



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HANMI OCCUPANCY AT 31% IN AUGUST 2025

SAIPAN, NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS – The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands (HANMI) reported 31.08% average occupancy rate among 11 member hotels for August 2025, 30% lower than 44.64% in August 2024.

A total of 19,895 of 64,012 available room nights sold during August 2025 compared to 29,024 of 65,0130 available rooms sold in August 2024. The average room rate was \$127.09 compared to \$143.17 last August.

Visitor arrivals to The Marianas continue to decline in the face of fierce flight competition from the primary source market of Korea, an unfavorable currency exchange rate, a shortage of aircraft due to Boeing delivery delays, loss of destination competitiveness, emergence of new beach destinations, and other factors.

“Other than during the pandemic, this is the lowest August occupancy rate we’ve seen since HANMI started tracking data in 1992,” said HANMI Chairman Dennis Seo. “We have lost over 65% of the air seats we had before the pandemic – including all flights from five cities in mainland China, and The Marianas is now fighting for every seat it gets.”

Seo said August presented new challenges in air seat supply from the primary source market of Korea. The Korea Fair Trade Commission had approved the merger of Korean Air and Asiana Airlines in late 2024 with strict requirements, including a 90% seat supply mandate on routes deemed important, such as the Guam route. As a result, Korean Air and its LCC affiliate Jin Air began doubling flights on the Seoul Incheon-Guam route in August, eventually operating at six times a day to meet the mandate.

“These merger policies and the resulting oversupply of seats into Guam do not reflect today’s true consumer demand,” said Seo. “As a result, the Guam oversupply is directly affected Saipan’s tourism market, resulting in the lowest August operating rate since 1992, despite August being peak summer season.”

Unstable air service to The Marianas is forecasted to continue throughout FY 2026 if not remedied. Jeju Air has suspended its night flight from Seoul-Incheon Airport to Saipan from Sept. 8 to 30 due to low ticket sales and high fares, and the airline is also considering further suspending flights from Oct. 12 to 25. T’way Air has suspended its

daily night flight to Saipan from Seoul-Incheon from August 18 until Sept. 28, leaving only one daily daytime flight from Korea to Saipan until then.

“Only by stabilizing air service can we begin to recover tourist arrivals and generate more government revenue so we can adequately fund the CNMI Public School System, public safety, the hospital, and others,” said Seo. “Government revenue is very tight, and difficult decisions need to be made, but all stakeholders are aware of the need, and we hope we can all come together and prioritize air service stabilization in the new fiscal year.”

[Current International Airline Schedule]

Airline	Route	Period	Remark
Jeju Air	Seoul-Saipan Night Flight	09/08/2025 ~ 09/30/2025	*Suspension
		10/01/2025 ~ 10/08/2025	Resumption
		10/09/2025 ~ N/A	*Suspension
	Seoul-Saipan Daytime Flight	Currently daily service	In Service
T'way Air	Seoul-Saipan Night Flight	08/18/2025 ~ 09/28/2025	*Suspension
		09/29/2025 ~ 10/13/2025	Resumption
		10/14/2025 ~ 11/22/2025	*Suspension
		11/23/2025 ~ 03/14/2026	Resumption
		03/15/2026 ~ N/A	*Suspension
United Air	Narita-Saipan Night Flight	Currently weekly 3 flights (Every Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday)	In Service
Hong Kong Airlines	Hong Kong – Saipan Night Flight	Set to resume on 09/21/2025 Weekly 2 flights (Every Thursday and Sunday)	Resumption

Several HANMI member hotels are now in discussion with air carriers and the MVA to find ways to ensure no further loss of flights, including purchasing air seats through hard block agreement - which may involve financial penalties for unsold seats - or offering special benefits to consumers in Korea who purchase Saipan travel products.

On a positive note, negotiations for winter seasonal charter flights from Busan-Saipan route are in the final stage of agreement, which would bring twice weekly flights during the period. Also, twice weekly flights from Hong Kong will resume on Sept. 21, and twice weekly flights from Hong Kong by Hong Kong-based carrier Greater Bay Airlines are under consideration to begin in the winter 2025-2026 season.

To further bolster the local tourism economy, HANMI is also seeking the reinstatement of Annex VI under the US Department of Transportation's "US-China Air Transport Agreement," provided an exemption for The Marianas from the cap on the number of scheduled US-China flights. However, Seo said that even with Annex VI, airline and travel agency partners are concerned about the stability of the EVS-TAP immigration program that allows non-visa holders to enter the CNMI. He added that full endorsement from the government and all concerned parties is critical.

"Along with these airlift issues, swift improvements to our tourism infrastructure are essential to revitalizing The Marianas' competitiveness as a tourism destination," said Seo. "We must reinstate unique cultural experiences that showcase the islands' heritage, such as the night street market. Developing compelling reasons for tourists to choose The Marianas over competing destinations is paramount."

Hotels included in HANMI's monthly statistical report are Aqua Resort Club, Aquarius Beach Tower, Century Hotel, Coral Ocean Resort, GrandVrio Resort Saipan, Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan, Kensington Hotel Saipan, LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort, Pacific Islands Club Saipan, Saipan World Resort, and Surfrider Resort Hotel.

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands was established in 1985 as a professional forum for the hospitality industry of The Marianas.

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