



*"I have always considered Saipan the decisive battle of the Pacific [for it] breached Japan's inner defense line and opened the way to the home islands."*

—Lt. General Holland Smith

## Sacrifice, Honor, and Remembrance

American Memorial Park honors the sacrifices of American military personnel and island residents involved in the World War II Marianas Campaign. In mid-1944, thousands lost their lives fighting over

the strategic island of Saipan. The park is now a "living memorial" and place of remembrance that offers visitors diverse cultural, natural, and recreation opportunities.

### A Critical Assault

#### The Invasion

Seizure of the Mariana Islands occurred in the third year of the war. Saipan, a major Japanese military base, was considered critical for use as an airfield for new American bombers that could easily strike Japan. With 24,000 civilians in urban centers protected by 30,000 Japanese troops, Saipan proved tactically difficult to conquer. American Navy vessels shelled the island for days before 71,000 American troops stormed ashore on June 15, 1944. Japan's leaders were surprised as they wrongly anticipated an attack further south in the Pacific. Undaunted, the Japanese mustered brutal counterattacks that eventually killed or wounded nearly 25 percent of the invading American troops.

#### Battle of the Philippine Sea

American troops had been ashore just a few days when the Japanese Navy decided to destroy the US Navy in a final decisive battle. Waves of Japanese aircraft attacked the American fleet from June 19 to 20. As well-trained, experienced American pilots shot down nearly 500 Japanese planes, US submarines sank enemy aircraft carriers. The Japanese fleet would never recover. Their troops on other islands could no longer be resupplied, reinforced, or evacuated. The lopsided battle was soon referred to as the "Marianas Turkey Shoot."

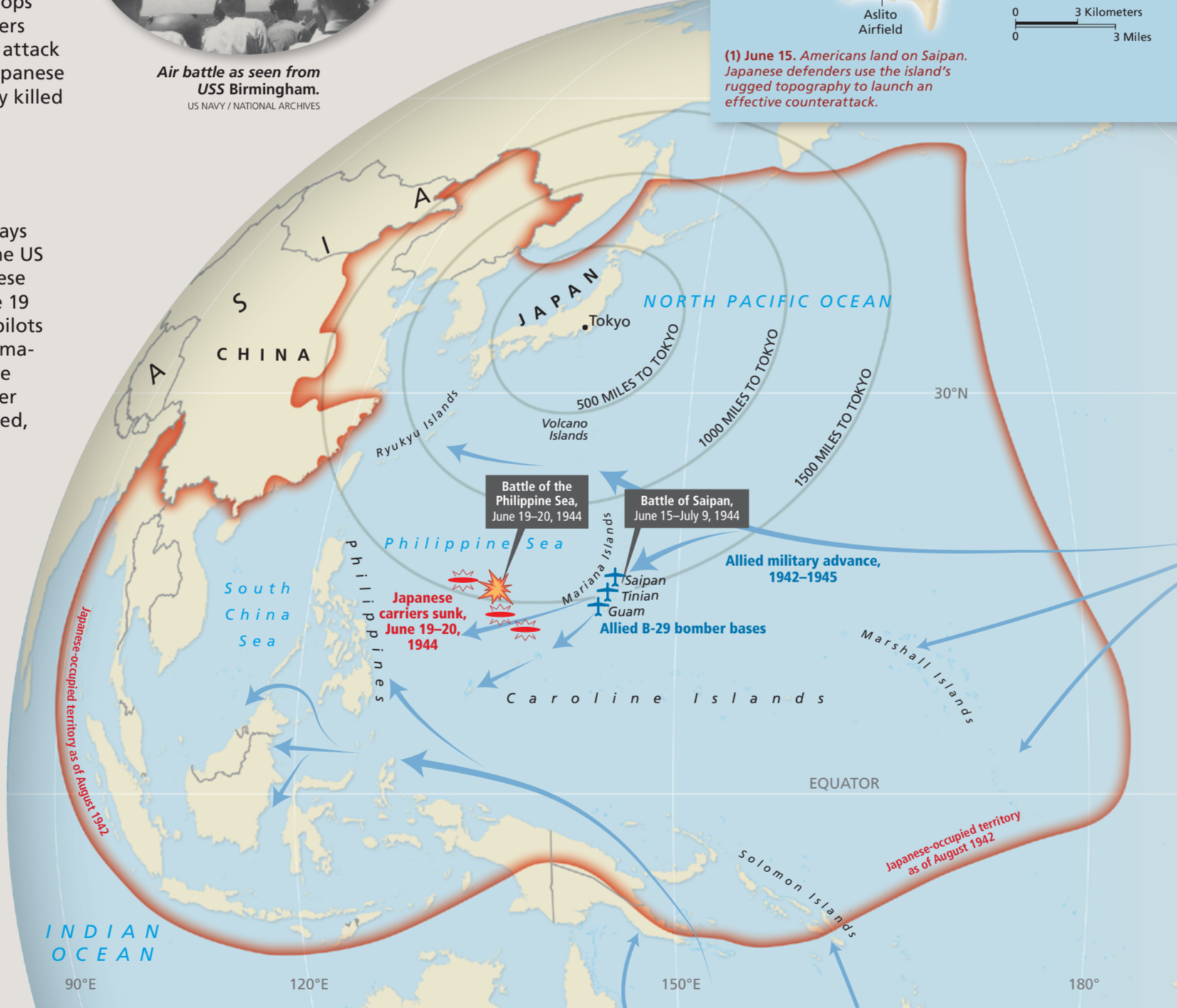
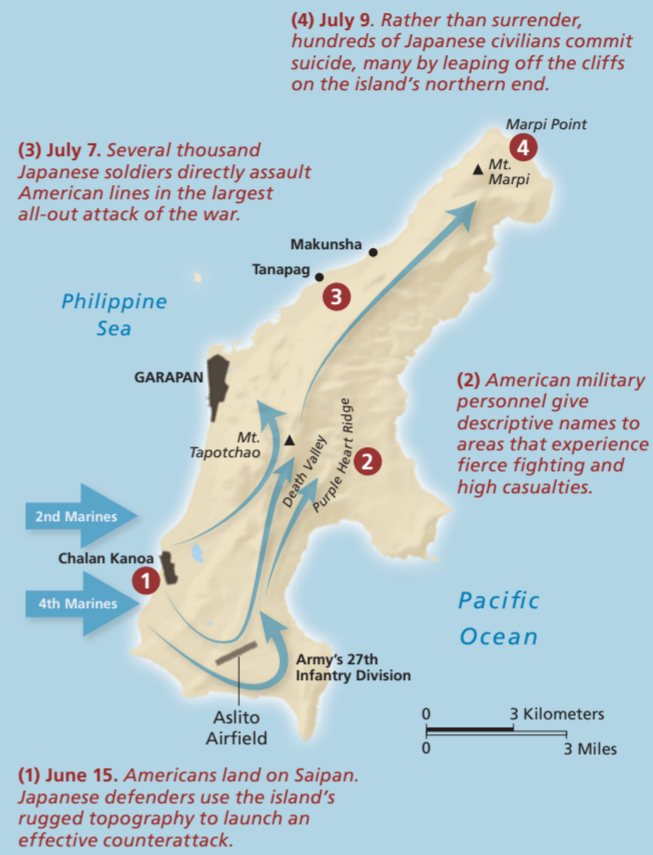
#### Turning Point

Saipan fell to the Americans on July 9, 1944, after the deaths of nearly the entire Japanese garrison. The loss of Saipan led directly to the resignation of Japanese Prime Minister Hideki Tojo and his entire cabinet. For the first time in the war, defeat could not be hidden from the Japanese people. Within six months, Mariana-based American B-29 bombers attacked and destroyed almost all large Japanese cities. These attacks, culminating in the use of atomic bombs, ultimately ended the war.

*"Our war was lost with the loss of Saipan."*

—Japanese Vice Admiral Miwa Shigeyoshi

#### Battle of Saipan June 15–July 9, 1944



### The Human Cost

The fighting for Saipan came at a heavy price. The villages of Garapan and Chalan Kanoa were leveled, and the human toll was staggering. American forces suffered over 3,250 killed in action and more than 13,000 wounded. Fighting almost to the last individual, the Japanese defenders experienced devastating casualties, with nearly the entire 30,000-man garrison lost.

During the weeks of battle, desperate civilians were caught between the opposing forces. As American troops advanced across the island, they found Chamorro and Korean laborers—including women and children—hiding in caves. On July 9, Marines encountered a final horror at Marpi Point. Japanese propaganda had led civilians to believe they would be tortured by occupying forces. Rather than risk capture by the Americans, hundreds of Japanese civilians jumped to their deaths from high cliffs. Others committed suicide with grenades or were killed by Japanese soldiers.

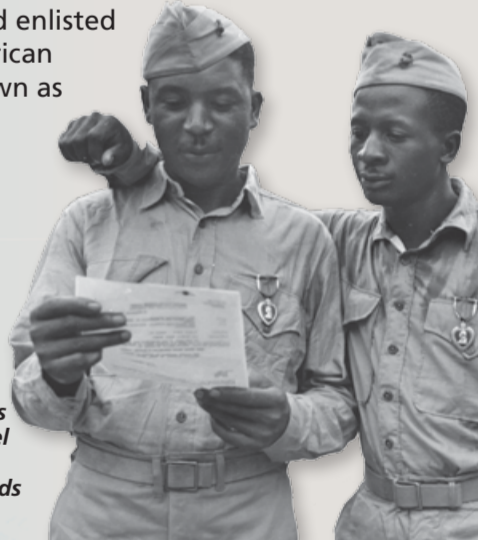
*Over 3,250 Americans died in the battle for Saipan, while an estimated 30,000 Japanese perished.*



American soldiers often put their own lives in jeopardy to save non-combatants like this woman and her children. Many islanders hid in a system of caves, which were also occupied by Japanese defenders. Trapped and fearful, they endured sickness and starvation.

The US Marine Corps broke a 144-year tradition and enlisted the first African American marines in 1942. Known as "Montford Point Marines" after their segregated camp site at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, they first entered into combat on Saipan.

Cook 3rd Class Timerlate Kirven (left) and Steward's Assistant 2nd Class Samuel J. Love, Sr., display Purple Hearts awarded for wounds received on Saipan.



**戦没者に思いを寄せて**

アメリカ記念公園は、第二次世界大戦中のマリアナ諸島の戦いで犠牲となった米軍およびマリアナ諸島の人々に追悼の意を捧げる目的で建設されました。1944年6月15日、当時日本の支配下にあったサイパン島にアメリカ軍が侵襲を開始しました。アメリカ軍は、フィリピン海からの海軍援護を受けて激しい地上戦を展開し、7月9日にサイパン島を占領。この戦いで、約3万人の日本軍兵士と3,250人を超えるアメリカ軍兵士のほか、一般市民までもが犠牲となりました。アメリカ軍は、サイパンの占領後まもなく、サイパン島、テニアン島、およびグアム島に飛行場を整備し、日本本土に対する空襲の基地として利用しました。これらの航空基地から、原爆を落とす2機を含む爆撃機B-29を日本上空に送り込み、主要都市を空襲。結果、大戦がようやく終結を迎えることになっています。

Japanese

**牺牲、荣誉与纪念**

美国纪念公园向第二次世界大战期间在马里亚纳群岛战役中牺牲的美国人和马里亚纳群岛居民致以崇高敬意。1944年6月15日，美国军队向日本人控制的塞班岛发起猛攻。陆上发生了激烈战斗，美国海军则在菲律宾海上提供支援，最终，美国军队于7月9日占领全岛。将近30,000名日本军人和3,250多位美军战士阵亡，而平民也遭受了巨大损失。美国军队迅速地在塞班岛、提尼安岛和关岛上建立机场，以便向日本本土发动袭击。B-29轰炸机从这些机场起飞，向日本的主要城市发起攻击，最终投放两颗原子弹结束了这场旷日持久的战争。

Mandarin

**희생, 명예 그리고 기념**

'아메리칸 메모리얼 파크'는 2차 세계대전 중 마리아나 전투에서 희생당한 미군인과 마리아나인을 기리기 위해 조성된 공원입니다. 1944년 6월 15일, 미군은 일제 치하에 있던 사이판 섬을 공격했습니다. 육상에서 벌어진 치열한 전투와 필리핀 해에서 이루어진 미 해군의 지원 사격에 힘입어, 결국 7월 9일에 사이판은 미군의 수중에 들어갔습니다. 거의 30,000명의 일본군과 3,250여 명의 미군 병사가 전사했고, 민간인 역시 끔찍한 피해를 입었습니다. 미군은 신속히 사이판, 티니안 및 괌에 비행장을 건설하여 일본 본토에 대한 공습을 시작했습니다. 이들 섬에서 출격한 B-29 폭격기에는 핵무기로 무장한 폭격기 2대도 포함되어 있었으며, 일본 주요 도시를 공격하여 마침내 전쟁에 종지부를 찍었습니다.

Korean

**Самопожертвование, честь и память**

Американский мемориальный парк создан в память о гражданах США и жителях Марианских островов, погибших во время Марианской кампании во Второй мировой войне. Армия США штурмом взяла остров Сайпан, находившийся под контролем японских войск, 15 июня 1944 года. Напряженная битва на суше и наступление флота США в Филиппинском море завершились победой Соединенных Штатов 9 июля. В сражении погибло около 30 000 японских и более 3250 американских военнослужащих. Большие потери были и среди мирного населения. Вскоре после этого на Сайпане, Тиниане и Гуаме были построены американские аэродромы для поддержки наступления на основную территорию Японии. Бомбардировщики B-29, отправленные с этих островов, включая два вооруженных атомными бомбами, атаковали основные города Японии, что положило конец войне.

Russian

# A Living Legacy

“American Memorial Park will serve as the surrogate memory and living legacy for future generations to comprehend and appreciate the sacrifices, ordeals, and lessons of this segment of World War II history.”

—Jonathan B. Jarvis  
National Park Service



PHOTO © JACK HARDY

## Changing Cultures, Changing Perspectives

### The Chamorros

The seafaring Chamorro people originally settled the Mariana Islands over 3,500 years ago, sailing large outrigger canoes known as “proas” from Southeast Asia. Around 1,000 years ago, they began constructing two-piece megalithic pillar structures out of limestone. These “latte stone” creations still exist on several Mariana Islands. Although they have endured centuries of change, the Chamorro spirit lives on in its people. Today their descendants predominantly use the Chamorro language and continue to preserve their culture and traditions.

### New Arrivals: Spanish and Carolinians

Explorer Ferdinand Magellan first sighted the Marianas when he crossed the Pacific in 1521 and made landfall on Guam. Spain officially claimed Saipan in 1565 and later named the islands for their queen, Mariana. Residents were forcibly removed to Rota and Guam under Spanish rule. Saipan remained uninhabited for decades until Carolinians from Satawal under Chiefs Aghurubw and Nguschul sought refuge there after a typhoon destroyed their island. Around 1815 the Carolinians founded a village called Arabwal in what is now American Memorial Park.

### Japanese Influence

In 1899, after losing the Spanish-American War, Spain sold the Marianas (excluding Guam) to Germany, who ruled the islands until losing them in World War I. Japan assumed control in 1914, improving health conditions and boosting the economy by exporting and importing various food products. By the time the United States attacked Saipan in 1944, thousands of Japanese, Okinawans, Koreans, and Taiwanese immigrants inhabited the island.

### Saipan Today

After World War II, the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands administered the Northern Mariana Islands. In 1978 a commonwealth established in political union with the United States led to the unique island democracy enjoyed by the diverse, multicultural island community today.



**More Information**  
American Memorial Park  
P.O. Box 5198 CHRB  
Saipan, MP 96950  
(670) 234-7207  
www.nps.gov/amme

To learn more about the Pacific war, visit [www.nps.gov/wapa](http://www.nps.gov/wapa). To discover more about the National Park System, visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

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## Reflect and Remember

The Court of Honor (below) is a memorial to the American military personnel who died during the Marianas Campaign of World War II. In honor of their sacrifices, the names of the fallen are inscribed on the memorial plaques. The Marianas Memorial (right) honors Chamorros and Carolinians who perished during the war.

PHOTO © JACK HARDY



Marianas Memorial.  
NPS

## An Environment to Appreciate and Preserve

The devastation of Saipan in World War II resulted in grave consequences for the island’s coral reefs, beaches, wildlife, and vegetation. Non-native plants and animals introduced during colonial times now threaten to overwhelm Saipan’s natural habitat. Fortunately, ongoing scientific research and environmental restoration efforts are proving successful in preserving Saipan’s resources. Explore the forests, paths, and shores within the park’s 133 acres to appreciate the island’s natural diversity.

### A Sanctuary for Rare Plants and Animals

From the knee-like roots of the mangrove trees (*Bruguiera gymnorhiza*) projecting above saltwater swamps to the native giant ferns (*Achrosticum*), reed marshes (*Phragmites*), and drier ironwood groves (*Casuarina equisetifolia*), the park’s forests shelter a colorful array of native lizards, tree snails, insects, and crabs. Among the 18 bird species found in the park, several are federally protected under the Endangered Species Act, including the Mariana moorhen and the Mariana nightingale reed warbler.



Micronesian honeyeater.  
PHOTO © LESLIE WARE

### Learn, Protect, and Enjoy

The 30-acre wetland and mangrove forest within American Memorial Park provides habitat rarely found in the Northern Marianas. Mangroves occupy an essential role in this ecosystem because they stabilize the shoreline, absorb nutrients, and filter runoff water from the land. These specialized trees also serve as a buffer to adjacent waters, which are home to threatened green and endangered hawksbill sea turtles. The park offers opportunities to learn about how to protect this vulnerable and unique environment so it will thrive and endure for future generations to enjoy.



Blue-banded king crow butterfly.  
PHOTO © FRANK MODEL



Gnarled mangrove wetlands harbor birds, crabs, and fish.



Visitors enjoy walking, swimming, and windsurfing at Micro Beach.

### 犠牲者を偲んで忘れない

公園内にある旗の掲揚台とマリアナ記念碑は、第二次世界大戦中のマリアナ諸島の戦いで犠牲となった人々を偲ぶ場となっています。この戦いでは、米軍の兵士だけでなくマリアナ諸島の住民もが命を落とすうえに、サンゴ礁や植物などの自然も破壊されてしまいました。現在のサイパンは緑豊かな自然と美しい海に囲まれており、自然の回復力のすばらしさが随所に見受けられます。133エーカー（約54万m<sup>2</sup>）という広大な敷地を持つアメリカ記念公園は、絶滅危惧種に定められている2種を含む、18種の鳥の生息地となっているほか、30エーカー（約12万m<sup>2</sup>）に及ぶ湿地帯に貴重なマングローブ林を保護しています。

Japanese

### 反思和纪念

美国纪念公园中的荣誉广场和马里亚纳纪念碑为人们提供场所，可以在这里追忆和缅怀第二次世界大战期间在马里亚纳群岛战役中牺牲的先烈。这场战役夺走了很多美国军人和马里亚纳群岛居民的生命，也对珊瑚礁和植被造成破坏。而今，大自然恢复了它的生机与活力，塞班岛上树木葱郁，水质清澈。占地 133 英亩的公园现在为 18 种鸟类提供栖息地，其中包括两种法律上的濒危物种，同时也保护着 30 英亩的珍稀湿地和红树林。

Mandarin

### 추모와 기억

‘아메리칸 메모리얼 파크’에 있는 ‘영예와 마리아나 기념 정원’은 2차 세계대전 중 마리아나 전투에서 사망한 사람들을 추모하는 장소입니다. 전쟁은 미군과 마리아나 주민들의 목숨을 앗아갔고, 산호초와 초목도 황폐화시켰습니다. 오늘날, 사이판에서 볼 수 있는 무성하게 우거진 숲과 깨끗한 물을 통해 자연의 신비한 자생력을 분명히 느낄 수 있습니다. 면적이 0.53 km<sup>2</sup>인 이 공원에는 법으로 보호되는 멸종 위기종 2종을 포함한 18종의 조류가 서식하고 있으며, 보기 드문 0.12 km<sup>2</sup> 면적의 습지대와 맹그로브 숲 또한 보호 대상입니다.

Korean

### Чтить и помнить

Площадь Славы и Марианский мемориал в Американском мемориальном парке служат местами поминовения погибших во время Марианской кампании во Второй мировой войне. Эта война забрала жизни множества американских солдат и жителей Марианских островов, уничтожила растительность и нанесла существенный урон коралловым рифам. Сегодня благодаря исключительной способности природы к самовосстановлению Сайпан вновь благоухает пышной зеленью и манит прозрачными водами. В парке площадью 53,8 га сейчас обитают 18 видов птиц, два из которых находятся под угрозой вымирания. На территории парка также находятся редкие мангровые леса и заболоченные земли площадью 12,1 га.

Russian