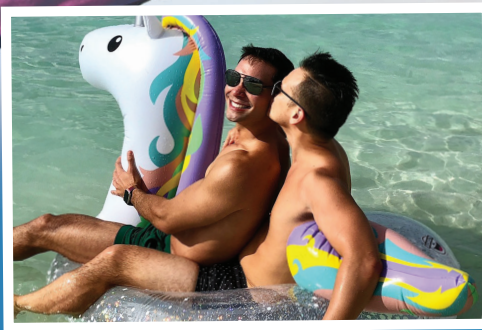




# GUAM PRIDE

7 Days in Paradise



***Travelers from all over the world, and especially those from the many Asian nations just a short plane ride away, are quickly discovering that this friendly island with year-round sunshine and spectacular beaches makes for a fantastic, and incredibly romantic, gay getaway. Guam became the first territory of the United States to legalize same-sex marriage on June 5, 2015, and it remains one of the only destinations in Asia where LGBTQ couples can marry.***

Whether you're planning a wedding or simply looking to enjoy a memorable vacation, you'll find Guam to be one of the most LGBTQ-welcoming destinations in the Pacific region. From hotel staff to restaurant and shop employees, the island's hospitality industry is extremely accepting of LGBTQ visitors, and same-sex couples can expect to feel very comfortable holding hands, sunbathing together on the beach, and simply being themselves. The island has a sizable, and quite visible, LGBTQ community that thrives throughout the island. Guam Pride ([guampride.org](http://guampride.org)) launched in 2017 and is held each year (typically in early June) and consists of a Pride March, social gatherings, and a beach party and cultural arts festival—it's a terrific time to visit and get to know the island's vibrant gay scene. You can also get involved with and learn more about LGBTQ Guam

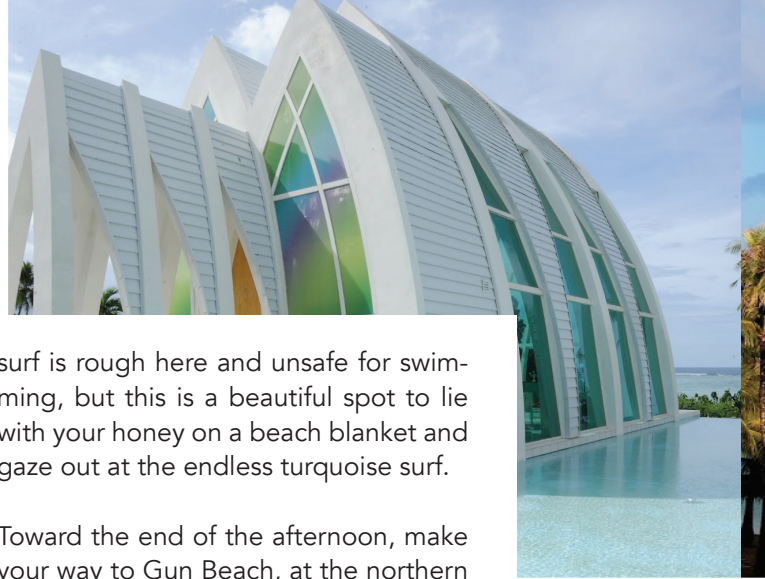
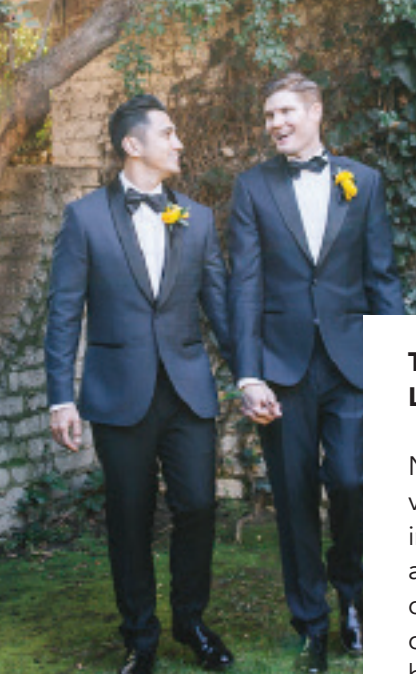
through such community organizations as GALA (Guam's Alternative Lifestyle Association, [galaguam.org](http://galaguam.org)) and ISA Guam ([facebook.com/isaguam](https://facebook.com/isaguam)).

The Guam Visitors Bureau, which is a proud member of the International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association, enthusiastically welcomes LGBTQ visitors from all over the world and is a helpful resource for both trip and wedding planning.

### *Getting Married in Guam*

The island has dozens of breathtakingly beautiful venues for wedding ceremonies, from oceanfront chapels and glass-walled ballrooms at virtually all of Guam's major resorts to scenic vistas like Two Lovers Point and Jeff's Pirate Cove, to parks and cultural attractions like Valley of the Latte Adventure Park in Talofofo and both Plaza de Espana and the stunning and contemporary Guam Museum in Hagåtña. You can even marry next door to the Guam Museum inside the handsome, and LEED-certified, Guam Legislature Building. Of course, many persons in Guam can serve as officiants, from clergy to various political figures and elected officials, and it's quite easy to find folks who are happy to perform same-sex weddings.





## The Perfect 7-Day Itinerary for LGBTQ Travelers in Guam

Note that there's sometimes a drive involved in getting from the hotel district in Tumon Bay to some of the island's top attractions. Guam is easy to navigate by car and there are numerous rental agencies at the airport and at many resorts, but if you'd rather leave the driving to others, you'll find some excellent independent tour operators, such as Discover Guam, that offers themed tours and can also work with you to develop your own custom journey.

### *Saturday Relax on the Beach*

Your first full day on the island is a great time simply to swim and sunbathe amid the lush, palm-shaded grounds of your hotel. Just about every resort on the island has a soft, sandy beach on radiant Tumon Bay, which is shallow, warm, and calm—as its protected by reefs—making it ideal for swimming, snorkeling, or zipping around in kayaks or stand-up paddleboards. Start your morning with breakfast at your hotel, and perhaps a morning swim in the pool, and then just grab a towel and chill out for a few hours. Most properties rent umbrellas and beach chairs along with equipment for getting out into the water.

If you'd prefer to venture away from your hotel and laze on a more remote or rugged beach, consider the many other picturesque stretches of sand found elsewhere around the island. On the eastern shore, Tagachang and Talofofo beaches both have protected swimming areas and are surrounded by lush natural scenery. One of the most stunning beaches on the island is at Ritidian Point, which you reach down a rough road at the northern tip of Guam. The

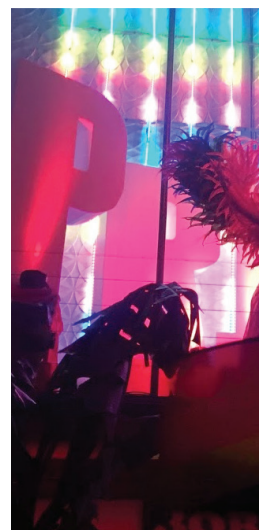
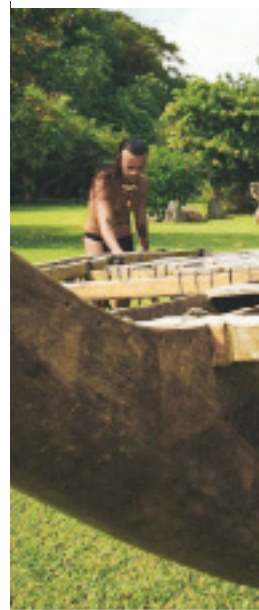
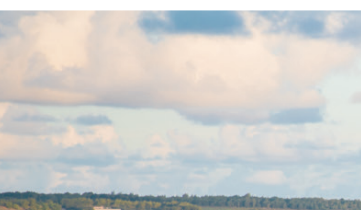
surf is rough here and unsafe for swimming, but this is a beautiful spot to lie with your honey on a beach blanket and gaze out at the endless turquoise surf.

Toward the end of the afternoon, make your way to Gun Beach, at the northern end of Tumon Bay, and grab a seat at the open-air Guam Beach Bar, where you can sip a mojito or mango madness cocktail as you watch the magnificent sunset. Stick around for dinner if you'd like—nachos, ahi sandwiches, fish-and-chips, and steaks are offered.

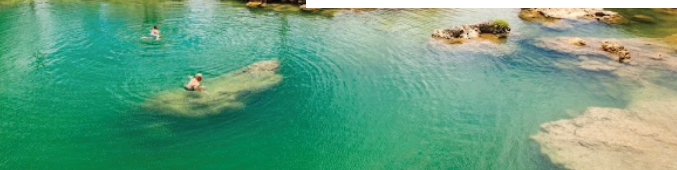
After a long day of reclining by the sea and perfecting your tan, it's time to partake of Guam's lively nightlife scene. You'll find a number of mainstream but LGBTQ-friendly bars and dance clubs right in the heart of Tumon, many with DJs and dancing, including Club Icon (described in the Thursday: Island Adventures below) and trendy Drop, a lounge that serves first-rate craft cocktails.

### *Sunday A Southern Island Road Trip*

Now that you're a bit rested, spend your second day by making a scenic drive around the picturesque and less-developed southern half of the island, a region steeped in both rugged beauty and fascinating history. Without stops and starting from Tumon's hotel district, it takes about two hours to make this 60-mile circumnavigation, but in order to give yourself time to explore some of the key stops along this route, allow four to six hours. Keep in mind that on this drive you'll also pass a number of attractions and diversions that you may wish to visit more in depth later in the week, from swimming holes to waterfall hikes.







To kickstart to your morning, stop for java at one of the several excellent cafes around Tumon Bay. Hafa Coffee, which opens early and serves delicious—and potent—lattes, cold brews, and espresso drinks, plus light breakfast fare, is an excellent choice. It's about a 10-minute drive southwest to reach the first stop on this tour, Hagåtña, the island's cultural and political center, where you can check out the latest art exhibit at the beautifully designed Guam Museum, which opened in 2014. Across the street you'll see the stately Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral Basilica. Be sure to stroll around the adjacent Plaza de Espana park, with its gardens, benches, kiosk, and preserved structures, three of them dating from Guam's period of Spanish control (from the late 17th through late 19th centuries).

From Hagåtña, drive along Highway 4 over across the hilly center of the island until you reach the east coast. Here you can stop to take in the sweeping panorama at Pago Bay Overlook, before continuing south past the excellent and gorgeously situated Country Club of the Pacific golf course. Guam has six other popular golf venues, including the acclaimed LeoPalace Resort & Country Club and the Guam International Country Club. Just past the course on the ocean side of the road, Jeff's Pirate's Cove is an excellent spot for lunch, serving such eclectic fare as spicy chicken wings, grilled local fish salad, and Greek-style gyro platters. There's also a quirky museum with interesting artwork and local artifacts, from unusual seashells to woodworking and pottery to a wheel salvaged from an 1890s U.S. battleship. The sandy shore of adjacent Ipan Beach Park is a nice spot for an after-lunch stroll.

As you continue south along Highway 4, you'll pass Valley of the Latte Adventure Park (more on this terrific attraction in the Tuesday itinerary) before reaching the small town of Inarajan, which is home to Waterfall Valley, a region rife with dramatic cataracts that you can easily hike to from parking areas along the road. In town, McKraut's—known for beer and hearty German food—is another good option for a lunch. Be aware that this is one of the last restaurants you'll encounter on the southern end of the island. Just south of town overlooking a dramatic bay, Inarajan Pools Beach is another alluring spot for a photo op, a picnic (there's covered seating), or a swim in the volcanic-rock pools.

Highway 4 continues to curve around to the small village of Merizo, where you can stop at beautiful Santa Marian Kamalen Park and admire one of the oldest buildings on the island, the mid-19th-century Merizo Combento, before continuing on to Umatac, where you'll want to visit Fort Nuestra Senora de la Soledad. The Spanish constructed this fortification in the early 19th century high on a bluff overlooking Umatac Bay, which is also where explorer Ferdinand Magellan is alleged to have first set foot on the island in 1521. In a park down on the bay, a small obelisk monument marks the spot.

Continue north up the coast via Highway 2, which climbs over some of the island's highest terrain. Stop at Cetti Bay Overlook for a grand, sweeping view of the island's west coast. Look up and to the east and you'll also see the huge white crosses rising atop Guam's highest peak, 1,332-foot Mt. Jamulong Manglo (meaning, "where the wind passes over"). From the parking





lot, well-marked hiking trails lead up to the summit of Mt. Jamullong Manglo in one direction (a moderately strenuous 4-mile round-trip hike) and down to Sella Bay (2 miles round-trip) and Cetti Bay (5 miles round-trip), where you'll encounter the ruins of an ancient Chamorro village.

Highway 2 continues to hug the west coast as you follow it back up toward Tamuning via Agat (and the War in the Pacific National Historical Park, which is covered in more details on Tuesday's itinerary) and Hagåtña. Back in Tumon, one very enjoyable way to end your day of driving and exploring is with one of the casual sunset barbecues, which are offered at a number of hotels and other restaurants—including the Hilton, Pacific Star, Nikko, Outrigger, Sheraton, and Westin. These often feature live entertainment along with tasty local food.

### *Monday Culinary Guam*

As you may notice in reading about the several excellent dining recommendations in this itinerary, Guam abounds with delicious food and drink—you'd be wise to arrive on the island with a big appetite. It's a wonderful destination for foodies, and you'll discover plenty of international options—notably excellent Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Italian, Thai, and other global offerings—as well as a number of places that specialize in the island's flavorful and local Chamorro cuisine.

Breakfast is a popular meal on Guam. For a genuine slice of Chamorro culinary culture, try visiting a restaurant that's popular with locals, such as Shirley's Coffee Shop, a bustling and friendly gathering spot where you can tuck into big portions of such island favorites as milkfish-and-eggplant omelets, Chamorro or Portuguese sausage with corned-beef hash, and eggs with spam or barbecue beef tapa and garlic-fried rice.

It may take you a little time to become hungry again for lunch—maybe get the blood flowing with a short hike or jog on the beach? When you're ready to



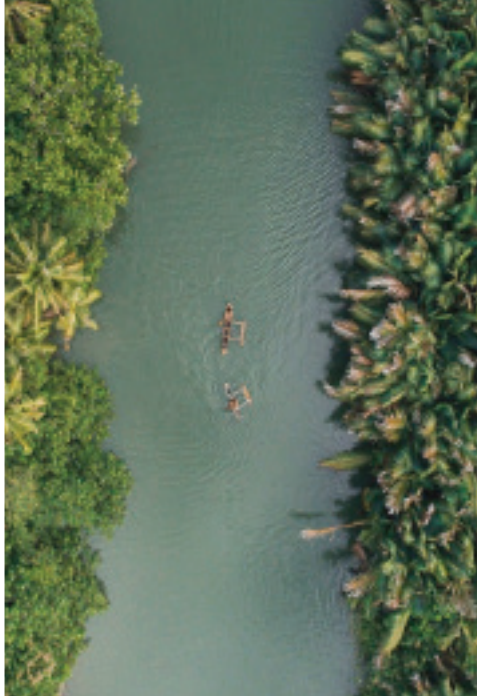
eat again, Terry's Local Comfort Food in Tumon Bay is a fantastic place to sample more traditional Chamorro dishes. A strategy here is to order a sampling of specialties, including kelaguen (a ceviche-like dish in which raw shrimp, fish, beef, or chicken is "cooked" in a marinade of lemon juice, coconut, green onions, and hot chiles) with crispy corn titiyas (similar to tortillas), barbecue mahimahi, chicken, and short ribs, beef tinaktak in a coconut-milk broth, fried whole parrotfish, shrimp patties, and red rice. If you like a bit of kick to your food, do generously apply traditional Chamorro sauces, like finadene (a soy-and-lemon-based condiment with chopped onions and local peppers) and the thicker and usually spicier dinanche, a fiery paste of hot chilies and garlic. Whatever you eat as your main dish, do

save room for the heavenly deep-fried banana lumpia, which are served with a sweet dipping sauce, or a bowl of champulado, a chocolate rice pudding.

Other great lunch options featuring authentic Chamorro food include Meskla Bistro (which has a few different locations), Three Squares, and Da Local Grind House, which is especially beloved for its hearty soups and stews.

In the evening, for the sort of celebratory meal that befits your wedding week or a special romantic getaway, book a table at Soi, a softly lighted, high-ceilinged restaurant that serves artfully presented Thai cuisine—such as roasted duck and foie gras salad and Kurobuta pork with Thai eggplant and panang curry—and has soaring windows that al-





low stunning ocean views. Or if you're in the mood for a modern fusion-inspired take on Chamorro food, consider dining at Proa, which has two locations, a cozy eatery near the hotels in Tumon Bay, and a larger branch in the heart of Hagåtña. The food here blends local and international—the Hawaiian rock salt-pressed rib eye steak is a favorite.

### *Tuesday Culture and History*

Inhabited by humans for more than 4,500 years, Guam has preserved its rich heritage at several fascinating attractions. On this day, you can learn about ancient Chamorro culture in the morning, before exploring the island's important, albeit sobering, 20th-century military history in the afternoon.

Start your day with a scenic drive to the Valley of the Latte Adventure Park, where you'll embark on an interesting narrated boat ride along the picturesque Talofofo River (keep an eye out for giant freshwater coconut crabs along the shoreline). The boat, equipped with comfortable covered seating, then lets you off at a re-created ancient Chamorro living-history village and botanical garden, where you'll see ancient latte stones (stone pillars with large capstones). Traditionally attired Ulitao guides explain how native plants and trees were used for medicinal and other purposes and also demonstrate fire-starting, basket-weaving, and other important arts and crafts. The tour concludes with a traditional barbecue lunch and a chance to visit a small but growing animal sanctuary. Tours by kayak or stand-up paddle board are also available.

In the afternoon, make your way to the exceptional War in the Pacific National Historic Park's T. Stell Newman Visitor Center and museum, in the town of Agat. Here engaging—and often poignant—interactive exhibits and a well-done 10-minute movie relate the story of Guam's critical pivotal military and geopolitical role throughout the past few centuries but especially during World War II, when the island was invaded and captured by the Japanese Army just after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and then taken back by U.S. forces after a brutal struggle in 1944. The park also includes several units that mark the site of key war battles, many of them within a short drive of the museum, including Agat Beach, Ga'an Point, Asan Beach, and Asan Bay Overlook (which includes a moving Memorial Wall). It's not an easy story to grapple with, and it's difficult to imagine the hardships endured by the island's brave inhabitants. One takeaway from understanding Guam's history is a better sense of why islanders tend to be so community-spirited and accepting of others.

In the evening, attend one of the most colorful and entertaining ways to learn about the island's culture, the legendary Taotao Tasi Beach Dinner Show. Set in an open-air theater set against the stunning backdrop of the Pacific Ocean, the show—which includes a generous buffet-style dinner—features more than 50 incredibly talented male and female performers dressed in traditional Chamorro warrior attire who will absolutely dazzle you with fire dancing and other dramatic moves.

### *Wednesday Duty-Free Shopping*

You needn't fly to Tokyo, New York, or Paris to visit the world's most famous high-end fashion, jewelry, and luxury-goods retailers. Right in Guam, particularly along Pale San Vitores Road in Tumon, you'll find retail from such vaunted names as Prada, Louis Vuitton, and Marimekko. Best of all, shopping in Guam is duty free, which may explain why visitors sometimes show up with extra empty suitcases to accommodate all



of the treasures they pick up during their visit.

In the morning, you might want to check out one or two of the island's major shopping centers. There's Guam Premier Outlets, in Tamuning, the island's only outlet shopping destination, where you can check out such popular brands as Calvin Klein, Forever 21, Guess, Nine West, and Tommy Hilfiger. In nearby Hagåtña, Agana Shopping Center contains about 70 different stores and eateries. And just a few minutes' drive from Tumon Bay, you can explore more than 100 shops as well as a large theater at Micronesia Mall—highlights include Lacoste, Gap, Folli Follie, the Original Levi's Store, and Macy's. There are popular food courts with both national chains and local eateries at these shopping centers, and a short drive from Micronesia Mall you'll also find one of the best lunch spots on the island, Pika's, which serves made-to-order wraps, salads, and sandwiches, from Hawaiian-style loco moco burgers to Korean barbecue and salmon tinaktak.

Spend the afternoon in Tumon, where you can either stroll or get around by trolley along Pale San Vitores Road. An absolute must is Tumon Sands Plaza, where you'll find such vaunted names at Balenciaga, Bulgari, Givenchy, Gucci, Kenzo, Rolex, Swarovski, Tiffany, and Watabe Wedding. Next investigate the offerings at T Galleria, which is home to Burberry, Cartier, Hermes, Prada, Miu Miu, and Marc Jacobs among others, plus fine spirits like Glenfiddich and Hennessy. And finally, no shopping adventure on San Vitores Road is complete without a stop at The Plaza, where you can browse the latest styles from Vivienne

Westwood, Paul Smith, Coach, Cole Haan, and Longchamp.

For a fun late-afternoon diversion from shopping, drop by the UnderWater World aquarium, which is located at The Plaza and offers amazing up-close opportunities to view reef and zebra sharks as well as colorful orangespine surgeonfish, lionfish, green sea turtles, black whiptail rays and shovel-nose guitarfish. UnderWater World offers several cool packages that include everything from dinner in a stunning glass-walled restaurant with amazing views of the sea creatures to diving with the sharks. There are also several popular dining spots at The Plaza, including the Hard Rock Café to Vitale's Italian Restaurant.

On Wednesday nights, the shopping fun on Guam continues at the decidedly local and very affordable Chamorro Night Market. This festive open-air celebration takes place at Chamorro Village in Hagåtña from around 5:30 until 9:30 pm and features dozens of vendors specializing in hand-made crafts and colorful artwork. Be sure to visit Infinite Charm, which showcases the gorgeous contemporary silver jewelry of artist Lasia Casil, the founder of Guam's annual LGBTQ Pride celebration. Many vendors and food trucks sell great food, too, including local Chamorro specialties, fresh-squeezed lemonade, and banana lumpia. There are music and dance performances in the village pavilion.

### *Thursday Island Adventures*

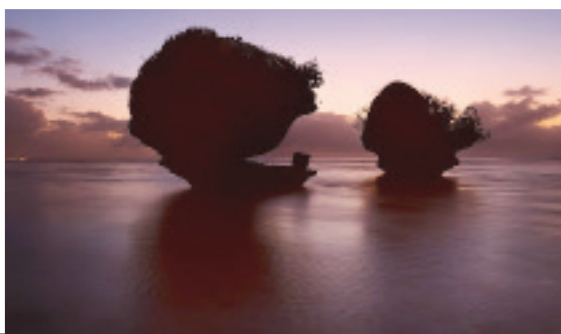
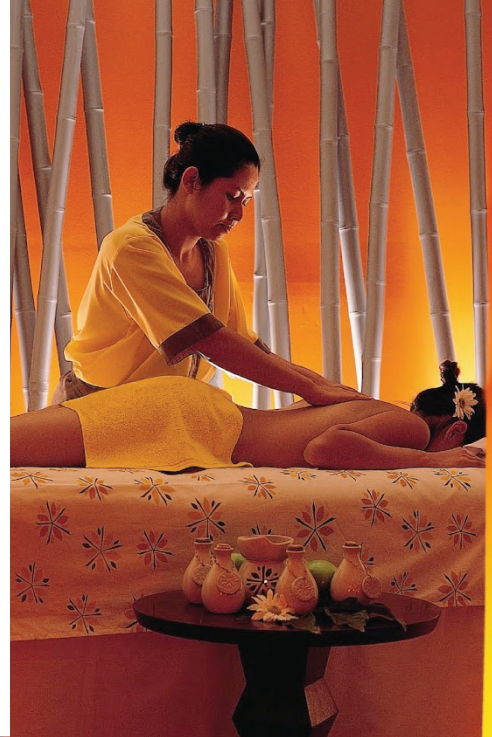
Guam is a mecca for outdoor recreation and adventure, whether it's hiking to a magnificent waterfall or diving beside World War II shipwrecks just off the coast. Spend this day



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out partaking of one, or maybe even two if you're especially ambitious, of the island's adventurous offerings.

If it's underwater fun you're after, you've come to the right place. Several companies offer Scuba diving and even certification. More casual swimmers can see colorful marine life simply by snorkeling around Tumon Bay. You can also get an exciting look beneath the sea at Fish Eye Marine Park in Piti, which has both a scenic above-ground observation deck and an underwater observatory some 30-feet beneath the ocean's surface. Or head out on a 35-minute cruise in the 65-foot-long Atlantis Submarine, which offers a one-of-a-kind tour through the island's reefs.

Guam is justly famous for hiking, or "boonie stomping," as this activity is known around the island. You'll find trails leading to dramatic waterfalls, including Tarzan and Sigua Falls in the center of the island, and the several cataracts in Waterfall Valley in the southern town of Inarajan. Other trails lead to secluded bays and soaring mountaintops (as described in the Sunday Road Trip itinerary, above), while others lead to hidden caves and through lush jungles. Several tour companies on the island offer guided hikes, but if you ask around, you'll also find plenty of locals willing to share tips and advice on the best places for a boonie stomp, and possibly even to venture out with you on a hike. Other great ways that

you can spend your day of adventuring include parasailing, ziplining, and even tandem skydiving.

Celebrate all that you accomplished during your outing by enjoying sunset at Puntan Dos Amantes, or Two Lovers Point, a majestic overlook set atop sheer seaside cliffs that rise some 368 feet above the sea. This romantic spot just north of Tumon Bay is named for a Chamorro legend, which you can learn about from signage beside the park's Lookout Point, a cantilevered observation deck that offers stupendous views of Tumon Bay and the Philippine Sea. On the deck of the open-air Terraza at Puntan Dos Amantes restaurant, sip signature "Two Lovers" cocktails and enjoy a relaxing dinner—maybe a bacon cheeseburger, chicken and shrimp kelaguen, or a veggie tofu wrap—while you watch the sun fall gently over the sea.

In the evening, head to Club Icon for the weekly queer dance party, Gender Bender, a spirited celebration with captivating and campy drag performances. This high-energy outing brings out plenty of LGBTQ locals and visitors and their allies. Icon has comfy seating along with a stage, dance floor, and large front patio. Although Thursdays are the club's most popular night with LGBTQ folks, Icon is a fun and welcoming place to cut loose every night of the week.

## Friday Spa Day

By the end of your week on Guam, you've toured the entire island, hiked to waterfalls and scenic bays, danced into the wee night, and packed in plenty of other amazing adventures. Now it's time to pamper yourself with a couple of hours, or maybe even a full day, at the spa. There are more than a dozen full-service spas on Guam, most of them conveniently located at resort hotels. They offer a wide range of treatments, from traditional body work and skincare to cutting-edge services from around the world.

Some favorite spa options include the 120-minute Pure Bliss Ritual at the Outrigger Guam Beach Resort's Navasana Spa, which includes a tropical body scrub, a special bath with floral petals, and either deep-tissue or aromatic Balinese massage. Like many of the spas on the island, Navasana also offers a popular experience geared specifically to men, the Gentlemen's Spa Retreat, which ends with a deep-cleaning Elemis facial. Romantic couples' massages are also offered here and at many of Guam's other spas.

At Angsana Spa, which specializes in rejuvenating Thai-style massage and is located at the handsome Sheraton Laguna Guam Resort, guests rave about the 30-minute Avocado Smoothie



body-nourishing treatment, which you might want to follow with a full-body custom 90-minute massage that Angsana's experienced body workers can tailor to your exact needs. Mandara Spa at the Westin Resort Guam stands out for its 10 treatment rooms, which include three "villas" with outdoor Jacuzzi tubs—a soak in one of these is a very special way to end your treatment.

At sleek and serene Devarana Spa Guam in the Dusit Thani Guam Resort, consider booking the luxurious three-hour After Sun Reviver package, which is a wonderful way to rejuvenate your skin after all that time you've spent relaxing in Guam's sunshine. A more affordable option is Chandan Spa, where you can book an excellent bamboo massage or couples' massage. Other favorite venues include Spa Bali at Guam Plaza Resort, Spa Ayualam at the Hilton Guam Resort & Spa, Island Serena Spa at the Hyatt Regency Guam, and Olive Spa at the Guam Reef Resort.

All of these properties have appealing lunch options. Some lovely spots for enjoying a meal before, after—or even between—your luxuriant treatments include Issin for authentic sushi at the Westin Resort, Tasi Grill at Dusit Thai, where you can sup on ahi poke salad or barbecue baby-back pork ribs in an open-air space overlooking Tumon Bay, and Roy's Restaurant at the Hilton (dinner only), which is renowned for modern Hawaiian fusion cuisine.

End your evening by attending one of the dazzling Vegas-style shows in Tumon, such as Zubrick at SandCastle Dinner Theater, which features the husband-and-husband team of Ryan and Chris Zubrick. These talented and entertaining illusionists lead an immensely talented group of dancers and acrobats, along with stunning Bengal tigers, in a show that's at once eye-popping, dramatic, and funny.

## About the author



### Andrew Collins

who resides with his partner Fernando in both Mexico City and Portland, Oregon, has been writing for and editing LGBT and mainstream travel guidebooks, magazines, and newspapers for nearly three decades. After graduating from Wesleyan University in 1991, he landed a job as an



editorial assistant for the Fodor's travel guidebook division of Random House. At age 23, having risen to the title of Associate Editor, he left Fodor's to embark on a freelance career. His first big break: successfully pitching his former employer with what would become Fodor's Gay Guide to the USA, which came out in 1996. The first LGBT travel guidebook produced by a major mainstream travel guidebook publisher, the book received a Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Award from the Society of American Travel Writers.

Since that time, Collins has served as editor or writer on more than 180 Fodor's titles and has authored Moon Travel Handbooks on New Orleans, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. He still writes about Oregon and Washington for the Fodor's Pacific Northwest guidebook. He's written hundreds of travel stories for both mainstream and LGBTQ newspapers and magazines, including the The Advocate, Out Traveler, Travel + Leisure, AAA Living, Four Seasons Magazine, and Sunset, and he's created LGBT content for websites and visitor guides for the CVBs of more than 20 cities, including Albuquerque, Denver, Kansas City, Portland, Sacramento, Seattle, Sonoma County, and St. Petersburg. For 10 years, Collins produced About.com's LGBT travel site, and in recent years he's launched and served as the editor of gay travel magazines about Hawaii and the Pacific Northwest. He's currently editor in chief of three new magazines focused on LGBTQ weddings and romance travel, Love Wins Texas, Love Wins California, and Love Wins Pacific Northwest. He's also editor in chief of The Pearl, a quarterly lifestyle magazine about Portland's trendiest neighborhood, and he's a contributing travel writer to New Mexico Magazine. Since 2004, Collins has also taught classes on travel writing and food writing for New York City's acclaimed Gotham Writers' Workshop.

### GVB LGBTQ BROCHURE

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### Guam Visitors Bureau

401 San Vitores Road Tumon, Guam 96913

Tel: 1-671-646-5278 Fax: 1-671-646-6661

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