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HUFF
POST

TRAVEL

Guam Is The Most Interesting Destination In America And Here's Why

Imagine a hybrid of Texas and Hawaii, or a cross between Spain and Japan: A remote island paradise with a rich, indigenous heritage, a contentious and diverse colonial history, and absolutely stunning vistas.

Welcome to Guam.

In many ways, Guam is a wonderfully unique contradiction. It's a remote island and an international melting pot; it's an American territory, but the gateway to Asia; it's home to an intensely local culture, but it's filled with outsiders. And to top it all off, it's insanely beautiful.

Below, the 11 reasons Guam just might be America's most interesting and exotic destination

1. The diving:

The water is crystal clear and, unlike much of the world, Guam's coral reefs are actually thriving. Piti Bomb Hole features such lushly perfect coral craters that it looks like they were sculpted by bombs. Between Apra Harbor, where WWI and WWII ships sunk on top of each other, to Gun Beach, where stingrays go for breakfast, divers and snorkelers are never, ever bored..



Apra Harbor

2. Chamorro Food:

With clear influences from Spanish and Mexican cuisine, Chamorro food features tortillas, tamales, atole and chilaquiles. Locals especially crave Finadene (a soy sauce-based condiment) and Chicken Kelaguen, which features lemon, chile peppers and coconut shavings.



3. History:

The U.S. territory enjoys the culture of the Chamorro people (the indigenous Pacific islanders), but with heavy Spanish, Japanese, and American influences. It was first colonized by Spain in the seventeenth century, was occupied by Japan for two years during World War II, and is home today to a relatively large U.S. military presence.



4. The Culture:

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5. The Hiking:

To get you drooling, just try Instagram searching the following: Pagat Caves, Cetti Bay, Sigua Falls, Ague Cove, Talofoto Falls and Marble Cave. Yes, please!



6. The Beaches:

A pretty beach is a pretty beach, right? Apparently not. Guam enjoys near perfect weather year round (temperatures range from the low 70s to mid 80s) and the water, according to one local, is warm and uniquely delightful, as if “Mother Nature herself drew you a warm bath.”



7. The Sunsets:

This is the kind of majesty you have to see for yourself.



But seriously, the sunsets are incredible:



8. The Music:

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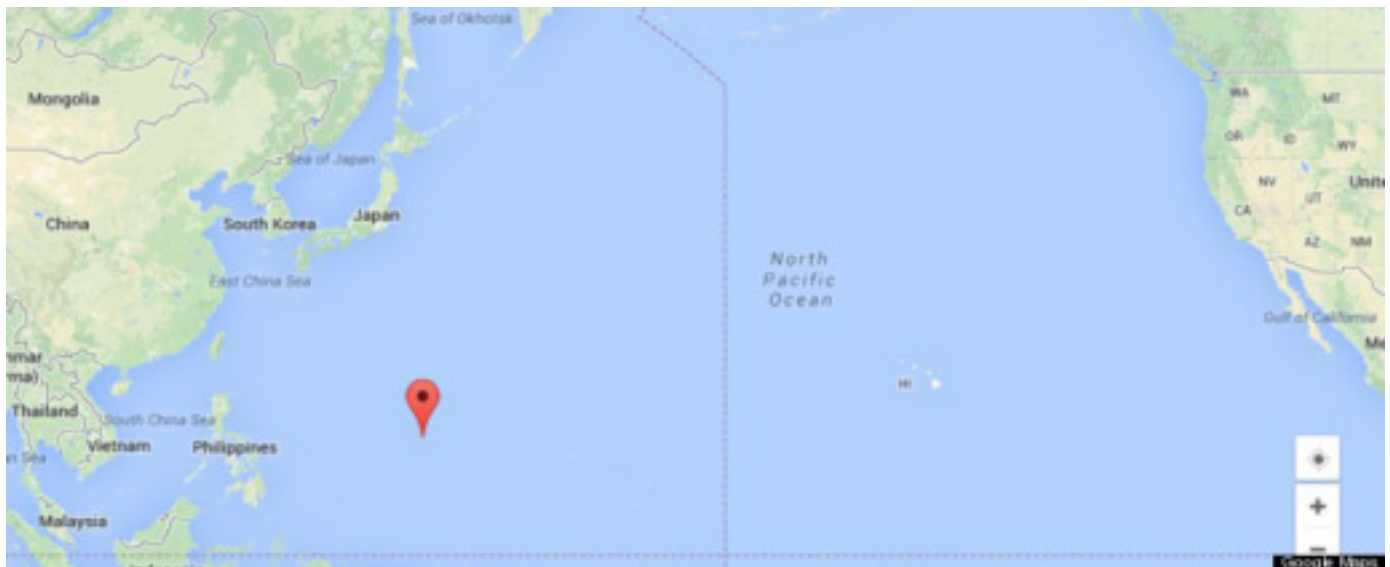
9. Exoticism:

Admit it: vacationing in Hawaii is so last century (ahem, “Mad Men”). Guam, on the other hand, is the new exotic destination for America.



10. A Head Start:

Guam is “where America’s Day begins” -- quite literally. With its own timezone (Chamorro Standard Time), Guam wakes up 14 or 15 hours ahead of the Eastern Time Zone, depending on Daylight Savings Time. The island celebrates New Year’s first in America and movies often premiere ahead of the rest of America.



11. Romance:

Perhaps the island's most famous landmark is Two Lovers' Point, a dramatic and steep cliffside overlooking the Philippine Sea. According to Chamorro legend, two star-crossed lovers, forbidden from being together in life, leaped from the cliff so that they could be together in the afterlife. Not surprisingly, weddings are held there regularly.

