

Guam Luring Russian Tourist Dollars Thanks to Visa Waiver

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Tumon Bay, the center of Guam's tourism industry. **Abasaa**

HAGATNA, Guam — Guam tourism officials say Russian tourists spend more and stay longer than visitors from elsewhere when traveling to the unincorporated U.S. territory.

The Guam Visitors Bureau found tourists from Russia reported different habits in exit interview surveys compared with tourists from other places, the Pacific Daily News reported Monday

The agency says tourists from Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and Hong Kong typically stay about three or four days, but Russian travelers stay more than 13 days on average.

Visitors Bureau general manager Karl Pangelinan said Russian tourists wanted to take advantage of Guam's warm weather.

"They take full advantage of long holiday periods and maximize their time abroad, especially

during their harsh winter season," Pangelinan said.

The agency says Russian tourists typically spend about \$2,000 each on airfare and hotel costs, then nearly \$1,600 per day on transportation, meals, gifts and other expenses.

"As travelers globally, they are known to be great consumers at any destination they flock to," Pangelinan said.

He said the surveys found a federal visa waiver program through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security gave Russian tourists a unique motivation to travel to Guam.

"Visa waivers make [traveling to Guam] very convenient," Pangelinan said. "This has meant everything to Guam for our ability to regularly welcome the Russian traveler."

The number of Russian travelers to Guam doubled in fiscal 2013 to more than 6,100 tourists. Weekly flights from two Russian cities started at the end of October.

Pangelinan said the agency has marketed the territory in Russia.

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