

Guam

As Micronesia's most populous island, Guam is about as 'cosmopolitan' as it gets, so it cops a lot of attitude from Pacific snobs who reckon it lacks 'real island culture'. Sure, American accents are everywhere (it's an unincorporated US territory and many Guamanian homes fly the US flag) and the Chamorro language isn't really spoken any more. And if you never stray from Tumon Bay – the island's glitzy duty-free shopping and accommodation hub – then undeniably you'll be over- (or under-)whelmed.

But the island is currently in the throes of retooling itself. The tourism authorities talk of how 'Product Guam' (there's that American influence) needs a complete overhaul from its current status as a Pacific theme park for Japanese tourists. There may come a day soon when Chamorro culture (long subsumed by various invasions and occupations) is promoted above all else, with an increased focus on local food and the fascinating stories underlying many of the villages.

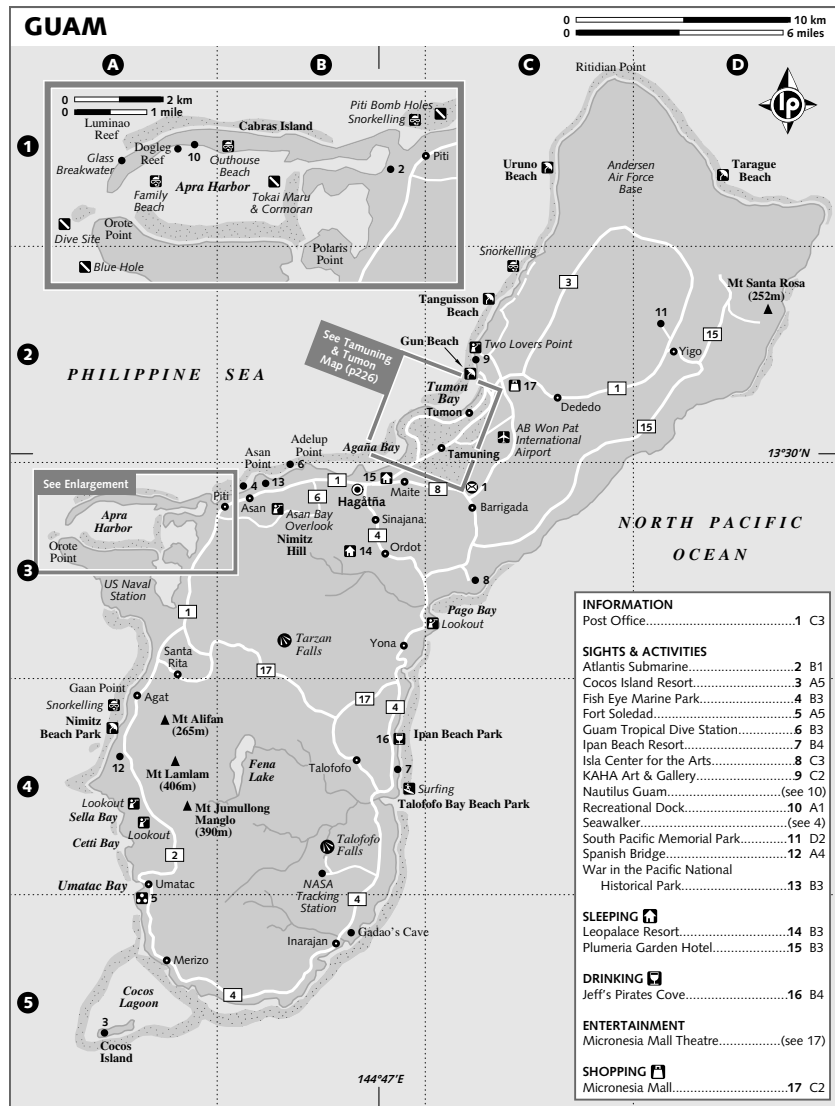
You can do your bit by escaping Tumon, exposing yourself to the best of Guam, and then spreading the word. The island, although Micronesia's largest, is small enough to explore in a day or two. The south is a must-see, with its rural kaleidoscope of sleepy, historical villages, stunning waterfalls and pristine beaches. The north is mainly taken up by the US military's Andersen Base, but even so it still contains Ritidian Point, a simply sublime stretch of coast featuring swaying palms, azure water and golden sands.

Along the way, chat to the proud locals who are working hard to restore their culture and you'll unearth a genuine community with a warm and welcoming attitude towards outsiders.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Relax at **Ritidian Point** (p226), a deserted and gorgeous beach, where the jungle meets the sand and butterflies meet you
- Eat and socialise with the locals at the **Chamorro Village Night Market** (p235), featuring Chamorro souvenir shops and food stands galore
- Picnic at **Talofofo Falls** (p231), a scenic and historic two-tier waterfall
- Reflect on Guam's turbulent WWII occupation when you visit the **War in the Pacific National Historical Park** (p227)
- Drive through **Southern Guam** (p228), a relaxed, rural and very different slice of island life





CLIMATE & WHEN TO GO

Guam has a uniform climate: warm and humid throughout the year. Daily temperatures average a low of 22°C and a high of 30°C. The dry season (January to late April) provides the most pleasant weather, with slightly lower humidity and a monthly rainfall average of just 114mm.

Ominously, Guam is in a sector of the Pacific Ocean known as 'Typhoon Alley'; typhoons are said to hit the island once every eight years, usually during October and November. The most recent occurrence was in 2002, when Supertyphoon Pongsona stalled over Guam for a full day, with wind speeds of 180km/h that levelled over 1000

homes and killed four people. See p61 for more on typhoons, or see p827 for Pacific climate information.

HISTORY 'We Have'

The ancient Chamorro inhabited the Mariana Islands (Guam, Saipan, Rota and Tinian) at least as early as 1500 BC, probably migrating from Indonesia (they shared Southeast Asian language and customs). The Chamorro name for Guam was (and is) Guahan, meaning 'We Have', and the island was divided into districts, each made up of one or more villages mainly scattered along the coasts. There were *chamorri* (district nobles) but no island-wide leader, so the districts often fought, with slings and spears as weapons of choice.

...But Not for Much Longer

On 6 March 1521 the *Trinidad*, captained by Ferdinand Magellan, sailed into Guam's Umatac Bay.

In 1565 Miguel Lopez de Legazpi arrived in Guam and officially claimed the Marianas for Spain.

In 1668 the Jesuit priest Diego Luis de Sanvitores established a Catholic mission in Hagåtña (renamed Agaña under the Spanish). As the Jesuits gained influence they opposed indigenous traditions, forcing the Chamorros to rebel and fight back. By 1690 the ongoing violence, along with smallpox and influenza, had slashed the indigenous population from 100,000 to 5000. Most survivors were women and children, so Spanish soldiers and Filipino men were brought in to help repopulate the islands, intermarrying with Chamorro women.

Drawing the Coconut Curtain

In 1898, shortly after the US declared war on Spain, US captain Henry Glass sailed into Guam's Apra Harbor with guns ablaze. Comically, the Spanish governor greeted him as if they were old mates, the Spanish authorities having no idea the two nations were at war (they actually apologised for not having enough ammunition to return the American 'salute'). The next day the governor got the message and officially surrendered.

With the signing of the Treaty of Paris in late 1898, Spain ceded Guam to the US. In February 1941 US president Franklin D

GUAM FACTS

- **Capital:** Hagåtña
- **Population:** 169, 000
- **Land area:** 549 sq km
- **International telephone code:** 1-671
- **Currency:** US dollar (US\$)
- **Languages:** English and Chamorro
- **Greeting:** *Hafa adai*
- **Website:** www.visitguam.org

Roosevelt declared Guam off limits to all visitors, a so-called 'Coconut Curtain' that remained in place until August 1962.

Great Shrine Island

On 8 December 1941, the same day as the strike on Pearl Harbor, Japanese bombers attacked Guam from Saipan. Guam was an undefended target, and on 10 December, within hours of 5000 Japanese forces coming ashore, the island's naval governor surrendered.

The Japanese forced the Japanese language on the Chamorros and renamed the island Omiyajima (Great Shrine Island), boasting that they would rule for a thousand years. Their reign lasted 31 months.

Originally, the Chamorros were largely left alone; islanders could live where they liked and were paid low wages for their labour. Towards the end, things turned nasty: the Chamorros were placed in work camps to build fortifications and forced into farming to provide food for Japanese troops, and in the final days of conflict there were several horrific massacres.

In one infamous incident, 40 Chamorro men were taken at night from their camp to carry provisions as the Japanese retreated to the north. On arriving in Tarague the Japanese, fearing the men would go back to their camp and give away their positions to the advancing US forces, tied them to trees and beheaded them.

Back to the Future

The US initiated pre-assault bombings on 17 July 1944. Four days later 55,000 US troops hit the beaches at Agat and Asan. The US secured Guam on 10 August after

fierce fighting, with 17,500 Japanese and 7000 US casualties. Hagåtña and many smaller villages were destroyed.

Large tracts of land, roughly one-third of Guam, were confiscated by the US military. When the war ended the military kept the land and turned the bases into permanent facilities. A 1986 class-action lawsuit for dispossessed landowners won a multimillion dollar settlement from the US government, although hopes that sizable tracts of land might be returned to the Chamorro people have been dashed by America's plans to boost its military presence on the island.

THE CULTURE

The National Psyche

Politics has much the flavour of sport in Guam. It's said that the island has the best voter turnout of any US territory and certainly, come election time, you'll see banners, bumper stickers, and flag-waving, loudspeaker-toting supporters everywhere.

Recent talk has been of reuniting Guam with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) as a single political entity, thereby presenting a stronger voice in dealings with the US and the world.

Activism is on the rise (the group I Nasion Chamoru, or 'Chamorro Nation', leads the way). One of the biggest sticking points is the US' intention to increase its military presence on Guam. A growing number of Guamanians say that such a measure can only increase the island's potential as a terrorist target while also decreasing the Chamorros' chances of self-determination.

It's probably an understatement to say that Guamanians are fiercely protective of their identity. In 2005 American sportswriter Mike Ogle wrote an article for ESPN's website about the alleged propensity for cockfighting in Guam and managed to slip in a number of insensitive 'country bumpkin'-type statements. The outrage in Guam bubbled up to the governmental level, spilled out into an all-in Internet flame war, and resulted in the story being pulled and an ESPN flunky calling Guam's KUAM radio station to apologise on air.

Lifestyle

Guam can seem heavily Americanised (convenience stores; the world's largest K-Mart and all that) but present-day Chamorro

culture is also influenced by the island's Spanish colonial past, mainly in the form of Catholicism. Around 90% of Guam's Chamorro population are staunchly Roman Catholic and religion has a powerful sway on island culture. The signs of faith are everywhere, from Guam's unyielding anti-abortion mentality (despite a high rate of teenage pregnancy) to the village fiestas that revolve around the church.

In many ways, life on Guam revolves around the fiesta: each of Guam's 19 villages holds one on various dates throughout the year to honour their respective patron saints. See p238 for more information.

The Chamorro are working to reassert their pre-Spanish cultural heritage. There has been a revival in Chamorro dancing (see opposite) and there's a movement afoot to return Guam's villages to their original names (Hagåtña was the first to change).

Population

Around 70% of the population lives in the island's northern half.

Although the Chamorros are Guam's largest ethnic group, they comprise less than half of the population (43%) and there's a real danger that they'll soon be overtaken by the Filipinos, the next largest group. After the Filipinos, in terms of numbers, come other Micronesian groups, as well as sizable numbers of Koreans, Chinese and Japanese and fewer numbers of other Pacific peoples. There are about 23,000 US mainlanders, many of whom are active-duty military personnel and their family members.

Guam constantly contends with an influx of illegal immigrants, many from China.

BEST EATING

Guam's varied restaurant scene 'rocks' (to use the parlance of our times). The following establishments are especially recommended.

- Old Hagåtña Bar & Grill (p234) – seafood and old-time ambience.
- Genji (p235) – creative Japanese.
- Jamaican Grill (p235) – 'JerK' chicken and ribs.

HOW NOT TO BUILD A LOCAL FILM INDUSTRY

Guam has had a few brushes with the film world, but for all the wrong reasons.

No Man Is an Island (1962), although filmed in the Philippines, tells the true story of George Tweed, a US Navy radioman who hid in a cave on Guam during the Japanese occupation, assisted by the local Chamorro people. The film plays fast and loose with the facts and is generally considered to be a pretty hackneyed and useless affair.

In the 1980s, sometime actor (and full-time loudmouth) Courtney Love put Guam in the headlines, making a big noise about having to work on the island as a stripper to support herself after she didn't get the part of Nancy in *Sid and Nancy* (1986). 'Courtney – spare us', an entire island state cried.

Then in 1998 the island was all set to host its first Hollywood production, *Guam on the Moon*, a comedy about a wealthy industrialist who planned to put Guam on the map by privately funding trips to the moon. Ominously, the production fell through and the project has been in development hell ever since.

2001 saw the release of *Arachnid*, a low-budget schlocker about a man who arrives at a clinic on Guam covered in bizarre bite marks. When investigators travel to the island he came from, their plane crashes and they become stranded in a forest festooned with killer spiders from outer space. The film sank without trace.

It gets worse. In 2005 *Max Havoc: Curse of the Dragon* was released, partly funded by a US\$1 million loan from Guam's government in the hopes that the film would kick-start a new wave of tourism and possibly a local film industry. Many 'chocolate-box' scenes are shot on the island, but the film – about a traumatised, retired martial artist who finds the strength to fight again – is beyond stink and has been panned by anyone unfortunate enough to have seen it. More disturbingly, there are allegations that the entire production was a scam, with latest reports suggesting that the producer has defaulted on the loan.

ARTS

Indigenous singing, chanting and cooking are showcased at Guam's many colourful fiestas.

Guam has few indigenous handicrafts to speak of, aside from those sold in Hagåtña's Chamorro Village.

The island hosts many music events throughout the year, like rock concerts and free jazz festivals at Polaris Point; check with the visitor information centre (p222) for details.

Chamorro dancing is making a comeback. The Gef Pa'Go Chamorro Cultural Village in Inarajan holds an annual dance festival, while the Pa'a Taotao Tano cultural group produces the annual Dinana Minagof Dance Festival and Competition.

LANGUAGE

Spanish never completely replaced the Chamorro language, even though an estimated 75% of modern Chamorro words are derived from Spanish. Although it has more guttural and repeated rhythmic sounds, Chamorro actually sounds a lot like Spanish.

English is now the language of choice, although in Tumon there's a great chance you'll hear more Japanese than English.

One Chamorro greeting you will hear and see everywhere is *hafa adai* (pronounced 'half a day'). Literally, it means 'what?' but it's sort of a 'hello', 'what's up?' and 'how are you?' all combined.

Chamorro basics

Hello.	<i>Hafa adai.</i>
Goodbye.	<i>Adiós.</i>
How are you?	<i>Hafa tatamanu?</i>
I'm well.	<i>Maolek.</i>
Please.	<i>Pot fa bot.</i>
Thanks.	<i>Si Yu'os ma'ase'.</i>
Yes.	<i>Hunggan.</i>
No.	<i>Ahe'.</i>

ENVIRONMENT

Earthquakes are rare but not unknown. On 8 August 1993 the most powerful earthquake to hit Micronesia in a century rocked Guam. The quake, which measured 8.2 on the Richter scale, originated deep in the Marianas Trench. Then in April 2002 an earthquake

GUAM IN TWO DAYS

Chances are you'll be staying in or around Tumon Bay. Don't dismiss it out of hand; Tumon may be touristy, but you can still start your day right at **Ypao Beach Park** (p225) with a breakfast picnic, followed by a spot of snorkelling. Take lunch at one of **Tumon's many restaurants** (p234) before heading up north for superb views at **Two Lovers Point** (p225) and the sublime sea-and-sand experience that is **Ritidian Point** (p226). Later, if it's Wednesday, immerse yourself in an orgy of people-watching and food at the **Chamorro Village Night Market** (p235). If it's another day, finish the evening with a meal and a drink at the very special **Old Hagåtña Bar & Grill** (p234).

On day two, rent a car and devote yourself to **Southern Guam** (p228), a side of the island that many tourists are curiously blind to. Stop off at the **War in the Pacific National Historical Park** (p227) for a picturesque history lesson. Then move on to the beautiful villages of **Umatac** (p229), **Merizo** (p229) and **Inarajan** (p230), with their fascinating mix of Chamorro and Spanish influences. Keep on until the east coast, where you'll want to check out the popular **Talofof Falls** (p231). Finish off with a bite to eat and a beer at **Jeff's Pirates Cove** (p236) while watching the sun set over the Pacific Ocean.

measuring 7.2 hit, followed in December that same year by Supertyphoon Pongsona.

Geography

Guam, the southernmost island in the Marianas chain, is about 48km long and 15km wide, narrowing to about 6.5km in the centre.

The north is the most developed and populated region, while the rural southern half features rainforest and villages. Natural features – jungle, waterfalls, mountains – dominate the interior.

ORIENTATION

Guam's airport is in Tamuning, around 1.6km northeast of Rte 1 (more commonly known as Marine Dr).

An 80km road circles the lower half of the island.

INFORMATION

Internet Access

Café Catcrea (Map p226; ☎ 647 6495; Pale San Vitores Rd, Tumon; ☎ 11am–11pm; per 15 min US\$3) Free access with food or drink order.

Coffee Beanery (Map p226; Suite 107, Fountain Plaza, 720 Pale San Vitores Rd & 1411 Pale San Vitores Rd, Tumon; per 15 min US\$2; ☎ 8am–10pm Sun–Wed, to 11pm Thu–Sat)

Nieves M Flores Memorial Library (Map p223; ☎ 472 6417; 254 Martyr St, Hagåtña; ☎ 9.30am–6pm Mon, Wed & Fri, 9.30am–8pm Tue & Thu, 10am–4pm Sat) Two Internet terminals with free access.

Medical Services

Guam Memorial Hospital (Map p226; ☎ 647 2330; 850 Gov Carlos Camacho Rd, Tamuning) The main civilian hospital.

Money

Credit cards are widely accepted and automatic teller machines (ATMs) abound. The Bank of Guam and the Bank of Hawaii together have about 20 branches in locations around Guam.

Bank of Guam Hagåtña (Map p223; ☎ 472 5300; 111 Chalan Santo Papa); Tumon (Map p226; ☎ 647-9132; 919 Pale San Vitores Rd)

Bank of Hawaii Hagåtña (Map p223; ☎ 479 3500; 134 W Soledad Ave); Tamuning (Map p226; ☎ 479 3500; 683 S Marine Dr)

Post

The post office has branches in Hagåtña and Tamuning.

Tourist Information

The **Guam visitor information centre** (Map p226; ☎ 646 5278/9; www.visitguam.org; 401 Pale San Vitores Rd, Tamuning; ☎ Mon–Fri 8am–5pm) is southeast of the Hilton.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Guam is a welcoming place, but be aware all the same. In recent years, the island has had a rash of burglaries and robberies, particularly over the Christmas period. Lock your hire car, no matter how long you're away for; park in well-lit areas and don't leave valuables in the vehicle; and don't openly count money. Apparently there's a scarcity of cops, not because there's a doughnut shortage but because the police department was one of the government agencies that felt the fullest effect of Guam's recent 'early out' retirement incentives.

HAGÁTÑA

pop 1400

Modest Hagåtña (Hag-[aht]-nya) is Guam's capital and has been the island's main centre (the name means 'blood') since the Spanish period – in an administrative sense, that is. If you're looking for nightlife, you won't find it here; instead, Hagåtña, with its parks, bridges and historic sites, is a pleasant place to stroll around for a few hours.

Central Hagåtña Walking Tour

Central Hagåtña is filled with historical sites, all within easy walking distance. An ambitious programme has been drawn up to restore the centre, complete with a sign-posted walking tour, but as seems to be the case with most public-works projects in Guam, it's already behind schedule, having barely left the planning stage. So, let's try and make do for now.

Start at **Paseo de Susana** (1; p225), north of central Hagåtña. At the park's northern tip there's a **mini Statue of Liberty** (2) and beyond that a breakwater where local surfers challenge the waves.

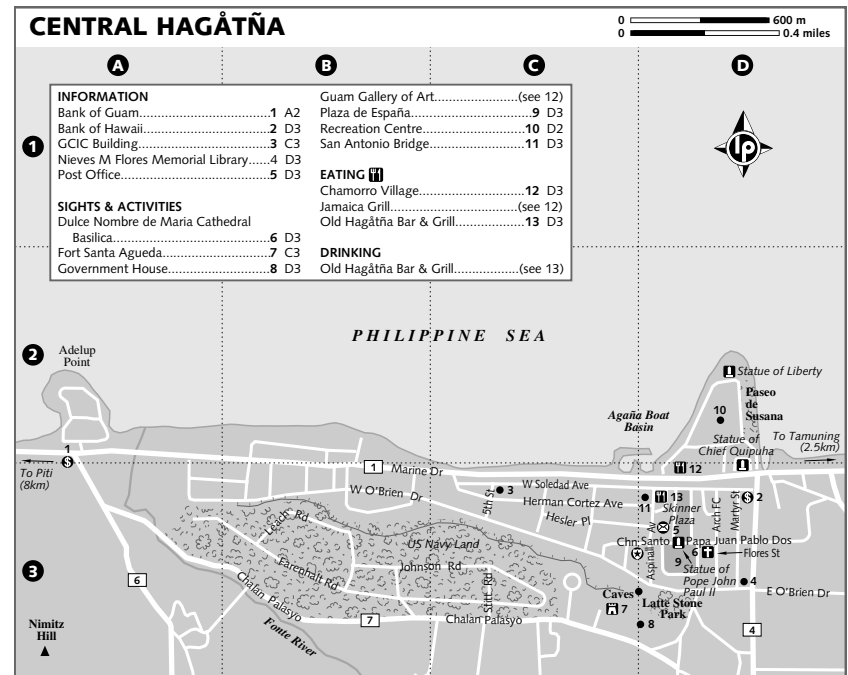
In the park's southeast section, a **statue of Chief Quipuha** (3) stands forever condemned to survey Hagåtña's congested traffic on Marine Dr (lucky Chief). Quipuha was Hagåtña's highest-ranking chief when the first mission was built on Guam.

The lively **Chamorro Village** (4; p235) is along the west side of the park, next to the **Agaña Boat Basin** (5).

Across Marine Dr is the **San Antonio Bridge** (6; p225), in an attractive park-like setting with seasonal flame trees. A stone plaque on the bridge honours St Anthony of Padua. Near the bridge is a statue of Sirena the Mermaid. Apparently, Sirena was a girl whose mother turned her into a mermaid because of her disobedience (obviously mum didn't believe in simply smacking her child).

About 100m east, Guam's first civilian governor, Carlton Skinner, lends his name to **Skinner Plaza** (7); this grassy strip contains a few memorials to Guam's war heroes and a statue of General Douglas MacArthur.

South of Skinner Plaza, bifurcating the road, is a 3m **statue of Pope John Paul II** (8).

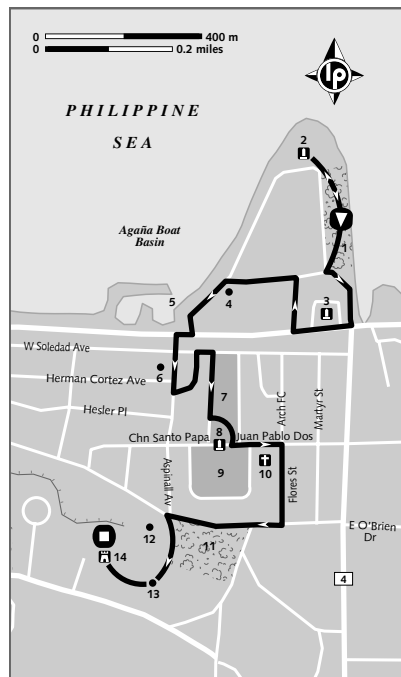


Based on countenance, the Pope's in a fine mood, and in fact he proves to be remarkably photogenic. And unique: he's a revolving Pope, making one complete turn every 24 hours. Near the statue is a war memorial honouring Guamanians killed during the Japanese invasion of 10 December 1941.

Across Chalan Santos Papa Juan Pablos Dos (that's the road) is **Plaza de España** (9; right), a peaceful refuge of Spanish-era ruins, old stone walls and flowering trees. Only a few of the Plaza's buildings survived the US pre-invasion bombings in 1944. One of these was the Chocolate House, a small, white circular building with a pointed tiled roof, where the wives of Spanish governors served afternoon refreshments to their guests, including...guess what.

WALK FACTS

Start Paseo de Susana
Finish Fort Santa Agueda
Distance About 2km
Duration 1½ hours



Next to the plaza is the **Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral-Basilica** (10; below); Chief Quipuha and other Chamorro chiefs and church leaders are buried beneath the basilica floor.

Walk a short way south down Flores St, then turn into West O'Brien Dr; **Latte Stone Park** (11; below), at the base of Kasamata Hill, boasts ancient *latte* stones (see opposite) presiding over Hagåtña like a Chamorro Stonehenge (minus the hippies). The park also features a number of **Japanese-era caves** (12), built by Chamorro forced labour, in the hill face.

Above the park, 500m up Rte 7 from O'Brien Dr, is the governor's residence, called **Government House** (13; below). It's a Spanish-style structure dating to 1952.

The remains of **Fort Santa Agueda** (14; opposite) are a 10-minute walk from Government House, on the first road on the right after heading uphill from Government House. The view the fort affords of Hagåtña and the turquoise waters of the bay is unbeatable.

Plaza de España & Around

The plaza (Map p223) was the centre of Spanish administration from 1669; later, US naval governors continued to use it as a seat of government, as did the occupying Japanese. Buildings once completely surrounded the central park area: schools, priests' quarters, the governor's residence, a hospital, military compound, arsenal and town hall.

To the side of the plaza is the impressive **Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral-Basilica** (Map p223). Above the main altar is a 30cm statue of Santa Marian Camarin, carved in ironwood and boasting human hair and an ivory face. Legend says it was guided to shore in the early 1800s from the waters off Merizo, by two golden crabs, each with a lighted candle between its claws.

Latte Stone Park & Around

It's said that the *latte* stones in this park (Map p223) are house pillars dating from AD 500. They were moved to this site from an ancient Chamorro village in the south-central interior of Guam.

The governor's residence, or **Government House** (Map p223; ☎ 477 9850), has a panoramic view of Hagåtña and a small

LATTE STONES

Latte stones are the most visible remains of early Chamorro culture. The upright posts were quarried from limestone and the rounded top capstones were of either limestone or brain coral. The stones are of such antiquity that at the time of the first Western contact, the islanders no longer knew what their purpose had been. Historians now believe the stones were used as foundation pillars for men's houses and for the homes of nobility. *Latte* stones vary from less than 1m high to as tall as 6m.

museum featuring Chamorro antiquities. Call before visiting.

Little remains of **Fort Santa Agueda** (Map p223), save for its stone foundation built of coral and burnt limestone. The fort, which once had 10 cannons, was built in 1800 as a lookout and has remarkable views of Agaña Bay.

The cut-stone **San Antonio Bridge** (Map p223; also known as the 'Old Spanish Bridge' or *To lai Achu*), from 1800, survived WWII bombing raids. During Hagåtña's reconstruction, the river it straddled was filled and now there's just a shallow pool.

Paseo de Susana & Around

This popular park and recreation centre (Map p223) sits upon an artificial peninsula created during the Hagåtña reconstruction.

The park is next to Chamorro Village (p235), a public market with kiosks, food vendors, produce sellers, a few handicraft artists and a lot of dogs. You can find indigenous art and handicrafts at the Village's **Guam Gallery of Art** (Map p223).

TUMON BAY

Tumon is the tourist centre of Guam; as Micronesia's most developed resort area, it draws strong reactions from people who assume the rest of Guam is as in-your-face. Tumon does have gorgeous palm-fringed, white-sand beaches, but these are lined with hotels, clubs, duty-free malls, plus Planet Hollywood and other American-themed businesses targeting the hip pocket of (mainly Japanese) tourists. Tumon does have a certain quality, with good bars, great restaurants and an

indisputably high-energy vibe, even if its main shopping and entertainment district is called 'Pleasure Island'.

Governor Joseph F Flores Beach Park

This spacious park, better known as **Ypao Beach Park** (Map p226), was once the location of an ancient Chamorro village and, in the late 1800s, a penal and leper colony. These days, it's still infectious but in a fun way, with playground equipment and BBQ facilities. The beachfront is spectacular, with white sand, turquoise waters, an awesome panoramic view of the bay, and terrific snorkelling opportunities.

Guam Zoological Botanical & Marine Garden

This funky **zoo and aquarium** (Map p226; ☎ 646 1477; Tumon Bay; adult/child under 12 yr US\$5/3; ☎ 9am-5pm) features monkeys, Palauan saltwater crocs, brown tree snakes, monitor lizards, coconut crabs, sharks, eels and tropical fish. You might find that it's small and obviously catered to kiddies, but the zoo still has a dollop of charm for older people.

Gun Beach

This **beach**, 500m down the coral road by the Hotel Nikko, is named for the rusted Japanese gun that rests half-hidden in jungle growth at the foot of the northside cliff, just behind the remains of a beachside pillbox. Mysteriously, people have been known to place toy guns and plastic swords by the real thing, like some kind of offering to the Gods of War. Arm yourself for best results.

Straight out from the centre of the beach, there's a cut in the reef that was made for the placement of underwater cables. Divers and snorkellers follow the cable out to deeper waters, where conditions are good when the water's calm.

Past the gun and around the point to the north is a lovely white-sand crescent. There was once an old Chamorro village in this area and *latte* stones can be found by following an overgrown trail that leads inland.

NORTHERN GUAM Two Lovers Point

Also known as Puntan Dos Amantes, **Two Lovers Point** (Map p218; ☎ 647 4107; www.twoloverspoint.com; admission US\$3; ☎ 8am-8pm) is a sheer

Apra Harbor

The Spanish developed this huge deepwater harbour (Map p218) in the 1700s for their Manila galleons. Now, in addition to US navy vessels, Apra Harbor has extensive commercial operations, a small boat harbour and space for cruise ships. A slew of sunken ships makes it popular with divers (see p76).

A peninsula marks the north side of the harbour; they call it Cabras Island. About halfway out, along the harbour side, is a **recreational dock** used by glass-bottom boats and the *Nautilus* semisubmarine (p238), as well as for other recreational activities. Just beyond the dock, look for a grove of ironwood trees on the left side of the road; they mark **Family Beach** (☉ 8am-6pm), a sandy harbourside strand that's popular for weekend outings.

To get to Family Beach, turn right onto Rte 11 at the traffic lights, then go straight past the Port Authority and oil tanks until the road ends. You'll need to pass a Coast Guard checkpoint, so be on your best behaviour and bring ID.

Dogleg Reef, fronting Family Beach, is good for snorkellers, with soft and hard corals and anemone colonies with clownfish. The waters are protected and the top of the reef, which starts just 1m underwater, is visible from shore.

When the seas are calm, **Luminao Reef**, stretching along the peninsula's north side, can also be snorkelled. It has good coral and small fish in waters 1.5m to 4.5m deep, accessible in several places along the road by short paths. To get here take the upper road to the right at the oil tanks.

At the US Naval Base at Orote Point, there's a **War Dog Memorial** – a statue of a Doberman keeping watch over the base's **war-dog cemetery**. During the WWII battle for Guam, 25 dogs were killed in action and buried on the island. During their active terms, some dogs explored caves, some were sentries, and some detected explosives.

Back on Rte 1, an apparently artificial **Polaris missile** guards the entrance to **Polaris Point**, part of the US naval station. Centuries from now, this might be half buried in the sand, *Planet of the Apes* style, for future archaeologists to unearth and cherish as a sample of 'authentic indigenous culture'.

Gaan Point

The **park** at Gaan Point is also known as the War in the Pacific National Historical Park – Agat Unit. On 21 July 1944, US marine and army combat divisions came ashore to battle with the heavily fortified Japanese infantry. From coastal caves and pillboxes, the Japanese mowed down the Americans as they leapt from their landing crafts. In the first few hours there were more than 1000 US casualties; US tanks made it ashore on the third day, knocking the Japanese out from behind, to finally secure the beachhead.

The park features **artillery**: a large, 20cm coastal defence gun and an anti-aircraft cannon, as well as **intact bunkers**. There's a US **WWII amtrac** 366m out and 15m down that's coveted by divers.

SOUTHERN GUAM

Rent a car and drive around the southern part of the island: the circle road winds in and out of rural villages, which seem so far removed from Tumon and Tamuning that it's hard to believe that they're on the same island. There are breath-stealing coastal and mountaintop views along the way and historic sites that tell the story of Guam from Magellan through to WWII. Don't miss this experience.

Taleyfac Bridge

In the late 1700s the Spanish built a coastal road to link Hagåtña with Umatac and other southern villages, connected by several stone bridges. The best-preserved **Spanish bridge** (Map p218) is in Agat at Taleyfac, just a little beyond Nimitz Beach Park, and 70m back from Rte 2. It's a picturesque construction, 10.8m long, with twin stone arches spanning a narrow river.

Sella Bay Vista Point & Trail

About 4km south of Agat, the road rises up the coastal hills to a **roadside lookout** (Map p218) offering a wondrous view of Sella Bay and the surrounding coast. If it's been raining, glance inland to the northeast for a view of a cascading waterfall.

From the lookout parking area, a well-defined **red-clay trail** leads down to Sella Bay, the site of an ancient Chamorro village. The walk is scenic, but watch out for slippery mud and for trailside sword grasses that can

slice through soft flesh. An **old Spanish bridge** dating from the 1790s still crosses the Sella River close to the coast. There are also a few other overgrown remnants of earlier habitation, including an old **beehive oven** and some **latte stones**. Allow around 1½ hours to make the hike down and back.

Cetti Bay Vista Point

This is where you'll find the most panoramic **roadside vista** (Map p218) on the southwest coast. The lookout offers an unbeatable view of the palm-lined Cetti River Valley and charming Cetti Bay. You can also see Cocos Island, the Merizo Barrier Reef, which encloses Cocos Lagoon, and the whole southwest coastline.

Mt Lamlam & Mt Jumullong Manglo

Inland from the Cetti Bay Vista Point, topped with large wooden crosses, is **Mt Jumullong Manglo** (Map p218; 390m), or Humuyung Manglu, the final destination of cross-bearers during the island's annual Good Friday procession.

The starting point for a trail that goes up Mt Jumullong Manglo is across the road from the Cetti Bay Vista Point. Head up an eroded hill then continue along the mostly well-defined trail. At the divide, go to the right to reach the crosses. There are excellent views of both the coast and the interior forests on the way and the hike takes around an hour. A more difficult, obscure trail continues left from the divide to **Mt Lamlam**, Guam's highest point at 406m. Lamlam means 'lightning' and legend calls it the source of the winds.

Umatac

pop 887

This unspoilt, friendly village (Map p218) is soaked in history. Prior to Magellan's 1521 landing in Umatac Bay, a spot just north of Umatac was reckoned by the Chamorros to be where the first people were created; they celebrated the event annually. Then came Magellan. His landing is celebrated in the village each March with four days of activities, culminating in Discovery Day, a re-enactment of the event. There's a tall, concrete **monument to Magellan** in the village centre.

Opposite the Magellan monument are the ruins of the **Saint Dionicio Church**, originally

built in the 1690s, reconstructed in 1862, and destroyed by an earthquake in 1902.

There's a **Japanese Zero fighter plane** in the bay about 137m from the beach and 15m under water – it makes for a good dive.

On the way out of town is the decorative **Umatac Bridge**, with its spiral staircase towers intended to symbolise Guam's Chamorro-Spanish heritage.

Fort Soledad

Fort Nuestra Senora de la Soledad (Map p218) offers a stunning hilltop view of Umatac Bay and the coastline to the north; on a clear day the aesthetic qualities of the sky and bay defy belief.

The Spanish built the fort in the early 1800s to protect their treasure-laden Manila galleons from western-Pacific pirates; the main remnant of the structure is a small hillside sentry post.

To get there take the ironwood-lined road on the right after crossing the Umatac Bridge.

Merizo

pop 2100

Guam's southernmost village (Map p218) was founded in 1695, largely as a resettlement site for Chamorro people from the Northern Marianas; they were forced to abandon their homes for a life in southern Guam, converted to Christianity under the Spanish 'reduction' policy.

The courtyard of **San Dimas Church** holds a monument to the 46 Chamorros executed by the Japanese in July 1944, one week before the US invasion of Guam.

Next door are the ruins of **Merizo Convento**, built by the Spanish in 1856, soon after the smallpox epidemic that killed almost two-thirds of the population. The *convento* (convent) was constructed of ifil wood and manposteria (burnt limestone mixed with coral rocks).

Directly across the street is Kampanayun Malessu, the **Merizo Bell Tower** built in 1910 under the direction of Father Cristobal De Canals and restored in 1981.

Cocos Island

This 2.4km-long atoll (Map p218), 4km offshore from Merizo, sits within a huge barrier reef. The good beaches and calm waters make it ideal for water sports.

Cocos Island Resort (☎ 828 8691), on the island's eastern side, is a day-trip destination offering jet-skiing, parasailing, kayaking, banana boats, snorkelling, diving, dolphin adventure cruises, windsurfing lessons, rentals and a hodgepodge of tours and other activities.

Boats make the 10-minute journey to the resort from Merizo Pier for US\$40, departures from 9am to 4pm; the fare includes the day-use fee and lunch. You can't bring food or beverages to the resort, but there is a snack bar.

Inarajan & Around

Founded in 1695, Inarajan (Map p218; population 3052) and its Spanish-era influence is still detectable.

Salugula Pool, on the roadside just before the village, is a natural saltwater pool with diving platforms and arched bridges that are now in disrepair as a consequence of the harsh storms that whip the south coast. Jagged, grey lava rocks separate the calm pool from the crashing ocean surf beyond, and there's a top coastal view. Locals gather here for good vibes and a sociable atmosphere,

and you can dig it too, if you have the right spirit.

The body of Chamorro priest Jesus Baza Duenas is buried beneath the altar of Inarajan's **St Joseph's Church**. Duenas, his nephew and two other Chamorro were beheaded by the Japanese near the end of the war for failing to reveal the whereabouts of US navy radio man George Tweed (see the boxed text, p221).

Along the waterfront is the **Gef Pa'Go Chamorro Cultural Village** (☎ 828 7246/7/8; www.gef.pago.org; ☎ 9am-3pm), a publicly funded complex of bamboo and thatch shelters where traditional Chamorro crafts are demonstrated. This simple concept is delightfully presented: cookies are baked in an old beehive oven; coconut fronds are woven into hats and baskets; coconut candy and sea salt is made; rope is made from bark; *katupat* (little rice lunch bags) are prepared; and you can even ride a carabao, a kind of water buffalo.

Just beyond the cultural village are the crumbling, powerfully atmospheric ruins of a concrete **Baptist church**, built in 1925. Next to it, a **bronze sculpture** depicts a local legend about an encounter between two powerful Chamorro chiefs, Malaguana of Tumon and Gadao of Inarajan (see left).

From the sculpture you can see some caves in the cliffs across the bay, not far from the point; one of them is **Gadao's Cave** (Map p218), boasting ancient pictographs said to be the canoe story drawn onto the wall by Gadao himself.

To get to the caves, drive north out of town on Rte 4. Just across the bridge, take the first sealed road to the right and park at the far end of the beach, just before the road turns inland. Walk 15 minutes along the beach and take the trail across a meadow and up a cliff to the caves. Some of this land may be private property, so if you see anyone along the way ask their permission to continue.

EAST COAST Tarzan Falls

These falls (Map p218; known as Kanuon in Chamorro) are comprised of a series of cascading drops from 2.5m to 15m high with a deep pool at the base, perfect for swimming. There are a number of well-marked trails throughout the island that

can be tackled on foot or by mountain bike; it's a favourite of 'boonie stompers' (hikers, in other words). The falls are best approached via Rte 17.

Talofof Falls

This popular **swimming and picnic spot** (Map p218; ☎ 647 2436; adult/child US\$13/5; ☎ 9am-5:30pm) is set around a lovely two-tier cascade, with pools beneath each waterfall. A few years back it had much of its ambience wrecked by the addition of some kind of faux-medieval gate and a **gondola** to ferry visitors down the steep grade from the parking area to the falls.

Still, the site's natural beauty overwhelms. At the bottom is a **wooden swinging bridge** with a splendid view of the falls. A small **museum** has colourful murals and historical models along its narrow passages. There's a 9m drop on the top fall, though it's usually gentle enough to stand beneath. The deeper and larger pool is at the base of the second fall, where the water flows gently over a very wide rock face.

Take the marked turn-off about 4km north of Inarajan on Rte 4, then a right turn about 2.4km on, following the signs to the falls. Car parking is about 1.6km further.

A 10-minute trail through the jungle leads to the **Yokoi Caves**, where a Japanese soldier subsisted for 28 years after WWII. Bring a flashlight.

Talofof Beaches

Back on Rte 4, **Talofof Bay Beach Park** (Map p218) is about 3.3km further on. This is one of Guam's prime surfing spots, where Guam's longest and widest river, the Talofof, runs out into the bay and the sand is chocolate brown.

Four kilometres down the road is **Ipan Beach Park**, another popular swimming place with calm, shallow water and ironwood shade trees.

The **Ipan Beach Resort** (☎ 789 4989; www.ipan.beach.com) offers snorkelling, swimming, volleyball, river cruising and go-karting. You can also camp here or stay in the on-site bungalows.

Pago Bay & Around

An **unmarked viewpoint**, just past the town of Yona, looks over the Pago River as it empties into broad Pago Bay. There was once a

Spanish village at the mouth of the river but its inhabitants were wiped out in the 1856 smallpox epidemic.

The area between Pago Bay on the east coast and Agaña Bay on the west is the narrowest part of the island. According to legend, a giant fish wanted to divide Guam in half, so it liked to nibble away at this neck of land. Guam was saved by the women of the island, who cut off their long hair, wove a big net from their locks and scooped up the fish with the net.

North of Pago Bay, at the University of Guam, the **Isla Center for the Arts** (Map p218; ☎ 735 2965, 735 2966; www.uog.edu/isla/index.htm; UOG Station, University of Guam, Mangilao) showcases regular exhibitions of works by artists from all over Micronesia.

ACTIVITIES

The calmest swimming waters are along the west coast; Tumon Bay has the busiest beaches.

Boating

See p238 for boating options.

Diving & Snorkelling

If you're curious about diving but don't want to make a full-blown commitment, try the Seawalker (p238) or Snuba (see p238) technologies—kind of like 'diving lite'.

Guam's waters are home to numerous war wrecks and a rich array of marine life—more than 800 species of fish and 300 species of coral.

There are a couple of dozen popular dive spots on the west coast, many in or south of Apra Harbor. For advanced divers, Blue Hole at the end of Orote Peninsula is the grail. At about 18m, divers in a free fall can descend a perpendicular shaft in the reef; at about 38m, there's a window that allows divers to exit. The area is known for its large fish and superb visibility; at night there are flashlight fish in the deeper reaches.

One of the more unusual wreck dives is to the *Tokai Maru*, a Japanese freighter bombed during WWII in Apra Harbor. In a strange case of synchronicity, as it sank it landed beside the *Cormoran*, a German cruiser scuttled during WWI, which rests on its side on the ocean floor; at about 29m you can have one hand on each war. The uppermost part of the *Tokai Maru* is only

GO GO GADAO

According to legend, Tumon's Chief Malaguana, weary of hearing exaggerated rumours about the strength of Gadao, a rival chief in the southern part of Guam, set out in his canoe for Inarajan determined to kill Gadao.

When Malaguana reached Inarajan, a stranger invited him to dinner. Unknown to him, that man was Gadao. When Gadao asked his guest to get a coconut for dinner, Malaguana shook a coconut tree and the coconuts fell like rain. Gadao then picked up one of the coconuts and crushed it open with one hand.

After a few more such contests, Malaguana became worried – if this common Inarajan man was so strong, what would his chief be like? So Malaguana asked the man to take him back to Tumon by canoe. Both chiefs got in the canoe but paddled in opposite directions. The canoe broke in half but Malaguana, in his urgency to leave, was paddling so fast that he didn't even notice until he was back in Tumon.

12m from the water's surface, so it can make a good beginner dive.

See p238 for a list of dive operators.

Some of the better snorkelling spots are Gun Beach (p225), when the seas are calm; Ypao Beach (p225); Outhouse Beach on the north side of Apra Harbor (p228); and the Piti Bomb Holes (p227).

Fishing

Deep-sea fishing boats leave from Agaña Boat Basin and Apra Harbor on the search for marlin, wahoo, yellowfin tuna, sailfish, barracuda and *mahimahi*. A 523kg Pacific blue marlin, caught off Ritidian Point by a Guamanian in 1969, broke the world record at the time. For information on chartering a fishing boat, contact the visitor information centre (p222).

Hiking

Guam has many excellent hikes, and the Department of Parks and Recreation organises **boonie stumps** (the islander term for hikes or treks) on Saturday mornings. This is a terrific way to see another side of Guam, with stumps ranging from easy to difficult and covering sites of major historical and cultural interest, including a welter of beaches and waterfalls, caves, mountains, *latte* sites and WWII sites all over the island. See p238.

Surfing & Windsurfing

Guam's not a prime surfing locale, but it is possible to catch a wave; the best conditions are between December and June. Beginners generally prefer Talofofo Bay, while the more experienced surf the channel near Agaña Boat Basin.

Windsurfing is practised in Tumon Bay and in Cocos Lagoon, and yachting and outrigger-canoe riding (see p238) are also popular.

Some of the larger Tumon Bay hotels have beach huts that offer outrigger-canoe rides and windsurfing lessons. It's also possible to hire catamarans and other water-sports equipment.

GUAM FOR CHILDREN

There is plenty of water-splashing fun, animal adventures and fiesta madness for kids to revel in when visiting Guam. If hunger is on the cards, head down to the Chamorro

Village Night Market (p235) in Hagåtña for an island-stylin' BBQ feast; the food, crowds and buskers make for a fun family night out. The market is next door to Paseo de Susana (p225), a spacious park that's perfect for throwing the Frisbee or burning off a bit of raw energy with a game of chasey. Guam has some great beaches: Ypao Beach Park (p225) in Tumon not only has a spectacular beachfront but it also backs onto a huge, grassy park with BBQ facilities. Naturally, Family Beach (p228), with a name like that, makes the cut. Also in Tumon, the Guam Zoo & Aquarium (p225) is kiddie-oriented, with cutesy examples of Micronesian animals. On the west coast, Fish Eye Marine Park (p227) affords the entire family a chance to view marine life without even touching the water, as do the Nautilus (p238) and Aquarius (p238) semi-submarines, and various dolphin-watching tours (see below). But if the ankle biters do want to get wet, try snorkelling at the Cocos Island (p230) or Ipan Beach (p231) resorts. Then there's the Pacific Islands Club (p234) in Tumon; even if you're not staying there, you can still pay to frolic at the PIC's enormous water park, guaranteed to keep the most hyperactive urchin busy until dinner time at least. Beautiful Talofofo Falls (p231) is ideal for a scenic picnic, while the Gef Pa'Go Chamorro Cultural Village (p230) is primo for exploring a bit of local culture. If all else fails, try a village fiesta (p238) for safe, friendly and colourful good times.

TOURS

Discover Guam (☎ 649 8687, 888 3958; discover@guamcell.net; PO Box 2860, Hagåtña) Try the Island Discovery Tour (US\$60), focusing on history and culture in southern and central Guam, the Southern Island Tour (US\$75), and more.

Fish Eye Marine Park (☎ 649 5314, 649 5315) Take the Piti Bomb Hole Snorkelling Tour (adult/child 3-7 yr/child 8-11 yr US\$45/25/35); the Dolphin Watching Tour (adult/child 3-7 yr/child 8-11 yr US\$65/35/40); or the Sunset Cruise (adult/child 3-7 yr/child 8-11 yr US\$115/30/50).

Lam Lam Tours (☎ 649 5314/5) Offers tours, bus passes, and shuttle rides, including the Two Lovers Point Shuttle (US\$2), and the Circle Island South Route (US\$25), taking in Gaan Point, Talefac Bridge, the Cetti Bay Overlook, Fort Soledad, Merizo Pier and Jeff's Pirates Cove.

Turtle Tours (☎ 646 1710, 646 8331; www.adventureguam.com; PO Box 6098 Tamuning) Offers the Adventure River Cruise (adult/child US\$65/37); the Jungle Hiking Tour

(adult/child US\$80/45), through 'Guam's most beautiful and ecologically fascinating sites'; and a Dolphin-Watching Adventure (adult/child US\$60/35).

SLEEPING

Most accommodation is in Tumon and Tamuning. Make sure you check out the larger hotels' websites before booking; they often have Internet specials that are substantially discounted.

BUDGET

Tamuning Plaza Hotel (Map p226; ☎ 649 8646; www.guamhotel.com; 960 S Marine Dr; s/d/ste US\$49/58/68; 🏠 🚗 🚶) This hotel has large rooms featuring a refrigerator, cable TV, air-con, phone and comfy beds; the kitchenette rooms are spacious and good value. There are no fancy trimmings but the staff are really cheery and friendly and will help you uncover the best of Guam (actually, it would be hard to find more accommodating staff). There's a laundrette on site, a restaurant and bar, free airport transfers and cheap car hire.

Hotel Mai'Ana (Map p226; ☎ 646 6961; maiana@ite.net; 253 Chalan Pasaheru, Tamuning; studio/1-bedroom unit from US\$90/100; 🏠 🚗 🚶) This clean, basic place has tropical-style landscaping and good amenities. The rooms are studio-style, spacious though boxy – if that makes any sense. It's close to the airport, and would make a great deal of sense to business travellers who don't mind a few less frills.

Also recommended:

Plumeria Garden Hotel (Map p218; ☎ 472 8831; PO Box 7863, Tamuning; s/d US\$50/55; 🏠 🚗 🚶) Pink-and-white exteriors, a courtyard, and what looks like

a pool inside a car park. Reasonably sized rooms with balconies look out onto Concrete City, but it's close to the action. It's near the intersection of Rte 1 and Rte 8. **Harmon Loop Hotel** (☎ 632 3353; 1900 Harmon Loop Rd, Dededo; s US\$50, d from US\$55; 🏠 🚗 🚶) Motel-style option above a small shopping centre. No-fuss, no frills – straightforward but clean. Rental cars are US\$40 per day.

MIDRANGE

Ohana Bayview Guam (Map p226; ☎ 646 2300; www.ohanahotels.com; 1475 Pale San Vitores Rd, Tumon; r from US\$89; 🏠 🚗 🚶) The Ohana, away from the Tumon Bay beachfront and its seething masses of humanity, is a pleasing alternative to the scale and bustle of the bigger resort hotels. It boasts an intriguing '50s-style lobby furnished with native elements (faux bamboo and so on) and clean and comfortable rooms with king beds and Asian-style interior design. The hotel features a large terrace (but a small pool) and a spa. Guests can also use the Outrigger Resort's facilities.

Garden Villa Hotel (Map p226; ☎ 647 0850; www.guamvilla.com; 800 Pale San Vitores Rd, Tumon; r from US\$100; 🏠 🚗 🚶) A faux Spanish-hacienda-style hotel featuring large, pleasant studio-style accommodation, some with wheelchair access. You could fit a family in them; each room has four single beds.

TOP END

Hyatt Regency Guam (Map p226; ☎ 647 1234; http://guam.regency.hyatt.com; 1155 Pale San Vitores Rd, Tumon; r from US\$185; 🏠 🚗 🚶) The 455-room Hyatt could be Tumon's swankiest hotel, with a lovely beach out back, grand pillared lobby, beautifully landscaped grounds featuring

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Leopalace Resort (Map p218; ☎ 471 0001; www.leopalaceresort.com; 221 Lake View Dr, Yona; r from US\$150) The Leopalace has to be seen to be believed. It's squarely aimed at the Japanese market, but even if you're not staying here it's still worth a visit – because this is about as opulent as it gets. The resort is set amid a massive hilltop setting, '2½ times the size of Disneyland and DisneySea combined' according to the publicity. Indeed, it's an awe-inspiring sight as you drive up the hills and begin to realise the true scale and scope of this colossal complex. The grounds contain more sporting facilities than you can shake a jockstrap at: soccer fields, golf courses, a water park and baseball fields (Japanese professional baseball teams stay and train at the Leopalace in the off season). Then there's the ostentatious man-made lake surrounding the hotel itself, filled with fountains and statues of lions and other awe-inspiring creatures. Naturally, the views are breathtaking, being up in the Manenggon Hills, especially at sunset when everything is draped in a dreamy ambience.

Inside, there's a grand lobby/atrium, a bowling alley, numerous bars and restaurants, and suitably elegant rooms.

pools and interconnecting waterways, excellent restaurants, and rooms with ocean-front balconies, soaking tubs and luxurious details like heavy shade curtains and marble vanities. Every inch oozes class, from the Lobby Lounge to the Grand Ballroom.

Guam Marriott Resort (Map p226; ☎ 649 7827; www.marriotthotels.com; 627B Pale San Vitores Rd, Tumon; r from US\$270; 🏠 📺 📺) The beds are bouncy and comfy, even in the standard rooms, although those floral bed covers leave a lot to be desired. In all other respects, the Marriott is more restrained and subdued than the other Tumon resorts. You can tell a hotel's ambience by its lobby and grounds music: the Hilton, cheesy reggae; the PIC, bangin' techno...and the Marriott? Classical, even in the toilets.

Hotel Nikko Guam (Map p226; ☎ 649 8815; www.nikkogum.com; PO Box 12819; r from US\$270) The Nikko is a very impressive option, gigantic in scale, with the feel of a mini city. Not only that, but a mini city on a cliff – its grounds extend below to the sand and water, right next to Gun Beach. The bar has one of the best views in Tumon, with massive floor-to-ceiling windows that are beautiful for sunset watching; the 16th-floor restaurant possibly tops that, though. All rooms have ocean views, and give you the room to space out in comfort, although floral bed covers make yet another appearance, seemingly de rigueur for Tumon resorts.

Outrigger Guam Resort (Map p226; ☎ 649 9000; www.outrigger.com; 1255 Pale San Vitores Rd; r from US\$290; 🏠 📺 📺) This 600-room resort is in the thick of Tumon Bay, right next to the Hard Rock Cafe. The delectable rooms have comfy, bouncy beds; interiors are all chocolate-brown and white with stylised leopard-skin trims; and there doesn't appear to be a cheesy floral quilt in sight. The lobby and restaurant come on like a cross between 'generic Vegas' and an airport lounge.

Guam Hilton Resort & Spa (Map p226; ☎ 646 1835; www.hilton.com; 202 Hilton Rd, Tumon; r from US\$175; 🏠 📺 📺) You've got to hand it to the Hilton – it's a fully self-contained world. It can actually be fun walking through the complex, even if you're not staying, and just marvelling at the lengths people will go to not leave their hotel. Bars, sauna, pools, restaurants – it's all here. Rooms are comfortable, but the Tower building is better value than the main wing, where

the accommodation at the lower end of the scale can be drab and in need of a touch up. The location is super – at the quieter end of Tumon Bay, beside Ypao Beach – although the Hilton, unlike the other resorts, has no beach of its own.

Also recommended:
Pacific Islands Club (Map p226; ☎ 646 9171; www.picresorts.com/guam/eng/index.htm; PO Box 9370, Tamuning, Pale San Vitores Rd; r from US\$275; 🏠 📺 📺) Massive grounds with all manner of kiddie-oriented water features and watery amusements – extraordinary considering there's a great beach right out back. The spacious, though bland, rooms have awesome ocean views. The last word in over-the-top resort-style living.

Westin (Map p226; ☎ 647 1020; www.westin.com/guam; 105 Gun Beach Rd, Tumon; r from US\$190; 🏠 📺 📺) Luxurious rooms with city- or bay-view balconies, all wood panelling and hidden angles – a streamlined, retro-country-club effect. Bathrooms feature a 'fully customisable shower experience', complete with 'eight additional inches of elbow room'. Say what?

EATING

Guam has a fixation with Spam – the Hormel company has even developed a special 'Guam Spam' with a hot-and-spicy flavouring that mimics Tabasco, another Guamanian obsession. Also, at one stage during the 1970s, Guam had the highest global 'volume sales' of Kentucky Fried Chicken, and was even presented with a special award by Colonel Sanders himself to honour this achievement.

How bizarre, then, that the island has the best restaurant scene in Micronesia,

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Old Hagåtña Bar & Grill (Map p223; ☎ 472 5885; 230 West Soledad Ave; mains US\$13-27; 🍷 lunch & dinner) The 'Old Hag' is an elegant restaurant that shares the superb ambience of the old-time, wood-panelled strip (see p236) it adjoins. It's among Guam's top dining options, boasting a consistently light, inventive and absolutely delicious menu, as recent offerings like miso-rubbed strip loin steak and shitake-and-prosciutto-wrapped mahimahi testify. Sit back in those soft-leather chairs and salivate. Refreshingly, it's away from the Tumon Bay madness, and altogether more laidback and refined as a result.

CHAMORRO FOOD

Chamorro food is a rich mix of Spanish, Filipino and Pacific dishes.

- *Ahu* is grated coconut boiled in sugar water.
- *Bonelos aga* is banana dipped in a sweet flour batter and deep-fried.
- *Cadon guihan* is fish cooked in coconut milk with onions and sweet peppers.
- *Escabeche* is fresh fish marinated in vinegar and soy sauce.
- *Golai hagoin sumi* is taro leaves cooked in coconut milk.
- *Kelaguen* is minced chicken, fish, shrimp or Spam mixed with lemon, onions, pepper and shredded coconut.
- *Lumpia* is similar to an egg roll, but dipped in garlic sauce or vinegar.
- *Pancit* is a mix of shrimp, vegetables and garlic over noodles.
- *Poto* is a rice cake of *tuba* (coconut wine), sugar and rice meal.

Other local delicacies include whole roast pig, tropical fruits, yams, coconut crabs, red rice made with *achiote* (annatto) seeds and anything barbecued. To turn ordinary dishes into a Chamorro meal ask for *finadene*, a hot sauce made from fiery red peppers, soy sauce, lemon juice and chopped onions.

As do Palauans, Chamorros love fruit-bat pie – too much, in fact. The fruit bat has become endangered on Guam due to culinary consumption and it's now illegal to poach them.

The best Chamorro food is generally found at village fiestas (p238) and private feasts; also try the Chamorro Village Night Market in Hagåtña (below).

featuring a wide range of styles and nationalities. Most of the action is centred in Tumon Bay.

Genji (Map p226; ☎ 646 3463; Guam Hilton Resort & Spa, 202 Hilton Rd, Tumon; mains from US\$25; 🍷 lunch & dinner) This Japanese restaurant, recently reopened after suffering damage during Super typhoon Pongsona, has a very loyal following. The food is as intricate and as fresh as the mod-Japanese interior design. Genji's teppanyaki and sashimi is a speciality, but if that doesn't appeal, kick back at the sushi and sake bar for a gay old time indeed.

Jamaican Grill (Hagåtña Map p223; ☎ 472 2000; Chamorro Village; Tumon Map p226; ☎ 647 3000; Carl Rose Plaza, Pale San Vitores Rd; mains US\$9-20; 🍷 lunch & dinner) This bar and grill is all the rage for its 'jerk'-style menu (jerk being a unique Jamaican blend of spices and marinade straight outta Kingston). Servings are massive, but you can hedge your bets and choose the Triple Combo: grilled local fish, a quarter jerk chicken and four Boston-style ribs, served with salad and rice. There are a few veggie options, including grilled jerk vegetables with fruit-soy dressing. If you're wondering how the owners became 'jerks', it's down to Guam's love of a good barbe-

cue, the Chamorro passion for spicy foods, and a general Guamanian zeal for reggae.

Al Dente (Map p226; ☎ 647 1234; Hyatt Regency Guam, 1155 Pale San Vitores Rd, Tumon; mains US\$35-55; 🍷 lunch & dinner) This fine Italian restaurant features a consistently inventive and refreshing menu. The wood-fired pizzas, prepared in an open kitchen, are a standout, and there's a great view of the gardens and hotel grounds.

Chamorro Village Night Market (Map p223; Chamorro Village, Hagåtña; dishes US\$3-5; 🍷 Wed 6-9pm) On Wednesday nights, Chamorro Village bursts into a colourful minifesta frequented by locals and tourists alike, with bands, buskers, dances, craft stalls and more barbecue stands than you can point a (kebab) stick at, serving Chamorro faves like *kelaguen* (chopped-and-spicy chicken or beef with lemon juice, grated coconut and hot peppers) and barbecued spareribs with red rice. There's vegetarian food, too, and during the day (9am to 5.30pm) you can stock up on fresh fruit and veggies.

Jeff's Pirates Cove (Map p218; ☎ 789 2683; 111 Rte 4, Ipan Talofofu; mains US\$16-25; 🍷 lunch & dinner) On the east coast, this beach bar (see p236) and restaurant has a popular menu with

THE AUTHOR'S CHOICE

Jeff's Pirates Cove (Map p218; ☎ 789 2683; www.jeffspirascove.com; 111 Rte 4, Ipan Talofoto; 🍷 lunch & dinner) This place is an oasis on the east coast, which is pretty much devoid of bars and restaurants, so its ambience is different and refreshing. The place is named after its owner, a salty, 'aaargh-me-hearties'-type who's very much your standard local legend, and features a bar shaped like a ship's innards and an eating area that backs right out onto the beach and the Pacific Ocean for the obligatory round of sunset drinks and munchies. Jeff tells stories and sells stories (storyboards, that is; there's a good gift shop here); pump him and his buddies for info on what Guam was like in the 1970s (certainly a lot different from now, by all accounts) and check out the walls of the Cove, which are festooned with photos from the last couple of decades of island life.

Shoichi Yokoi, the Japanese soldier who hid in the jungle for 28 years after WWII ended, used to say that he could hear people laughing and singing at the Cove, and that it made him wistful for human contact.

The Cove has good food, too (see p235). Beware, though: it closes early, 6pm Monday to Saturday and 7pm Sundays.

favourites like spicy chicken *kelaguen* salad, fresh local fish, and cheeseburgers, as well as a Greek menu (US\$7 to US\$10) suitable for nibbling on at the bar: dips, gyros, falafels, salads.

Wagaya Hachi Hachi (Map p226; ☎ 647 8880; Blue Lagoon Plaza, Tumon Bay; mains US\$12-30; 🍷 lunch & dinner) This amiable, quiet joint serves up pretty good Korean fare, like roasted pork belly and spicy intestine. The winner, though, is the kimchee pancake, effectively a Korean pizza – hot, spicy and sloppy.

Outback Steakhouse (Map p226; ☎ 646 1543; Pacific Palace Bldg, Pale San Vitores Rd, Tumon; mains US\$16-20; 🍷 dinner) Guam has lots of steakhouses, but the raucous, Aussie-themed Outback ('Ripper Shrimps', 'Jackaroo Chops' etc) is the standout. Besides steak in bewildering permutations (and seafood battered, crumbed and fried), the place is famous for the Bloomin' Onion appetiser – a small forest of crispy, spicy onion sticks that's billed as an 'Outback Ab-original' (hmmm...). The Outback is insanely popular and they don't take bookings, so just turn up, count on a long wait to be seated, and drink at the bar in the meantime. Thrilling news for Aussies: they serve VB beer, a welcome respite from Asahi and Budweiser, apparently the only two other brands sold on this island.

Marianas Trench (Map p226; ☎ 646 4049; North-west Plaza, Tamuning; mains US\$15-25; 🍷 lunch Mon-Sun, dinner Mon-Sat) This Thai restaurant has a loyal following; its recent renovations have only increased its standing, because it continues to pack 'em in more than ever. The Trench

serves traditional Thai dishes (Pad Thai, the full gamut of curries) and serves them well, in generous portions.

DRINKING

Guam used to have an outstanding beach-bar scene until the relentless resorts gobbled all the real estate up. As with sleeping and eating, most of the action is in the Tumon area; most of the big hotel bars have happy hours, usually with finger food, from 4pm to 7pm or 8pm.

Jimmy Dee's (Map p226; 646 7760; Tamuning) Run by Guamanian singer and all-round legend, Mr Jimmy Dee himself, this is a throwback to (or hold over of) the classic beach bars of yore, perched right on the sand, tucked away behind houses and offices. As you sip your booze on the hot sand and watch the tail lights flaring from cars on Marine Dr across the water, you'll be thanking your lucky stars you're not in one of the endless traffic jams that clog that particular thoroughfare. There's island dancing every Friday night and live music Saturday nights.

Old Hagåtña Bar & Grill (Map p223; ☎ 472 5885; 230 West Soledad Ave; Hagåtña) This is a lovely old-time, wood-panelled bar – classy, elegant and perfect for sippin' scotch. Whatever your poison is, you'll feel like a mover and shaker here. The restaurant (see p234) is highly recommended.

Tree Bar (Map p226; ☎ 646 1835; Hilton Guam Resort & Spa, 202 Hilton Rd, Tumon) This lively bar is frequented by off-duty pilots, expats and coachloads of Japanese tourists. It's a circular affair surrounded by palm trees and lapping water,

and features free and reasonable food during its happy hour (4pm to 7pm). There are several theme nights (like Tequila night, with appropriate Mexican food) and Chamorro dancing every night except Tuesdays. The dancing, while undoubtedly sanitised for tourists, is still bawdy and in your face and features fire twirling and machete juggling.

Mac & Marti (Map p226; ☎ 647 1879; 1st fl, Holiday Plaza Hotel, Tumon) This large, dark US-style bar features live music and a dedicated cigar room that stocks all kinds of stogies. Mac and Marti is a big hit with naval types, but you don't have to wear huge white flares, a bib, a ridiculous cap and a grudge against the army to enjoy yourself here.

Bully's (Map p226; ☎ 649 2389; Pleasure Island, Tumon) This classic American-style bar is a small, narrow, dark drinking den. George Thorogood would feel right at home here, drinking alone or with his good mates Johnny, Jimmy and Bud...and his Old Grandad.

ENTERTAINMENT Cinemas

Guam Megaplex Cinema (Map p226; ☎ 646 0360; 199 Chalan San Antonio, Tamuning) In the Guam Premium Outlets complex.

Micronesia Mall Theatre (Map p218; ☎ 647 4032; www.micronesiamall.com; Micronesia Mall, 1088 W Marine Corps Dr, Dededo)

Live Music & Performance

Mac & Marti (Map p226; ☎ 647 1879; 1st fl, Holiday Plaza Hotel, Tumon) This popular bar (above) hosts live music most nights: lightweight acoustic duos, jazz combos, alternative rock.

SandCastle Dinner Theatre (Map p226; ☎ 646 8000; www.sandcastle.guam.com; 1199 Pale San Vitores Rd, Tumon) For glitz, this entertainment complex is unrivalled – it proudly boasts of hosting Las Vegas-style cabaret and dinner shows 'amidst Noritake bone china, Italian marble, and hand-cut crystal chandeliers'; Steve Wheeler, an 'ice skating illusionist', recently performed here. The SandCastle also houses the enormous Globe, with billiard tables, lounge, bar and disco. You won't get into its ritzy Manhattan Room in shorts or thongs.

SHOPPING

K-Mart (Map p226; ☎ 649 9802; 🕒 24hr) This is reputedly the world's largest K-Mart; folks from all over Micronesia travel here to stock up, and indeed, for you, the traveller,

it's perfect for finding those elusive last-minute items before travelling around the more remote Micronesian islands.

Micronesia Mall (Map p218; ☎ 647 4032; www.micronesiamall.com; 1088 W Marine Corps Dr, Dededo; 🕒 10am-9pm Mon-Sat, to 8pm Sun) Another gigantic shrine to consumption, with department stores, food courts, beauty salons, travel agents, sporting goods, clothing boutiques and jewellers.

DFS Galleria (☎ 646 9640; Pale San Vitores Rd, Tumon; 🕒 10am-11pm) Duty-free heaven for cashed-up angels, with numerous boutique shops to choose from.

The **Shopping Bus** (☎ 632 8882), billed as 'Guam's Number One Shopping Ride', runs a 'shopping loop' shuttle between all of these fine establishments and more besides. Only in Guam... Choose from weekly (US\$10), daily (US\$6) and round-trip (US\$4) tickets.

GUAM DIRECTORY

ACCOMMODATION

All hotels accept Visa and MasterCard and most top-end hotels charge around US\$15 return for airport transfers; smaller places tend to do it for free. Most hotel rooms

PRACTICALITIES

- Guam's excellent daily newspaper, *Pacific Daily News*, carries local, US and international news.
- *Guahan* is an interesting monthly magazine covering all aspects of island life, and includes entertainment listings.
- All hotels have cable TV including CNN.
- The video and DVD systems used in Guam are NTSC, which is the same as the US.
- Electricity is supplied at 110V, 60Hz AC and US-style two- and three-pin plugs are used.
- Like the US, Guam uses the imperial system of measurement (feet, miles and degrees Fahrenheit). We've used metric in this chapter; use the table on the Quick Reference page to convert to imperial.

have TV, phone, refrigerator, and private bathroom, and are subject to 10% tax unless otherwise noted.

ACTIVITIES

Pick up a copy of the tourist office's *General Information Brochure* for a thorough overview of places to rent surfboards, jet skis, sea kayaks and other water-sport equipment.

Boating

Marianas Paddlesports Racing Association (☎ 649 6772) Sponsors numerous races in six-person outrigger canoes in Tumon Bay and Apra Harbor.
Marianas Yacht Club (☎ 477 3533; www.guam-online.com/myc; Apra Harbor) Sponsors several races throughout the year and supplies information about charter boats and sailing lessons.

Diving & Snorkelling

The tourist office publishes a comprehensive booklet, *Diving in Guam USA*, listing dive services and attractions in Guam.
Guam Tropical Dive Station (☎ 477 2774; www.gtds.com; Marine Dr, Anigua)
Micronesian Divers Association (☎ 472 6321/5; www.mdaguam.com; Piti)
Real World Diving Co (☎ 646 8903; www.rwdiving.com; PO Box 2800, Hagåtña) Besides 'real' diving, it also offers 'snuba diving': the air tank stays on the boat, while you, attached to an air hose, explore shallow waters.

Seawalker (Map p218; ☎ 477 3830; www.seawalker.com; 372 Marine Dr, Piti) Strap on a ridiculous-looking helmet attached to an air hose and you too can approximate a real diving experience; 'so easy', goes the claim, 'almost anyone can do it', including 'physically handicapped people in wheelchairs'.

For more information on diving in Guam, see p76.

Hiking

The **Department of Parks & Recreation** (DPR; ☎ 472 2887, 472 8197; www.admin.gov.gu/dpr/boonie/home.html; adult/child US\$2/free) sponsors guided bushwalks (called 'boonie stomps') on most Saturday mornings. The party departs from the recreation centre, next to the baseball stadium behind Chamorro Village. Transportation is not provided, so bring a hire car or a friend with wheels and dress appropriately; ring beforehand to find out what exactly you'll need to bring.

Submarining

Atlantis Submarine (Map p218; ☎ 477 4166; www.atlantisadventures.com; 319 Aqua World Marina, Piti; adult/child US\$82/42) Does a 45-minute dive of Gab Gab Reef II in Apra Harbor.
Nautilus Guam (Map p218; ☎ 646 8331; www.adventureguam.com; adult/child US\$45/20) Semisubmersible vessel that also tours Apra Harbor.

FIESTA!

Each of Guam's 19 villages hosts an annual fiesta honouring its patron saint. These Catholic-inspired, community affairs begin with a Saturday evening Mass in the local church and proceed with a procession around the village, carrying a statue of the saint, followed by a buffet feast in the church hall. The festivities continue on Sunday, when groups of friends gather in private houses.

The idea is to attract as many people as possible to the festivities, so everyone is welcome.

Fiestas are celebrated on the weekend closest to the saint's feast day so the dates vary a bit each year; consult with the Guam visitor information centre (p222) for exact dates.

The largest fiesta is Hagåtña's, and the Malojloj fiesta in Inarajan is also one of the

more well known. Certainly, Malojloj is among the more colourful: lasting for three days, it features hot-pepper contests and carabao (water buffalo) racing in the streets around the San Isidro church.

January Asan, Tumon, Chalan Pago, Mongmong
February Maina, Yigo

March Inarajan

April Barrigada, Agafa Gumas, Merizo

May Malojloj (Inarajan), Santa Rita

June Chalan Pago, Toto, Tamuning, Ordot

July Agat

August Tamuning, Piti, Barrigada, Agat, Canada-Barrigada

September Hagåtña, Anigua, Talofofo, Mangilao

October Yona, Umatac, Sinajana

November Agaña Heights, Dededo

December Santa Rita

BUSINESS HOURS

Regular banking hours are 10am to 3pm Monday to Thursday, 10am to 6pm Friday, and 9am to noon Saturday.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Guam is under US embassy jurisdiction.

Embassies & Consulates in Guam

Federated States of Micronesia (☎ 646 9154/6; PO Box 10630, Suite 613, Tamuning)

France (☎ 649 7277; PO Box 9819, Tamuning)

Japan (☎ 646 5220; ITC Bldg, Marine Dr, Tamuning)

Korea (Map p223; ☎ 472 3097; 305 GCIC Bldg, Hagåtña)

Marianas/Guam Liaison Office (☎ 646 9181/2; PO Box 8366, Tamuning)

Nauru (☎ 649 7106; PO Box 2354, Hagåtña)

New Zealand (☎ 646 7662; PO Box 10989, Tamuning)

Palau (☎ 646 9281/2; PO Box 9457, Tamuning)

Philippines (☎ 646 4620/30; PO Box 9880, Tamuning)

Taipei (☎ 472 5866; PO Box 3416, Hagåtña)

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Guam Discovery Day First Monday in March. Marks Magellan's landing, celebrated at Umatac with a re-enactment of the landing, as well as cultural dances, sports, arts and crafts and *tuba* (coconut wine) making.
Liberation Day 21 July. Feasts, fireworks and, along Marine Pde, the year's largest parade.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Guam Diner (www.guamdiner.com) Lists (probably) every restaurant on the island, but be warned that objectivity is in short supply (ie the reviewers like everything).
Guam Visitors Bureau (www.visitguam.org) Useful tourist information.

Guampedia (www.guampedia.com) Aims to be a comprehensive cultural guide to Guam – its history, people and arts. It's currently in the early stages, but keep checking back for further developments and more comprehensive entries.

MONEY

A tip of 10% to 15% is expected. See the Quick Reference page for exchange rates.

TIME

The time in Guam is GMT/UTC + 10.

VISAS

All non-US citizens need a US visa to visit Guam, except Canadians and anyone who's eligible for Guam's visa-waiver program. Visa waivers allow citizens of the following countries to enter Guam visa-free for

HOW MUCH?

- **Newspaper:** US\$1
- **Coffee:** US\$2
- **Taxi ride from the airport to Tumon:** US\$10
- **Car hire:** from US\$40 per day
- **Internet access:** US\$8 per hour

LONELY PLANET INDEX

- **Gallon of petrol:** US\$3
- **1L water:** US\$1.50
- **Can of Budweiser beer:** 80c
- **Souvenir t-shirt:** US\$22
- **Hot dog:** US\$3

15 days maximum (no extensions; travel onwards to other US points is not allowed, except for citizens of Japan and the UK); Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brunei, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong (Chinese with British passport), Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Monaco, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, UK, Vanuatu and Western Samoa.

TRANSPORT IN GUAM

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

A B Won Pat International Airport (☎ 0800 1700; www.guamairport.com) in Guam is the hub for Micronesian travel.

AIRLINES FLYING TO & FROM GUAM

All Nippon Airways (☎ 642 5555; www.ana.co.jp)

China Airlines (☎ 649 0860; www.china-airlines.com)

Continental (☎ 647 6453; www.continental.com; Rte 14, Tamuning)

Freedom Air (☎ 649 2294; www.freedom-air.net)

Japan Airlines (☎ 646 9195; www.jal.co.jp)

Korean Air (☎ 642 3216; www.koreanair.com)

Northwest Airlines (☎ 649 1665; www.nwa.com)

Philippine Airlines (☎ 632 1617; www.philippineairlines.com)

Sea

Apra Harbor is the only port of entry for Guam. Yachties should contact the **Marianas Yacht Club** (☎ 477 3533; Apra Harbor).

GETTING AROUND

Public transport is limited; your best bet for seeing the island is to hire a car.

To/From the Airport

There are car-hire booths and taxis at the airport. Many of the hotels provide airport transport for free, or a nominal amount; the upmarket hotels charge around US\$15 return.

Bicycle

Bicycling is dangerous and not recommended – on Guam's main roads there's hardly any room for pedestrians, let alone bicycles.

Bus

Guam Mass Transit Authority (☎ 475 4682) operates a limited public bus system. The most useful route is from Hagåtña to Tamuning, Tumon Bay and the Micronesia Mall; another line runs between Hagåtña and Agat; and another between Hagåtña and the University of Guam.

Buses run approximately every hour from 5.30am to 7.30pm from Monday to Saturday (US\$1/3 per ride/day), although frequencies can be erratic and inconsistent.

Car & Motorcycle

DRIVING LICENCE

If you're on Guam for more than 30 days, you'll need to get a local driving licence.

Bring your home licence, US\$5 and half a brain (to pass the written test) to the **Department of Revenue & Taxation, Motor Vehicle Division** (☎ 475 5000; Rte 8, Barrigada).

HIRE

Budget (☎ 647 1446), **Hertz** (☎ 646 5875), **National** (☎ 649 0110), **Toyota** (☎ 642 3200), **Avis** (☎ 646 8156) and **Nissan** (☎ 632 7300) all have rental booths at the airport. Optional collision damage waiver (CDW) is available and most companies will deliver cars to your hotel at no extra cost. Tamuning Plaza Hotel operates a very reasonable car-hire service; the Harmon Loop Hotel has good deals, too.

ROAD RULES

Driving is on the right-hand side of the road. The speed limit is 35 mph unless otherwise posted.

Local Transport

TAXI

Fares start at US\$1.80 on flag fall. It's US\$3 for the first 1.6km and US\$0.60 for each 400m thereafter. The meters are also time-based: they'll keep ticking as the built-in timer charges US\$0.60 for every two minutes of your journey. It costs US\$1 to transport each piece of heavy luggage. From Tumon Bay it costs about US\$10 to catch a taxi to the airport or to Micronesia Mall, and it costs US\$15 to US\$20 to go to the Agaña Shopping Center. A 10% tip is customary.

Call **Peace Taxi Service** (☎ 646 1515).