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## Group Leisure Travel (GLT) Program Launches

In an effort to provide a more efficient visa application process for group travelers from China, the U.S. Commercial Service in Shanghai has launched the Group Leisure Travel (GLT) program with outbound travel agents licensed to sell U.S. destinations in China's largest city.

Initially formed as a pilot program following concerns by Guam Visitors Bureau (GVB) and Chinese travel agents in November 2010, GLT helps ease the shortage of U.S. visa interview slots in peak travel periods like Chinese New Year. Response to the pilot was so positive, the program has now become permanent in Shanghai.

The process begins with deadlines imposed on travel agents to submit customer information for groups of more than 20 people to the U.S. Commercial Service. Names are then pre-screened and forwarded to the Visa Section for interview scheduling, bypassing typically long wait times. If deadlines are not met, interview slots are given to another travel agent.

"Our relationship with the U.S. Commercial Service has helped bring this program to fruition, which has in turn allowed Shanghai travel agents to sell almost all charter air seats to Guam during the peak Chinese New Year travel time," said GVB Marketing Manager Pilar Laguaña. "All of the agents licensed to sell outbound travel to the U.S. in Shanghai are appreciative of this program. We look forward to its placement in other cities as well."

If the Shanghai GLT program proves to be a viable option for group travelers in the coming months, GVB will advocate for other U.S. Consulates to implement it in their cities.

## A Message from the Acting General Manager

*Hafa Adai!* As Acting General Manager, I look forward to building on the progress GVB has experienced in the past several years. That being said, this month has brought several challenges including drops in visitor arrivals due to the crisis in Japan. We ask for your support as we continue to respond with increased marketing efforts and continued flights from our airlines.

Senseramente,



Joann G. Camacho



## Japan Crisis Spurs "Clean & Safe" Campaign in Korea, Core Markets

Following concerns surrounding the Fukushima Dai-ichi radiation plant in Japan after the earthquake and tsunami on March 11, GVB launched campaigns in each core market to ensure visitors the island remains "clean & safe."

Arrivals in Korea were hit the hardest, peaking at 25% cancellations in the weeks following the crisis.

GVB Korea marketing representatives, TLK Marketing, have worked with travel agents to institute special promotions and media familiarization tours to Guam.

In Korea, visitors have begun posting positive feedback about their Guam experiences on social media sites as part of the "Clean & Safe" campaign.



# Exploring the Visitor Industry on Guam



## Perez Steps Down from Role as GVB General Manager

Gerald S.A. Perez stepped down as General Manager of GVB, submitting his resignation to the Board of Directors at its regularly scheduled meeting on March 24.

He has agreed to serve as consultant adviser to the board in order to fulfill the remaining outstanding commitment made during his tenure as general manager, assist in updating the GVB Five Year Strategic Plan, and assist the new general manager through a leadership transition in regard to the bureau's operation, industry relationships, and brand-building initiatives.

After nearly six years at the helm of the region's largest National Tour Operator (NTO), Perez said the decision to leave was difficult but he felt the new board should have an opportunity to hire a manager of its choosing.

"We have done a lot of great things during my time here," he said. "We have an amazing staff that has instilled into the community and our core markets a sense of place and a united vision of Guam as a destination. We have weathered drops in visitor arrivals due to natural disasters and have battled back to see more than 1.1 million arrivals in 2010. Now is a good time to step down and allow another leadership perspective for our island's No. 1 industry."

The Board of Directors, which recently received confirmation of three governor appointees by the 31st Guam Legislature, appointed Joann Camacho as Acting General Manager following Perez's announcement.

Perez's contract with the board expires in November, and he has agreed to serve in an advisory capacity until then.

## Guam Governor Meets with Korean Media

GVB and representatives from major Korean media met with Gov. Eddie B. Calvo and emergency response teams on March 31 to reassure Guam's No. 2 market the island remains "clean and safe."

Korea has been the cause of most cancellations since the earthquake and tsunami in Japan on March 11. Consumer concern for radiation exposure to Guam has resulted in about 25% cancellations of group travel from Korea while Japan has experienced only 8.7% cancellations, a rate much lower than initial projections.

"Cancellations from Korea have been the result of misconceptions and misleading information distributed in the marketplace. This was about dispelling those rumors," said GVB Marketing Manager Pilar Lagaña.

Media representing a total circulation of about 25 million were represented by Hankook Ilbo, The Seoul Economic Daily, Segye Times, Sports Chosun, Sports Hankuk, City, Nocut News, and Metro.

## Korean Crew Expected to Film Drama on Guam

A 10-member inspection team for Korean MBC TV will be on Guam beginning April 15 in preparation for filming scheduled in July for the popular drama, "Stubborn Lady."

The initial visit will scout out locations for a 63-member team planning to arrive this summer to feature Guam in two 40-minute episodes.

Filming and photography from Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and other core markets has continued to increase in the past year due to marketing efforts by GVB and increased interest in the island as a scenic backdrop to modeling photoshoots, music videos, short films, and TV shows.

"Projects like this offer a unique marketing opportunity for Guam," said GVB Acting General Manager Joann Camacho. "The wide reach of film allows us to reach multiple demographics in each of our core markets."



## Global Industry Developments & New Products



### GVB Partners with PATA San Diego for Seminar

GVB partnered with the San Diego Chapter of Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) and Che'lu Inc., for a product seminar on March 17 aimed at sharing the latest Guam offerings with travel agents in San Diego.

Che'lu Inc., a nonprofit organization comprised of Chamorros on the West Coast, also used the opportunity to unveil a hand-built traditional Sakman made by Master Carver Mario Borja and a small crew over the past year.

"This event gave us an opportunity to share information about Guam's visitor industry with San Diego travel agents, and an opportunity to highlight our culture with two organizations that really embody the Chamorro spirit," said GVB Marketing Manager Pilar Laguaña. "We were really able to give these industry representatives a taste of our island and its culture."

Speakers included GVB General Manager Gerald S.A. Perez; Barbara Bryant, PATA North America regional director; Sandy P. Everett of Continental Airlines (United); and Rear Adm. William D. French, commander of U.S. Navy Region Southwest.

### Plans Under Way for 2nd Maila Ta Fan Boka Tour

Planning is under way for the GVB 2nd Annual Maila Ta Fan Boka, a three-day event aimed at introducing authentic Chamorro culture to international media through cuisine.

The three-day event will bring social media from Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and

**MAILA  
TA FAN  
BOKA  
2011**

the Philippines to Guam from May 26-28. They will explore everything from the types of foods grown on Guam to how they are prepared in the kitchen.

Activities will include farm tours, cooking demonstrations, a trip to the Agat Mango Festival, and the 2nd Annual Maila Ta Fan Boka Culinary Competition at Guam Premiere Outlets.

### GVB Showcases Guam at L.A. Times Travel & Adventure Show

For the sixth consecutive year, GVB attended the L.A. Times Travel & Adventure Show from March 19-20 in Los Angeles, joining more than 500 exhibitors who showcase at the event annually.

Known as the largest consumer and travel industry event in the United States, L.A. Times attracts 20,000 consumers and provides a major platform to attract potential visitors, including Chamorros living on the West Coast.

"This is the leading consumer show in North America," said former GVB General Manager Gerald S.A. Perez. "Each year, we get a lot of support from our fellow Chamorros who help us set up and man our booth. It's a great way for us to connect while positioning Guam as a destination of choice."



Please let us know what other stories and information about Guam you would like to see featured in l'Estoria. Contact us at [plaguana@visitguam.org](mailto:plaguana@visitguam.org) with your ideas, suggestions, or requests for additional information.



# Calendar of Events



= GVB Special Event

## April

April 14-17

### **2nd Annual Talofofo Banana Festival**

Enjoy the village's 2nd Annual Banana Festival, where sweet varieties will be on display in a number of recipes. Cultural activities for all ages will also be on site. For more info, contact the Mayor's Office at 789-1421.



April 16

### **Boonie Stomp from Umatac Bay to Toguan Bay**

Meet at the center court of Chamorro village in Hagåtña at 9 a.m. to join Guam Boonie Stompers. For more info, e-mail davelotz@ite.net.

April 18

### **Agafa Gumas Yigo Fiesta**

Join Agafa Gumas Yigo and its Catholic Church in celebration of Santa Bernadita. For more info, contact the Mayor's Office at 653-5248.

April 23

### **Boonie Stomp to Pagat Point**

Meet at the center court of Chamorro village in Hagåtña at 9 a.m. to join Guam Boonie Stompers. For more info, e-mail davelotz@ite.net.

April 30

### **Boonie Stomp to Lower Sigua Falls North**

Meet at the center court of Chamorro village in Hagåtña at 9 a.m. to join Guam Boonie Stompers. For more info, e-mail davelotz@ite.net.

April 30

### **Inarajan Fiesta**

Celebrate its patron saint, St. Joseph, with a traditional Chamorro fiesta. For more info, contact Historic Inalahan at 828-1671.

### **Fin'nana na Ferian Fina'Hechuran Unai (1st Sand Sculpture Contest)**

For more information on this student-led contest, contact Peter Onedera at ponedera53@yahoo.com.



### **Guam Perimeter Relay**

Join the oldest Guam Running Club event, which puts team sof 10 on a 20-leg course covering 48 miles. For more info, visit [www.guamrunningclub.com](http://www.guamrunningclub.com).

## May

May 1

### **Guam Island Fiesta Tour (Inarajan)**

For reservations for the fiesta, contact your tour agent or Kiyoko/Rex at Lam Lam Tours at (671)649-5314.



May 6-8

### **Inarajan Coconut Festival**

For more info, contact Historic Inalahan at 828-1671.

May 27

### **GVB Excellence in Tourism Awards**

Annual event honoring outstanding employees in the local visitor industry. For more, call GVB at 646-5278.



May 27-29

### **2nd Annual Maila Ta Fan Boka**

International media tour highlighting Guam cuisine. For more, contact GVB at 646-5278.



May 27-29

### **Agat Mango Festival**

Come experience everything mango! For more, contact the Agat Mayor's Office at 565-2524.



## Visitor Statistics January - March 2011 (preliminary) Total: 322,513 (0.7% LY)

% of Mkt Mix	Country	Arrival Pax	Change from Last Year
76.6%	Japan	246,934	-2.5%
11.1%	Korea	35,680	38.6%
3.6%	U.S. Main	11,580	-1.4%
0.8%	Hawaii	2,453	-6.6%
2.7%	Taiwan	8,861	2.8%
0.8%	China	2,509	38.2%
0.3%	Other	834	-14.5%

## Special Promotions, Incentives & Other News



### GVB Hand Delivers Well Wishes to Sendai, Japan

GVB Japan personally delivered handmade get well wishes from students in Guam to children in Japan on April 4 by driving more than five hours to the area most affected by an earthquake and tsunami.

Greeting cards produced by students from Guam and attendees from the Guam Ko'ko' Kids Fun Run on March 20 are now being displayed in the Miyagi Government Office in Sendai.

"This was a small way that we as a bureau could share our condolences and well wishes to the victims in this region," said GVB Acting General Manager Joann Camacho. "We are appreciative to all of the island's students and GVB Japan, who helped us. We hope it brings a little joy to the children of Sendai."

The effort follows a \$10,000 donation given to the American Red Cross Japan Relief Effort by GVB.

### Guam Island Fiesta Tour Brings Authentic Experience Back to Visitors for 2011 Season

After success in 2010 introducing visitors into the homes of local families for village fiesta celebrations, the Guam Island Fiesta Tour (GIFT) kicked off the 2011 calendar with a Barrigada celebration on April 10.

The program, sponsored by GVB in partnership with the Mayors Council of Guam and Lam Lam Tours, has been well received as an opportunity to share the Chamorro culture with Japanese, Taiwanese, Korean, and U.S. military groups who likely would never get the opportunity to experience it.

"The GIFT really embodies principles the Guam brand was founded on," said GVB Acting General Manager Joann Camacho. "It helps local families understand their stake in the visitor industry, and allows us to show our visitors our history, food, and the way we celebrate – instead of telling them."

For information on reservations for upcoming GIFTs in Inarajan, Merizo, Santa Rita, Agat, Mangilao, and Dededo, call 649-5314.

### Free Travel Tools for Agents

- **Swimsuit Optional:**  
Click here to request an electronic version of the Swimsuit Optional brochure for land activities.
- **Top 10 Things To Do:**  
Click here to request an electronic version of the Top 10 Things To Do On Guam flyer.
- **Marketing Tools:**  
Click here to learn about more free downloadable tools.

Guam Visitors Bureau is a proud member of the following organizations:



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