinian Ocean View, Lorilynn's Hotel, Tinian Street Motel, Fleming Hotel, Green Lion House Hotel, and the Marpo Valley Inn. Free camping is available at Kammer Beach, Taga Beach (toilets, barbecue pits, and outdoor showers available) and at the adjacent Tachogna Beach (toilets, barbecue pits, and indoor showers available).

For more information, contact Tinian Field Operations Supervisor Vida Borja at 1.670.433.9365 or e-mail at vborja@mymarianas.com or MVA Community Projects Manager Martin Duenas at 1.670.664.3200 or email mduenas@mymarianas.com.



FILE- Indigenous Chamorro dance is performed at the 15th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 16, 2019, in The Marianas. The Marianas Visitors Authority and co-sponsor Tinian Mayor's Office will hold the 17th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 13-14, 2021, at the Fiesta Grounds in San Jose village on Tinian, adjacent to Kammer Beach.

The Marianas are an archipelago of 14 islands - including Saipan, Tinian, and Rota - in the Western Pacific. Latte stone limestone monoliths from the time of the pyramids, 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 awaiting visitors to The Marianas, where pristine sea, sand, and skies are just three to four hours by plane from major Asian gateway cities. 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. United Airlines flies to The Marianas several times a week 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/[mymarianas](https://www.facebook.com/mymarianas), or Instagram [@themarianas](https://www.instagram.com/themarianas).

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