

GUAM BACKGROUND DATA

I. Geography and Climate

The United States Territory of Guam is the largest and most populous island in the group of islands known as the Marianas. Regional and island maps are included in a previous section of this report. The Marianas are strategically located in the Western Pacific Ocean, south of Japan and east of the Philippines. Guam is situated about 900 miles north of the equator. Approximate air time distances from Guam to major Pacific Basin cities are as follows:

<u>City</u>	<u>Flying Distance (Miles)</u>	<u>Air Time (Hours)</u>
Honolulu	3,800	7.0
Tokyo	1,560	3.5
Seoul	1,990	4.75
Taipei	1,720	4.0
Hong Kong	2,100	4.75
Manila	1,600	3.5
Sydney	3,300	6.75
San Francisco	6,200	12.0

The Island of Guam is nearly footprint-shaped. Guam is approximately 30 miles long and ranges from approximately 4 to 8 miles in width. The island contains a total land area of about 212 square miles. Guam's soil mass is a mixture of weathered volcanic rock and raised coral. The northern half of the island is a high, coralline limestone rolling plain, reaching a height of up to 850 feet with steep cliffs abruptly forming the coastline. Hagåtña (also known as Agana), the capital, is located in the central portion of the island. The central portion of the island includes relatively level areas and rolling hills. The southern portion of the island is volcanic in origin and includes peaks of up to about 1,300 feet. Apra Harbor, one of the largest deep draft harbors in the Pacific, is located on the western side of the island. Apra Harbor is one of the few major deep draft harbors located in the Western Pacific Ocean between Honolulu and the Philippines or Japan.

The climate of Guam is tropical with temperatures ranging from about 70° to 90° Fahrenheit with a mean annual temperature of 81° F. The warmest months are May and June. Most of the average yearly precipitation of 80 to 100 inches falls from July to October. The island enjoys tradewinds from December to April and is periodically subject to typhoons.

II. History

As early as 5,000 years ago, Guam was discovered by the ancient Chamorro race. Little is known of their past. Studies in language and culture suggest that the ancient Chamorros originated from Southeast Asia in the regions of Malaysia and Indonesia. Europeans first arrived on Guam in the 16th Century. In March 1521, Ferdinand Magellan marked the first European contact and the beginning of recorded history of Guam. Soon after the initial contact, Guam was the first island in the Pacific to experience subjugation; the introduction of Christianity and acculturation. Hagåtña (also known as Agana) is the oldest village or community with European heritage in the Pacific. The heritage of this once Spanish colonial village is not substantially evident today because of the destruction inflicted during World War II.

In 1898, the United States took possession of Guam after the Spanish American War. The United States administered the affairs of the island until the outbreak of World War II in the Pacific. In 1941, Japan took control of Guam after the December 7 and December 8 attacks on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and Agana, Guam. In 1944, after a successful military campaign, the United States regained control of Guam and other Pacific Islands from Japan.

After the war, the island and its people experienced further changes in government and in the economy. In 1950, the Organic Act of Guam was passed by the United States Congress giving U.S. citizenship rights to the Chamorros. In 1970, Guam elected its own Governor for the first time. The post-war period and influence of the United States altered the lifestyle of the Chamorros so that the island has become similar to communities in the mainland United States; albeit with an island influence.

Guam today is the regional center of Micronesia for transportation, education, government, communication and commerce. It is frequently referred to as "America in Asia". As a U.S. Territory, the United States federal government retains some control over its affairs. For many years, the local government has periodically attempted to gain Commonwealth status for Guam.

III. Demographics

The 2000 census indicates that Guam's population (including civilian and military) totals about 154,805. The island's population is anticipated to increase at an annual rate of approximately 2 percent. A summary of changes in population for the Island of Guam for previous years is shown on the following page. Guam's population represents a mixture of many ethnic backgrounds. As a result of the 1980s Free Association Compacts negotiated with the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau, the population of Micronesians on Guam has increased substantially. The following ethnic categories represent the major racial groups on Guam.

<u>Racial Group</u>	<u>% of Population</u>
Chamorro (Indigenous)	37%
Filipino	26%
Caucasian	7%
Chuukese	4%
Others	26%

Guam's population is comprised of civilians, military personnel and military dependents. Military personnel and dependents comprise a modest portion of Guam's population and recent military cutbacks resulted in a decreasing military population in recent years as shown on the table on the previous page. The military population started to increase somewhat in 2002, following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. This positive growth, the first since 1993, is expected to continue in the near future as the military re-evaluates the strategic importance of Guam. A table summarizing the most recent census (2000) figures for civilian and military population categories is shown below.

<u>Category</u>	<u>2000 Population</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Civilian (Estimated)	143,180	92%
Military (Active and Dependents)	<u>11,625</u>	<u>8%</u>
Total	<u>154,805</u>	<u>100%</u>

The Government of Guam Bureau of Planning recently completed a population forecast for Guam through 2026. The forecast estimates a civilian population of nearly 224,000 by 2026. The overall annual growth rate is projected to slow from 2.5 percent in 1990 to 1.5 percent by 2026. The most significant population growth forecasted during the period reflects northern Guam (158.5 percent) followed by central (24.3 percent) and southern areas (17.2 percent).

Median income data is reported every 10 years by the U. S. Bureau of the Census. Between 1990 and 2000, median income (adjusted for inflation) decreased for households, families and on a per capita basis. Most recently, local government agencies have reported increases in household sizes and decreases in various income categories. While incomes have dropped, the average family size stabilized at 3.89 individuals per household in 2000, compared with 3.97 in 1990. A table of the historic data is shown below.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Median Income¹</u>		
	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1990-00 Percentage Change</u>
Household	\$41,472	\$39,317	-5.2%
Family	\$42,043	\$41,229	-1.9%
Per Capita	\$13,388	\$12,722	-5.0%

¹ Adjusted for inflation by the U.S. Bureau of the Census using a factor of 1.348. All figures are reported in 2000 dollars.

In November 1994, the Government of Guam Bureau of Planning completed a draft of Housing in Guam: 1990. The report was not finalized due to other commitments; however, it remains the most comprehensive report on demographics for Guam. Selected quotes from the Housing in Guam: 1990 study are included herein in order to provide the reader with historic demographic data for the island of Guam. For more specific demographic data and analyses, we suggest that the reader consider obtaining a copy of that comprehensive report from the Bureau of Planning.

“For the purpose of population analysis, Guam can be divided into Northern, Southern, and Central areas for census periods between 1940 and 1990. The smaller geographic units of election districts are comparable only between 1960 and 1990, having undergone extensive reorganization on several occasions prior to 1960.”²

“Prior to World War II, nearly half of Guam’s population lived in the one square mile village of Agana, in Central Guam. Military occupation during and after the war dispersed the indigenous population into other areas of the island. Fractional lot problems in Agana contributed to the difficulty of repopulating the village after the war. In other parts of the island, families gave up their inherited lands to the U.S. government, which seized over one-third of Guam’s land for defense purposes.”³

“The decades 1940 through 1990 was a period of rapid growth in the North. New inhabitants included both indigenous residents and new off-island migrants from the United States and Asia. The population of the North increased a remarkable 60,819 persons, from 1,795 in 1940 to 62,614 in 1990. Growth in the other regions did not match the population increase of the North. The Central region, the most populated area in 1940, added 27,019 persons, while the South grew by 23,024 persons.”⁴

“In the Southern region, the villages of Merizo, Umatac, and Inarajan retained their rural character, with interior mountainous areas not suited for housing development. Some new development occurred during the 1980s in the more gently sloping areas of Yona and Talofof, as improved roads shortened travel time to commercial areas further North, and generally improved infrastructure opened the area for development. Of the individual election districts showing decreases or large increases in population between 1960 and 1970, the number of military personnel living on federal lands was often the source of the change. The population living on federal lands should be taken into account in analyzing the growth trends of election districts.”⁵

For more information about Guam Background Data, please contact the Captain Real Estate Group.

² Housing in Guam: 1990 (Draft), Bureau of Planning, November 1994, various pages.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.