

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)



Northern Marianas College – Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service (NMC-CREES)

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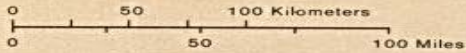
Narrated by: Jonathan Kiyoshi



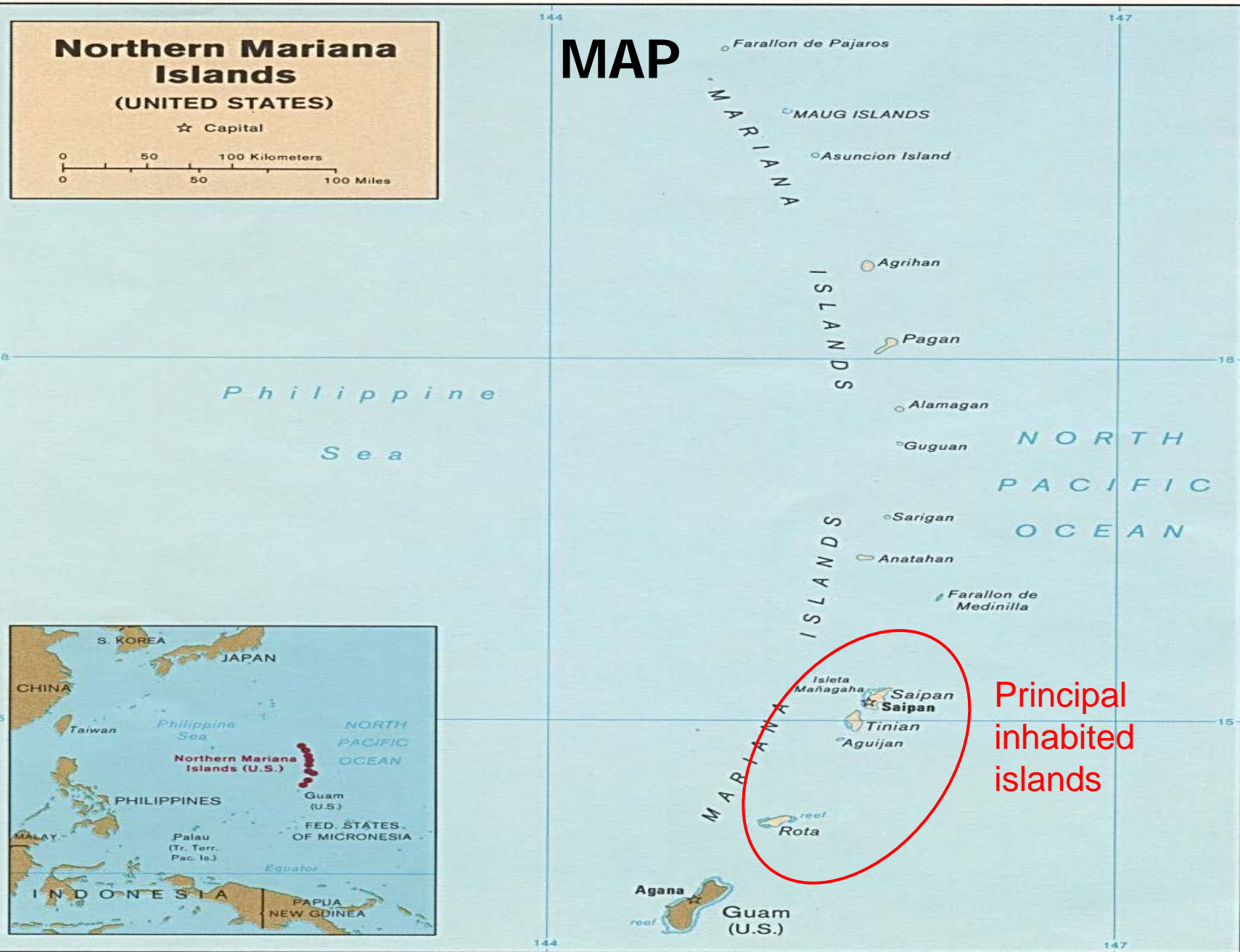
Northern Mariana Islands

(UNITED STATES)

☆ Capital



MAP



Principal inhabited islands



GEOGRAPHY

- **Location**

Islands in the North Pacific Ocean, about three-quarters of the way from Hawaii to the Philippines

- **Area**

Total: 464 sq km

- Land: 464 sq km
- Water: 0 sq km

Consists of 14 islands (Farallon de Pajaros, Maug Islands, Asuncion Island, Aguihan, Pagan, Alamagan, Guguan, Sarigan, Anatahan, Farallon de Medinilla, Saipan, Tinian, Aguijan, and Rota) Underlined islands are principal inhabited islands

- **Coastline:** 1,482 km

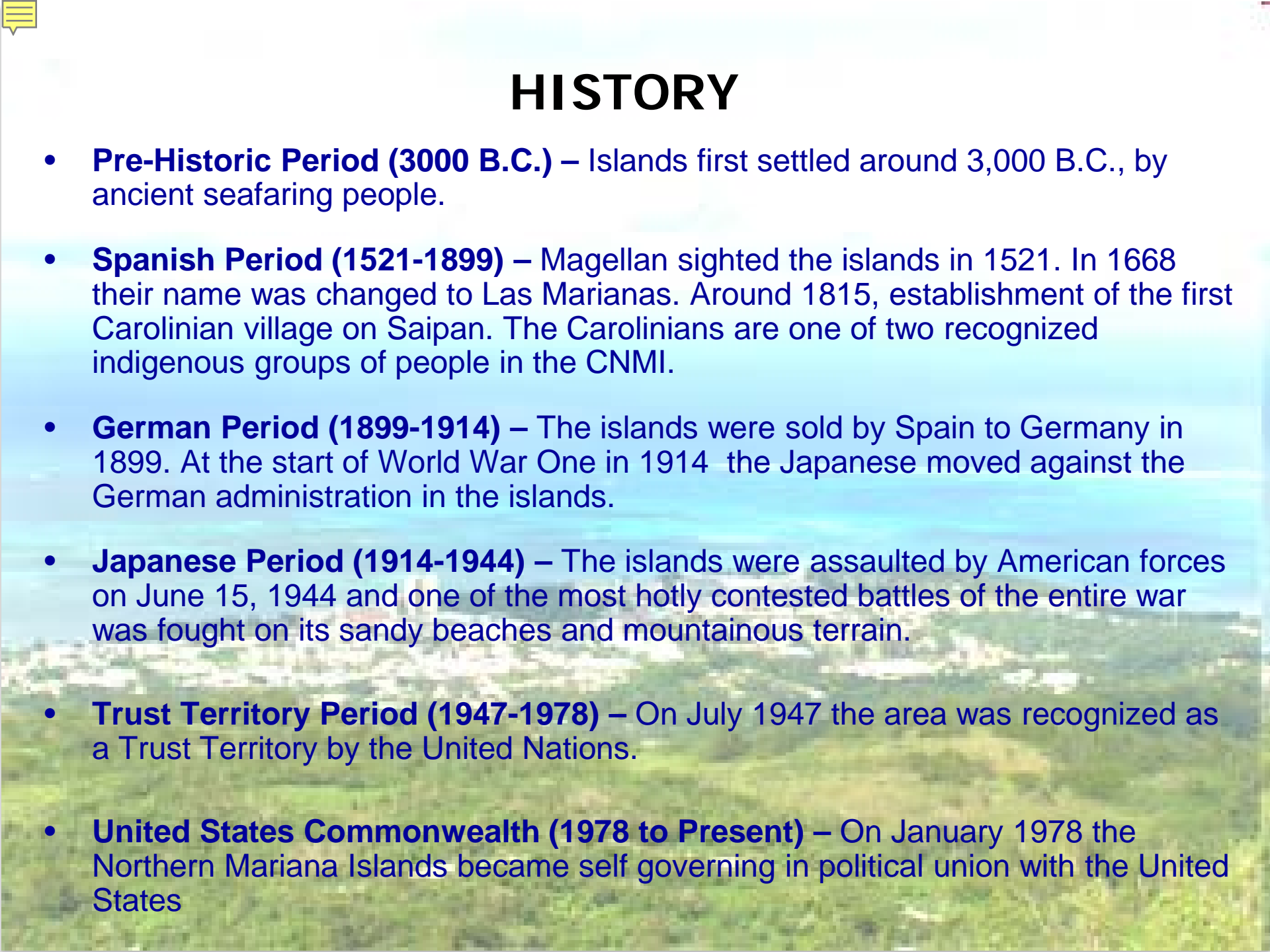
- **Area – comparative:** 2.5 times the size of Washington, DC

- **Maritime claims:** Territorial sea: 12 nm: Exclusive economic zone: 200 nm





HISTORY

- **Pre-Historic Period (3000 B.C.)** – Islands first settled around 3,000 B.C., by ancient seafaring people.
 - **Spanish Period (1521-1899)** – Magellan sighted the islands in 1521. In 1668 their name was changed to Las Marianas. Around 1815, establishment of the first Carolinian village on Saipan. The Carolinians are one of two recognized indigenous groups of people in the CNMI.
 - **German Period (1899-1914)** – The islands were sold by Spain to Germany in 1899. At the start of World War One in 1914 the Japanese moved against the German administration in the islands.
 - **Japanese Period (1914-1944)** – The islands were assaulted by American forces on June 15, 1944 and one of the most hotly contested battles of the entire war was fought on its sandy beaches and mountainous terrain.
 - **Trust Territory Period (1947-1978)** – On July 1947 the area was recognized as a Trust Territory by the United Nations.
 - **United States Commonwealth (1978 to Present)** – On January 1978 the Northern Mariana Islands became self governing in political union with the United States
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DEMOGRAPHICS

Population: 53, 883 (Census 2010)

Age structure: (2010 census)

0-14 years:	26.4 %
15-64 years:	70.7 %
65 years and over:	2.9 %

Ethnic groups: (2010 census)

Asians	49.9 %	Pacific Islander	34.9 %
Caucasian	2.1 %	other	0.4 %
mixed	12.7 %		

Urbanization: Urban population: 90% of total population (census 2010)

Religions:

Christian (Roman Catholic majority, although traditional beliefs and taboos may still be found)

Languages: (2010 census)

Philippine languages	32.8 %	Chinese	6.8 %
Chamorro	24.1 %	English	7.0 %
other Pacific Island languages	5.1 %	Other	14.2%

POLITICS

Dependency status:

Commonwealth in political union with the US; federal funds to the Commonwealth are administered by the US Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs

Constitution:

Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands effective 1 January 1978; Covenant Agreement fully effective 4 November 1986.

Those born in the CNMI are US citizens. They do not pay federal taxes, and do not vote in US Congress and presidential elections. *The Northern Mariana Islands elect one nonvoting delegate to the US House of Representatives.*

Legal system:

Based on US system except for customs, wages, immigration laws, and taxation

Government type:

commonwealth; self-governing with locally elected governor, lieutenant governor, and legislature

IMMIGRATION/EMIGRATION

- Net Migration rate: - 57.46 migrants/1000 population (2011 est.)
- The exact number of CNMI Chamorros that move to the U.S. is unknown as surveys do not distinguish between Guam Chamorros and CNMI Chamorros living in the U.S. However, available statistics do seem to reconcile with anecdotal information on CNMI Chamorro emigration.
- The states that have the most Chamorro residence are California, Washington, Texas, Hawaii, New York, and Florida.
- Chamorros that live in the U.S. emigrate there to fulfill educational goals (college or advanced degrees) or for job or career opportunities that might not be available in the CNMI.

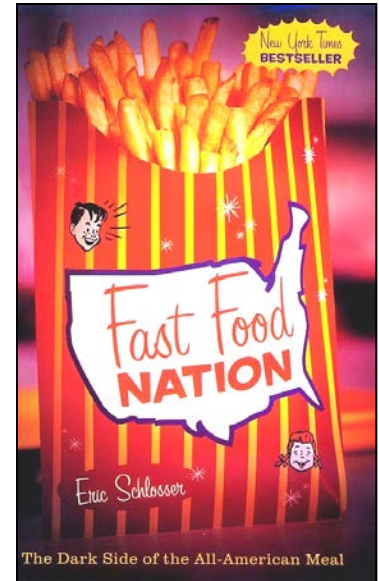
LIFESTYLE

- **GDP :** \$733 million (2010 est.) Note: GDP estimate includes US subsidy
- **Imports:** \$436 million (2010) Food, construction equipment/materials, petroleum products
- **Exports:** \$242 million (2008) Tourism services
- Many indigenous families own or homestead small land. In general, only native residents of the CNMI can own property.
- Tourism is by far the largest sector of the economy, followed by government activities and light industry. The tourist industry employs about 50% of the work force and accounts for roughly one-fourth of GDP.
- Many have a high value on formal education. There are Head Start programs and preschool opportunities for the child under six years old.
- The Northern Marianas College offers degrees, in education, liberal arts, and business. Young people who leave the CNMI to complete their higher education often do not return.
- Unemployment rate: 11.2% (2010 est.)

HEALTH ISSUES

- Generally the CNMI is a healthy place to live. There are health centers with dental facilities on Rota and Tinian. Medicaid and other federal programs are available.
- **Life expectancy at birth:** 77.08 years
 - (Male: 74.45 years, Female: 79.87 years (2011 est.))
- **Leading causes of death:**
Heart disease, Cancer, Stroke, Renal disease, Sepsis
- **Rates overweight/obese:** around 34% for children ages 2-10 years old; estimates similar for adults
- **Diabetes mellitus:** estimates for adult prevalence of diabetes range from 25%-45% . (2,490 new cases in 2000)
- **Rates of physical inactivity:** a 2005 study found that 16.7% of children ages 5-10 did not engage in physical activity, whether at school or outside of school.
- **Tuberculosis:** 28 new cases in 2008. CNMI has highest rate of TB in US (U.S. mainland, 1:100,000 people are likely to contract TB. In CNMI the ratio is 80:100,000).

DIETARY CHANGE





FOOD AND LIFE EVENTS

- What is culturally important : praying the rosary for the deceased, fiestas, family (how people are related), respect for elders, hospitality
 - Birthdays ☀
 - Christenings: Celebration of child baptismal
 - Fiestas: Patron saints are celebrated at each village and an abundance of food is shared amongst villagers
 - Weddings: ☀
 - Anniversaries (significant years): ☀
 - Funerals/Rosaries: Food is not served every day for nine days but only on last day at church hall since 2006
 - Holidays : ☀
- ☀ Celebrations that include roast pig, coconut crab

POPULAR LOCAL FOODS

- **Apigigi'** –freshly grated coconut and tapioca flour
- **Buñuelos Aga'** – Banana doughnuts.
- **Titiyas** – Tortilla made with flour
- **Hineksa' Agaga'** – Rice cooked with red coloring from the seed of the achoti.
- **Kelaguin** – Dish made of meat, salt, red pepper and lemon juice.
- **Potu** – Rice cake, rice pudding.
- **Tãmales Mendioka** – a tapioca dish
- **Saibuk** – Starchy foods cooked in coconut milk
- **Okoko' Pipinu** – Pickled cucumbers.



Apigigi'



Buñuelos Aga'

Okoko' Pipinu



PHOTO PAGE

