

Discover the Federated States of Micronesia!  
A treasure trove of magnificent nature and cultural diversity

Permanent Edition

# FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

## Experience Guide

Full of exciting experiences  
For both first-time and returning visitors who  
love the Federated States of Micronesia





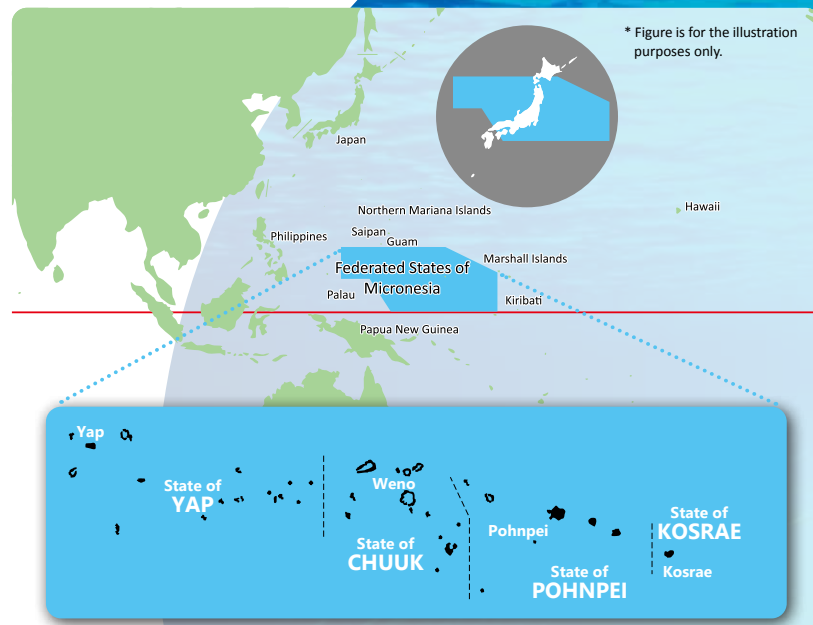
“The seas bring us together; they do not separate us.”

(Quoted from Preamble - Constitution of the FSM)

## Experience all of Micronesia, a fascinating oceanic country



There are many tourists who have travelled south from Japan to Guam, but how many have travelled further down the Pacific Ocean towards the equator? The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) is a vast maritime nation consisting of 607 islands and large atolls, just 90 minutes by plane from Guam.



### The 14th-largest exclusive economic zone in the world

The FSM has the 14th largest sea area in the world with a population of about 110,000 people. Its total sea area (EEZ: Exclusive Economic Zone) covers about 3 million square kilometers, an area larger than Japan. Currently, the country's major industry is fishing, mainly tuna. However, hopes are high that the FSM will acquire enormous marine resources through the advancement of seabed development technologies. Many countries have shown keen interest and more investments are expected from all over the world.

### Eco-discovery tour to explore cultural diversity and primitive nature

As its name suggests, the FSM is a federation consisting of four states: Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae. Residents are very friendly and peaceful, and the unique cultures and ecosystems are unlike anywhere else in the world. Each state is self-governing, and the indigenous cultures and eight languages remain strong and well preserved. The natural surrounding is also diverse—there are 600m high mountains, deep valleys, hills, grasslands, dense mangrove forests, atoll-enclosed lagoons, and beaches that retain their true beauty.

## World's Best! Experience a variety of the world's best

### Swim in one of the world's largest swimming pools

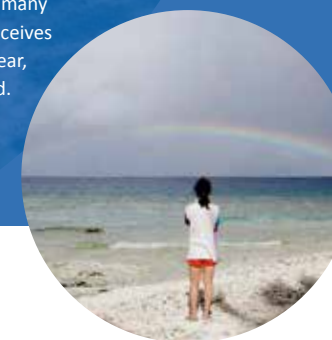
If the ocean itself were to be included in the World Heritage list, the Micronesian waters would definitely be selected as No.1. Among these, one of the world's largest lagoons is Chuuk Lagoon in Chuuk State, with a circumference of about 200km. On a windless day, because the water surface is so calm and mirror-like, you will feel as if you are in a swimming pool. This is why some people may call it the world's largest swimming pool. The FSM is a great place for swimming, snorkeling and scuba diving.

### The country with the world's highest percentage of Japanese descendants

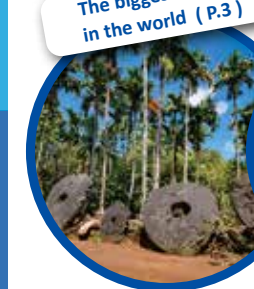
According to one estimate, as many as 20% of the population are of Japanese descent as a result of about 30 years of Japanese occupation. Some older people who received Japanese language education are still able to speak Japanese, and many words of Japanese origin still remain. For example, denshinbashira (telegraph pole) or undoukai (athletics). However, some Japanese words have been adapted into their own Micronesian meaning! The Japanese word joshi has evolved from simply meaning young woman to referring to someone lovely and cute. Another example is kokoro, or heart which now refers to something important.

### Experience the world's best rainbow

One reason why the FSM is called Rainbownesia is because of the rainbows that appear in various forms. If you are particularly lucky you can even see a Midnight Rainbow. This is a phenomenon where a rainbow appears in the moonlight after a sudden squall at night. The reason why the FSM is blessed with so many rainbows is the amount of rainfall. It receives over 10,000mm of rain in an average year, which is one of the highest in the world. Thanks to this rain, natural resources like forestry and wildlife grow strongly, filling all the islands with vitality.



The biggest money in the world (P.3)



There are more World's Best experiences



Island with the most beautiful landscape in the world (P.8)

## History

- 1886 Spain declared territorial sovereignty over the Mariana and Caroline Islands.
- 1899 Spain sold the islands of Micronesia to Germany.
- 1914 WWI began. Japan occupied Micronesia (Southern Ocean Islands), including the present-day Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, the Marshall Islands and the Northern Mariana Islands.
- 1945 WWII ended. US military rule began.
- 1979 The Constitution came into effect. Self-government was established. Tosiwo Nakayama of Japanese descent was inaugurated as the first President.
- 1986 The FSM became independent after the government signed the Compact of Free Association with the United States on 3 November.
- 1988 Diplomatic relations were established with Japan in December.
- 1991 The FSM joined the United Nations on 17 September.

### KIZUNA Japanese people who established KIZUNA (Bond)

There are still many people carrying Japanese names due to the long Japanese occupation period. Koben Mori, the first Japanese person from Kochi Prefecture, emigrated to Chuuk in the 1890s. He married a local woman and had six sons and five daughters. Over a century later, the number of his descendants is now estimated to be over 3,000. The Mori family has been playing a major role politically and economically. Tosiwo Nakayama, another man of Japanese descent, was the first President of the FSM and he helped the country gain independence from the US. Mori's descendant, Emmanuel Mori, also became the 7th president about 20 years later. Susumu Aizawa was a professional baseball player in Japan before returning to Chuuk to become a head chief. The FSM has an immeasurably deep and strong bond with Japan.

### Have you ever heard of a country called Rainbownesia?

Rainbownesia is a nickname given to the Federated States of Micronesia, derived from the words rainbow and nesia (meaning islands). The FSM has a tropical marine climate and is one of the wettest regions in the world, this is why there are so many rainbows. Just like the seven colors of a rainbow, the FSM is full of charms that will spark inspiration within you.



### Recharge your body, mind and spirit!

Let's take a journey of self-reflection and ask yourself about the true wealth and happiness that you may be losing sight of. Here, you can discover what you can't find in more developed tourist destinations and learn important life lessons through deep interactions with nature. It will help you regain the energy to live in nature again.

### FSM Visitors Board

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YAP

Traditional Yapese culture is full of colors



## Stone Money

### Exciting story about the world's biggest money

Small stone money can be 60cm in diameter, while large ones are approximately 2m. Given that they are called stone money, you would imagine that only people in the olden days used them, but you would be surprised to learn that they are still in use today. As people cannot actually take stone disks to a convenience store to spend, they deposit them in the stone money banks and use them as bridal gifts, or to pay for materials to build a house.

### The value lies not in its size but in its story

The stones are made of crystalline limestone and were transported on rafts from Palau, although its exact origin is not clear. The hole in the center is for inserting a log so it can be carried, but how did they transport such massive stones? Yapese people used to sail over 500km to Palau by canoe, carve the limestone and bring it back. A number of people might have been injured or even lost their lives in storms on the voyage across the sea... This is why the value of the stone money lies in its story.

### It works in a similar way to virtual currency

Virtual currencies, a new form of money, are attracting a lot of public attention today, and play a fundamentally similar role to stone money. The similarity is that if everyone recognizes you as the owner of the money, then you are the owner of it even if no one has ever seen the money itself. As long as you have the trust that you have the money, you can pass on the value of the stone money to others. Something old but new.

About YAP



Explore unseen traditional culture



Just a 95-minute flight, Yap is located approximately between Guam and Palau. In the vast sea area stretching 1,200km from east to west, it consists of 138 small islands, including 22 that are inhabited. The best part of visiting Yap is to experience the traditional culture that Yapese people have kept unspoiled. Not only is Yap the most traditional island in the FSM, it is also known to be a very unique cultural destination in the Pacific area. This must be because the island is rich in old traditions and fascinating legends, retaining many of the distinctive cultures among the Pacific Island countries. The charm of the island is highlighted by seaside men's houses, village tours to explore unchanging cultures and traditions, ancient stone money and stone money banks, a variety of handicrafts, marine life and mangrove forests, etc. Colorful Yapese clothing is still in use for traditional dances.





## Culture & Charm

### Explore the untouched world of traditional culture

One of the best things about Yap is to experience the unspoiled traditional culture which is a part of their everyday life. From the moment you arrive in Yap, you will see traditional houses and stone money making you feel like you are on a different planet. You will often encounter men wearing loincloths called *thu* and women wearing wrap-around skirts. You will feel the spirit of the Yapese people everywhere on the island, as if you have taken a trip back to ancient times.

### Homecoming Festival

#### Join the warm social atmosphere

To celebrate the reunion of family and friends, this festival takes place in early summer at the Living History Museum located in the heart of Yap's main island, Colonia. Traditional dances and performing arts are also performed here.

#### YAP Visitors Bureau

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Mail : yvb@mail.fm

URL: <https://www.visit Yap.com/>

## Must-see traditional festivals

Experience special events unique to Yap

### Yap Day

#### Let's dance to celebrate Yapese traditions

Yap Day is the biggest festival in the state and the island is filled with bright colors. It is held annually on the 1st of March with the aim of returning to the old Yapese way of life in food, dresses and everything else to pass on the traditions, culture and wisdom of life to future generations. Islanders from each village on Yap Island will perform traditional dances for two days. There are also agricultural and seafood fairs, and traditional life skill competitions such as coconut husking, basket weaving and more. All hotels will be fully booked during Yap Day, make sure to book early!

### Canoe Festival

#### Enjoy a passionate atmosphere

The Yap Canoe Festival is held annually in November for two days highlighting the traditional Yapese navigation and canoe building skills. You will feel the Yapese pride and desire to preserve these skills and pass them on to the younger generations. The event begins with a parade of canoes of all sizes, from lagoon canoes to voyaging canoes with a crew of 15. The sight of the canoes approaching the shore is truly spectacular. During the festival, you can also enjoy traditional food and crafts at the night market.

### Traditional meeting houses

For lovers of architecture and design

Each village on Yap Island has its own traditional meeting house. These breathtaking traditional houses were built without a single nail. They can be divided into two types: *faluw* and *p'ebay*. The *faluw*, or men's house, stands at the seaside in each village and serves as gateway to the sea. Marine work was the responsibility of men on the island of Yap. All unmarried men over 10 years old used to spend their nights in the *faluw*, learning the traditional knowledge and skills needed to become mature men. Women are still not allowed to go near it. *P'ebay* is a kind of village community center, where men, women and children gather for different purposes.

## To Do List

### Experience traditional canoeing

This tour offers not only a canoe ride, but also a chance to feel the spirit of the Yapese people. It takes you to the reef on a small canoe, but the steering is the same as a large canoe. With the aid of a few crew members, once the canoe catches the wind, it starts sailing at quite a high speed. Yapese people on big sailing canoes do not use nautical charts or compasses, but instead sail by using the stars, waves, winds, marine life, and other natural phenomena. Even today, canoes are built by skilled craftsmen and this art of navigation has been handed down to the next generation.



### Scuba Diving & Snorkeling

See manta rays and sharks in one of the world's top five seas

What has become increasingly popular on Yap Island in recent years is diving and snorkeling to see manta rays and sharks. The best part is that you can see schools of manta rays and sharks close up in water with a visibility of over 30m. If you are lucky, dolphins will pass by. The water around Yap is shallow and calm at a depth of 1m extending for 1 to 2km before the drop-off, making it safe for children to play. There is also a lot of coral so you can enjoy snorkeling with colorful fish. There is something for everyone from beginners to advanced divers.



### Wedding on the south island

Celebrate your marriage again!

A unique wedding with the beautiful nature of Yap will remain as a special memory in your heart forever. Handmade *mwaramwar* (flower headdresses), necklaces, traditional costumes and a private beach with a lagoon will make your wedding even more special. Why not have a second wedding and pledge your love for each other once again? Most hotels in Yap will make all the necessary arrangements for you. Weddings also take place on the beach, at the Yap State Court and in churches and chapels.

### Traditional nautical navigation

ancient navigation techniques have been passed down to us in a surprisingly sophisticated form and are full of human wisdom for surviving in the wild.

On Yap and Chuuk Islands, some men still sail to Palau and Guam in hand-built canoes using only the stars as a traditional navigation technique. Without a nautical chart or compass, they can tell where they are and which way to go by translating beautiful, twinkling stars into a map in their mind. They say that the navigation is based on two spatial perceptions: finding the 'position' and 'course' of the ship. In ancient times, voyagers made navigation possible by reading various signs from nature—heavenly bodies, wind and waves, swell, tidal currents, color of the sea water, birds and fish, even smells of the land.

### Kaday Village culture tour

Experience all the traditional culture at once!

This is a place where you can experience a variety of things in one place, not just watching women in colorful grass skirts sitting in a circle making baskets out of banana leaves and children performing traditional dances, but also chewing betel nuts which have a mild anesthetic effect. Kaday Village is located in Weloy, the western side of Yap Island, where you can see the well-preserved stone paths, stone money, recently rebuilt magnificent *p'ebay* and *faluw* on the beach.



### Sunset Beach

Watch the flaming sunset on a tropical beach

After a long day of sightseeing, it is time to watch the sunset. Because this beach faces west, it is perfect to watch the sunset. Sunset Beach is located in Kaday Village on the west side of Yap Island. There is a small cottage on the beach where you can relax in the shade while looking at the sea. You can also enjoy snorkeling at a spot which used to be a mangrove forest.



### Kayak Tours

Explore the rich natural beauty of Yap by kayak

Take your kayak and head out to the mangrove forest across the blue sea! Paddling through quiet mangrove channels will make you feel so calm and peaceful. The mangrove forest is the best place to "recharge your body and mind" which have become tired from your everyday life. You can also explore the unique nature and eco-system of Yap by kayaking around the quiet inner bay, which is protected by coral reefs and mangroves. You can pull in at villages to visit traditional meeting houses or go snorkeling on the way.





# CHUUK

To the universe of water  
that draws you in

## About CHUUK



## Venice in the South Seas

During your quick 90-minute flight from Guam to Chuuk State, you'll see a stunning view of the atolls that surround the islands in the deep blue sea. Weno Island, the capital of Chuuk, is one of the world's largest atolls. The closer you get to the island, the more excited you'll be by the spectacular sight. Chuuk State consists of six main islands and numerous atolls. The population is about 54,000 people across the many islands, although some are uninhabited. The pleasure of travelling by boat from one island to the next seeking more exciting things will remind you of Venice in Italy.

## Traditional practices that have protected the natural environment of Chuuk

Chuukese culture in particular cherish their traditional practices called Mechen for coastal areas and Pwau for terrestrial areas, which protect their precious natural environment. When a key clan or family member becomes diseased, they close their own land or sea for a certain period of time at their discretion. When they exercise Mechen or Pwau, the specified area becomes strictly off limits. This also means that no hunting or gathering can take place in the area for a certain period of time. The system and traditional wisdoms have been a major force helping regional revitalization and protecting the whole natural environment of Chuuk.



## Wonder

## Jeep Island -Experience your dream deserted island stay!

**Sleep on a beach  
under the wonderful starry sky**

Jeep Island is about 100m in circumference and takes less than 3 minutes to walk around. Here, you can find beauty in everything—sunrise and sunset over the horizon, coral reefs, crystal clear water, the sound of the waves and more. Rainwater stored in tanks is for your daily use, and you will be provided with a bucket of water each day to wash your body and clothes. The island was once selected as No. 1 on Fuji TV's show

"The 100 Best Views in the World: 100 Places to See Before You Die" and has become popular. Both day trips and overnight stays are available, either alone or with a loved one, you can enjoy the ultimate healing paradise.

## The luxury of "Disconnecting"

No Internet, no running water, and no electricity. Jeep Island and the other uninhabited islands of Chuuk are nothing like well-developed beach resorts, but there are special things that you can only experience here. The view surrounded by the sea on all sides is spectacular. Enjoy having a sleep in, or watching the bright sunrise. Snorkel among the coral reef encounter countless colorful fish and take a nap after lunch. While watching the sunset, you can enjoy a BBQ with a beer. How about laying down on a beach bed and going to sleep while watching the star-filled night sky? Just like a Japanese teahouse, the island is a place which relaxes and sharpens your mind and reminds you that because it is a small space, you can see the whole world.



# Culture & Charm

[Underwater Museum]

## Visit the world’s largest wreck diving mecca

Chuuk Lagoon is a popular spot called an “underwater museum” and is known as the world’s best shipwreck diving destination, attracting many divers from all over the world. A total of 80 wrecks, including battleships, tankers and cargo ships, lie on the seabed. With so many wrecks, there is rarely a crowd of divers in one spot allowing divers to take their time and enjoy fantastic diving. The wrecks are now the home of a wide variety of fish, so you can encounter schools of fish and also kaleidoscope-like colorful coral reef.

## Experience the world of what James Cameron, the director of the movie “Titanic” has seen

During the Japanese occupation, Chuuk Lagoon (formerly Truk Islands) was a strategic place for the Japanese navy with a huge base and many ships anchored there. Even now, 70 years later, an enormous number of wartime artifacts still remain in the wrecks, telling the story of Japan and the islands of Micronesia. The most famous wreck in the atoll is the Fujikawa Maru, a former Japanese naval aircraft ferry, and it is over 130m long. The ship has been preserved in its original form and divers can even enter the wheelhouse and engine room. Some of the scenes of the sunken Titanic were filmed on these wrecks, including the Fujikawa Maru. As a side note, James’s autographed t-shirt is on the wall of a bar on Weno Island which he often visited.

[Fishing]

## Catch a big fish at one of the world’s best fishing spots

From catch-and-release recreational fishing to game fishing like catching marlin, you can enjoy a variety of fishing experiences. Bottom fishing, bait casting and trolling are the options depending on the season, fishing method and time of day. Fishing is one of the most popular activities among visitors to Chuuk. You can catch

Giant Trevally every day. You can also join fishing tournaments which welcome tourists.



### A story beyond time and space between Heian Maru in Chuuk Lagoon and Hikawa Maru in Yokohama

The 160m long Heian Maru is one of the largest wrecks in Chuuk Lagoon. The Heian Maru, a naval special submarine tender, was attacked by US forces and sank to the bottom of the sea. Amazingly, the ship is actually a sister ship of the Hikawa Maru, an item classified as Important Cultural Property of Japan, which has been moored in Yamashita Park (Naka-ku, Yokohama). Because the two ships were built from same drawings, they are identical in shape. They were named after Hikawa Shrine and Heian Shrine. After seeing the Heian Maru in Chuuk Lagoon, it would be interesting to see the Hikawa Maru in Japan for comparison. You can feel the history of Japan and the FSM hidden in these two ships.

[Star Watching]

## The world’s largest 360-degree planetarium!

Star watching on a deserted island is just like visiting the world’s largest and most beautiful planetarium. Shooting stars are rare in the city, but here they appear so often that you can hardly keep up with your wishes. You can see the three-dimensional view of constellations such as the Milky Way and even the Southern Cross clearly, although the time of its appearance varies according to the season.



CHUUK

[Snorkeling]

### Thanks to the blessings of nature!

Chuuk Lagoon is an atoll with shallow waters and clear, calm waves, making it a perfect place for snorkeling. The beautiful ocean with colorful fish is just a few steps away. If you are a beginner, a professional instructor will be happy to help. All the equipment you need for snorkeling and diving is available for hire on the island.



### [Swimming with dolphins] Maybe they have telepathy?

Swimming with dolphins is one of the most popular activities. When you go out to the sea by boat, you’ll meet a pod of curious dolphins that will spin around in the water, and play with you. They have remarkable communication skills that make you wonder if they are telepathic. When there are no waves, it will be easier to spot the dolphin’s dorsal fins.

## To Do List

[Kimishima Atoll]

### Miracles of crystal clear water and big fish

If you visit Jeep Island, you’d better visit Kimishima Atoll. You can enjoy both diving and snorkeling in water with a visibility of at least 80m. Return to nature and play with the fish swimming around you. You can see schools of bluefin trevally, barracuda, and sometimes manta rays, whale sharks, blue marlin, giant groupers over 2m long, black whales and more!

## Discover more fascinating islands



### Pisar Island

The island is situated near the open sea and is larger than the other islands, offering visitors a more dynamic deserted island experience. The vast shallow water and the white sandy beaches are particularly beautiful.

### Fonomu Island

Fonomu Island is another place where you can stay overnight and enjoy a deserted island lifestyle. This island is larger than Jeep Island and offers a more spacious atmosphere. There are two private rooms for couples to make it feel like a beach resort. You will be surrounded by beautiful coral, the sea and starry night sky.



## Take a legend home with you! Handicrafts that tell stories

### Chuukese traditional way of saying I Love You Love Stick

A long time ago, Chuukese people lived in houses made of woven palm leaves. Each man had a long stick with a jagged end. These sticks, called love sticks, were carved in a different shape for each man, so that when he met a woman he liked, he would show her the stick and she would remember the shape. At night, he would go to her thatch hut and push the carved stick through the wall to snag her hair and see how she would react. The woman could then feel the shape of the stick and would pull it if she wanted to say ‘yes’ or would push it back to say ‘no’. This was how a man and woman became a couple. Today, this custom no longer exists. If you find a small version of a love stick in a souvenir shop, get it for your loved one and tell them this story.



### Charm against evil spirits Devil Mask

There once lived ghosts who did bad things on the island. People made devil masks to ward them off. The ghosts were scared of the masks and ran away and never came back. Since then, these masks have been displayed in many places in Chuuk to ward off evil spirits. It is believed that a pair of devil masks, one male and one female, must be used together for them to be effective.



### Chuukese Legend

Once upon a time, a horrible ogre lived on a hill on the island of Patta, looking down on the cape of the island. This cape was an important part to cross from one side of the island to the other. The ogre was so feared because he would snatch any goods carried by people trying to get to the other side of the island. One night an old lady, who could not bear the situation anymore, brought her two turtles and had them dig into the hard rock under the cape from both sides. The turtles worked hard all night and finally managed to connect the tunnel. Thanks to the turtles, people were able to use the tunnel to travel back and forth without going through the dangerous cape. The legendary tunnel still exists today and is used by the people on the island.

### CHUUK Visitors Bureau

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# POHNPEI

Paradise of mountains, sea and rainbows

Wonder

World Heritage Site!

## Nan Madol, the mysterious ancient coral reef city

Explore a megalithic civilization with many wonders and legends!

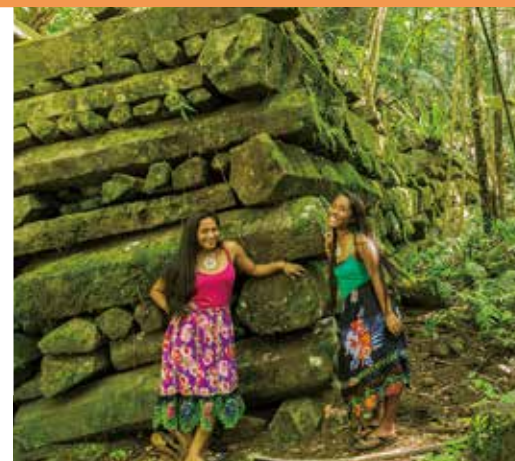
Here in Pohnpei there is a megalithic civilization registered as a World Heritage site that is not so well known. Its name is Nan Madol, meaning ‘between heaven and earth’. Nan Madol is the largest archaeological site in the Pacific region. According to radiocarbon analyses by archaeologists, Nan Madol was constructed over a period of about 1000 years, from the 6th to 16th century. It is situated in the south-east end of Pohnpei consisting of 95 artificial islands, over a huge area in a vast shallow sea. Each of the artificial islands had its own role—palaces, royal residences, tombs, guardhouses and meeting houses. It is said that people used to come and go by canoes. In 2016, the ruins were added to the UNESCO World Heritage sites and have become a must-see destination for anyone visiting Pohnpei.

### Where did the huge stones come from and how did they get here?

The architecture of numerous stacks of huge, hexagonal basalt columns on top of each other remains on the artificial islands. The quarries were more than 10km away from the site. How did people transport such huge stones, some weighing up to 5 tons? Unfortunately, the details are still unknown. According to one theory, the stones were hung from rafts by ropes and submerged beneath the water, just like the story of stone money on Yap Island. If they put the stones on their canoes, they would’ve sunk. How were they brought and assembled? It is still unclear.

### Stones flew in the sky! A space where heaven (God) and earth (people) are linked

Nan Madol means space between gods and humans. As the traditional story goes, one day, two brothers arrived in Pohnpei by canoe from the west with many servants, seeking a place to build a political and economic center. After several false starts, the brothers were finally able to find an ideal place and the construction began. According to the legend, the construction of many artificial islands was too difficult for the men to complete on their own, so God was called upon to help. When the brothers recited the spell, stones flew one after the other and fell on into their allocated locations. It is believed that the vast ruins were built in this way, and even today, the islanders regard this place as being special and sacred.



### Is this where the Ryugu Castle was?

Nan Madol is also believed to be the model of Ryugu Castle from a Japanese fairy tale “Urashima Taro”. Local elders say the legend of this sacred city that sank to the bottom of the sea is similar to Ryugu Castle’s story. Some even say the legend tells that the old name of an island near Nan Madol was “Uranoshima”.

### Highly valued members of society

The current Nahnmwarki, or the village chief, can be traced back to the king of Nan Madol. Most parts of Pohnpeian society are still divided into 12 hierarchies with Nahnmwarki, at the top. As in the other states, residents pay respect to their superiors also, members of the tribe support each other. Thanks to this tradition, there was an abundance of food which may be one reason most had no difficulty making a living. This made everyone a valued member of society.

### About POHNPEI



#### Pohnpei



Whether you are an explorer, nature lover, diver or surfer, Pohnpei Island offers something for every style of traveler. Activities of excellent quality are available here—diving, snorkeling, kayaking, fishing, surfing, swimming in the sea on deserted islands, hiking, exploring a World Heritage site, viewing waterfalls, joining a local food tour and more. Pohnpei means ‘upon (pohn) a stone altar (pei)’. The capital of the FSM, Palikir, is located on Pohnpei Island, which is approximately 20km in diameter and surrounded by an emerald green sea. The island is known as the “Flower Garden of the Pacific” because of the abundance and beauty of its flowers. It has the highest mountains of the FSM and the rainfall is one of the highest in the world, making this small island home to over 40 rivers and the lush rainforests. The intricate coastline surrounded by mangroves creates numerous water currents that carry nutrients into the vast lagoon.





# Culture & Charm

## Immense richness of the sea and mountains

### Explore the bounty of nature

Pohnpei Island is situated right in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and has a typical oceanic climate. Since the island is surrounded by the sea, there is a pleasant breeze and the temperature rarely rises above 35°C. The annual precipitation is about 10,000mm with 300 rainy days, making it one of the wettest regions in the world. As a result of this enormous rainfall, over 40 rivers and waterfalls have been created, forming beautiful and rich mountain forests. The island is blessed with water, greenery and a wide variety of flowers, fruits, plants and animals.

### Mountain Side

Relieving your stress at spiritual places filled with the negative ion power of waterfalls



### Kepirohi Falls

This is the most popular waterfall of all, on the island of Pohnpei. As you enter the jungle along the river from the island-circle road, you will encounter a waterfall with a large volume of water. It's refreshing and beautiful to see a huge amount of water splashing down on the 20m high basalt rock face. The basin of the waterfall is a natural swimming pool with freshwater fish swimming around. If you have time, it's not a bad idea to spend half a day at the waterfall full of negative ions.



### Pahn Takai Waterfall and Cave

A challenging 30-minute hike through the rainforest jungle leads you to the beautiful waterfall and cave of Pahn Takai, meaning 'under the rock'. You will climb up and down on a path like an animal trail. The waterfall is about 50m high and the cave is situated right behind the waterfall which is more than 300m across, connecting to an old battlefield. The power of nature is so impressive that it's worth the effort to get there.



### Must-try foods in Pohnpei

#### Local Food & Drink

#### Pohnpei Pepper

The secret of the rare and aromatic, Pohnpei pepper, is that people on the island grow and care for them using no pesticides or chemical fertilizers and handpick the peppercorns one by one. Be sure to taste pepper dishes, such as pepper tuna steak during your visit, it also makes a great souvenir.

### Karat Banana, the king of bananas

There are about 50 varieties of bananas in the FSM, some unique to this region. One species called Karat is particularly delicious. It looks black on the outside, but from the inside comes a dark yellow, creamy flesh with a reddish tinge. When you scoop it with a spoon and eat it, you will taste the sweet, rich banana-flavor. Serving chilled with a squeeze of lime on top makes it an excellent dessert.



### Let's try out a sakau bar

Sakau is a drink made by pounding the roots of the pepper plant on a basalt stone, soaking it in water, wrapping it up in hibiscus bark and then squeezing it. It was originally a drink served in religious rituals, important events and festivals.

In recent times, drinking sakau is a part of many people's daily life. It does not contain any alcohol, but has an anesthetic effect, which makes you feel good and calm. There are many sakau bars in Pohnpei, so it's worth a try.



### Discover Pohnpei, the Flower Garden of the Pacific

Step outside your hotel and you will see more than 600 species of trees, tropical shrubs and flowers in bloom. Everywhere you look you will find a wide variety of tropical plants, such as orchid species, including Hong Kong orchids, hibiscus, iron trees, eucalyptus, honduran mahogany, papaya, bananas, coconuts and plumeria.



### Making mwaramwar (flower headdresses)

When visiting Pohnpei try wearing a mwaramwar, a headdress made of colorful flowers and leaves, which has been a fashionable icon of the island. People on the island wear these for ceremonies such as welcome parties and weddings, and also as an accessory in everyday life. Mwaramwar is a fashion item that uplifts the feelings not only for women but also for men. It is very sustainable as it will easily biodegrade after use.



### Would you like to meet The God of eels?

In some river areas of Gifu and Yamagata prefectures in Japan, local people don't eat eels which are considered to be divine messengers. Here in Pohnpei, eels are also considered to be sacred divine messengers. Maybe because of this, no one catches them and the eels in this waterfall basin are surprisingly thick and large.



Pohnpei Surf Club



### [Surfing]

## Must-visit destination for every surfer

Pohnpei Surf Club, a surf camp on Pohnpei Island, has been selected as the world's best surf camp by Surfer Magazine.

The island offers the perfect waves that will satisfy professional surfers. It is also famous as a filming location for magazines and DVDs. Some Japanese surfers are enthusiastic about visiting Pohnpei every year. Even surfers from the North Shore of Hawaii flock to these waters. The water is quite beautiful and the waves are amazing.

### Sea Side

Pohnpei Island has so much to offer - Why not enjoy the sea too!



### [Ant Atoll]

## Must visit Ant Atoll which is known as No. 1 for its beauty!

Ant Atoll is a small uninhabited atoll located in the open sea. Once you have overcome the hurdles to get there, you will be rewarded with white sandy beaches and emerald blue waters, the most miraculous sea in the FSM. Blue sky, blue sea, white clouds and green atoll—all perfectly match and amplify its charm. In addition to its beauty, the atoll is home to many colorful tropical fish and you can enjoy snorkeling and diving with dolphins, stingrays and sharks.

## Pohnpei is also a great place for diving!

The island is surrounded by mangrove forests which give nutrients to the sea. The number of fish, including barracuda and other migratory fish, is the highest in Micronesia during the summer. You will see reef fish swarming over the pristine coral with a high chance of spotting schools of fish.

## From small to big fish, Pohnpei offers a wide variety of fishing experiences.

Even beginners can try catching a variety of fish, from coral reef fish to giant trevally and tuna. Bottom fishing, bait casting and trolling are the options depending on the season, fishing method and time of day. Fishing is one of the most popular activities among tourists visiting the FSM. A number of tournaments are held each year in which tourists can participate.



### POHNPEI Visitors Bureau

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# KOSRAE

The perfect balance between spiritual forests and cheerful smiles!

## About KOSRAE



Explore sparkling Kosrae Island known as the “Jewel of Micronesia”



Kosrae Island, a small island known as the “Jewel of Micronesia” for the sparkling beauty of its coral reefs. The island is located in the easternmost part of the FSM and is famous for its magnificent nature, including the world’s most pristine mangrove forests and tropical rainforests. It is also known as the “Coral Kingdom” as over 200 different species of vibrant corals are growing all around the island. Here, even if you don’t do any water sports, you can still enjoy the nature and friendly smiles of the islanders. There are even more fascinating places, such as the forests full of spiritual legends.

## Wonder

Feel the spirits of the mystical forest!

Explore the hidden world of Yela forest on Kosrae

Yela forest is not accessible by land, so visitors must travel by boat at high tide through the mangrove forest, first to a way station and then walk through a wetland. The adventure continues when the boat goes up the river with the sun shining through the trees. The fantastical Yela forest is a protected area and is home to some species of rare birds.

Amazing! Ka trees

When you walk through the Yela forest, you will come across strange shaped trees called “Ka”. This tree is an endemic species only found in this place around the world, and it is a symbol of Kosrae’s vitality. The trees were once used to make canoes, but because of their rarity, it is now

forbidden to cut them down. The distinguishing feature of this tree is its magnificent roots that are 3 to 4m long. If you tap on the roots, you will hear a mysterious knocking sound as if there is a spirit inside the thick roots. Many of the roots have very unusual shapes.

Legend of the dwarfs

There is a legend that dwarfs used to live in the forest of Yela. According to the legend, these dwarfs used to help an old man who lived in the forest to build canoes. When you visit Kosrae, you must come to this forest and listen to the mystical whispers of the spirits as you purify your mind while forest bathing.



## Jungle Treks to Menke Ruins

Treks to the Menke Ruins are also fun. You will get your feet wet crossing mountain streams, meet monitor lizards up to 2m long and find mysterious ‘rainbow trees’ which have trunks of seven colors. It’s like an adventure tour. The jungle will be more beautiful after the rain with the rainbow trees turning into bright colors. You will also see rare plants such as pinecone gingers which can be used as shampoo.

Impressed by the rainbow trees in the rainbow country!



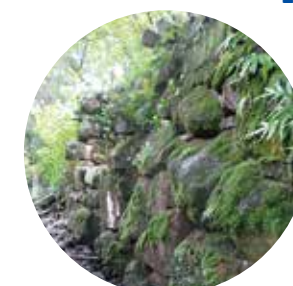
## More than 100 sacred worship places at Menke Ruins

Menke Ruins, built around 1400, may be the oldest ruins in Micronesia. One of the features is that Menke existed as a place of worshipping Sinlaku, the goddess of the breadfruit tree. There are more than 100 stone-piled altars of about 3.6m in width in the jungle. Unlike Nan Madol which was built with basalt stones, Menke was built with river stones. There are still many unanswered questions about the purpose and use of each ruin, which are still under investigation by American research teams. It is said that the role of Menke Ruins ended in the 1800’s when Christianity was introduced to the island.



## Lelu Ruins, a Marvel of the Pacific

The ruins are believed to have belonged to an ancient kingdom that ruled the whole of Micronesia around 1400. It features 6m high stone walls built with huge basalt stones piled on top of one another to enclose the area. Inside the walls there are canals, waterways, tombs and living spaces. The origins remain a mystery thus being known as a “Marvel of the Pacific”. Lelu Ruins is quite similar to Nan Madol Ruins on Pohnpei, but as Kosrae is situated at the easternmost part, they may have been built for a defensive purpose.





# Culture & Charm

## Welcome to the Coral Kingdom

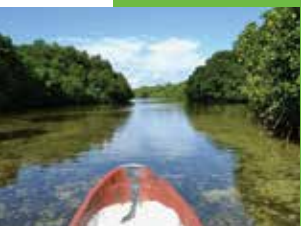
### Popular marine activities

When you make your way to the island of Kosrae, you must try at least one marine activity. The island is surrounded by beautiful coral reefs and clear, blue waters so you can enjoy a wide variety of marine activities—scuba diving, snorkeling, fishing, SUP (stand up paddleboard), kayaking and sunset cruises.

## The only place to dive and snorkel in the “Coral Kingdom”

No matter where you dive—on the east, west, north, or south of the island—you will find over 200 different types of pristine corals in the sea of Kosrae, known as the Coral Kingdom. The visibility of the blue waters is astonishing. It is always at least 30m and sometimes over 100m depending on the day. What makes this place unique is the very large untouched corals which grow upward in colonies close to shore.

## Discover the art of coral reefs at Dwarf Forest

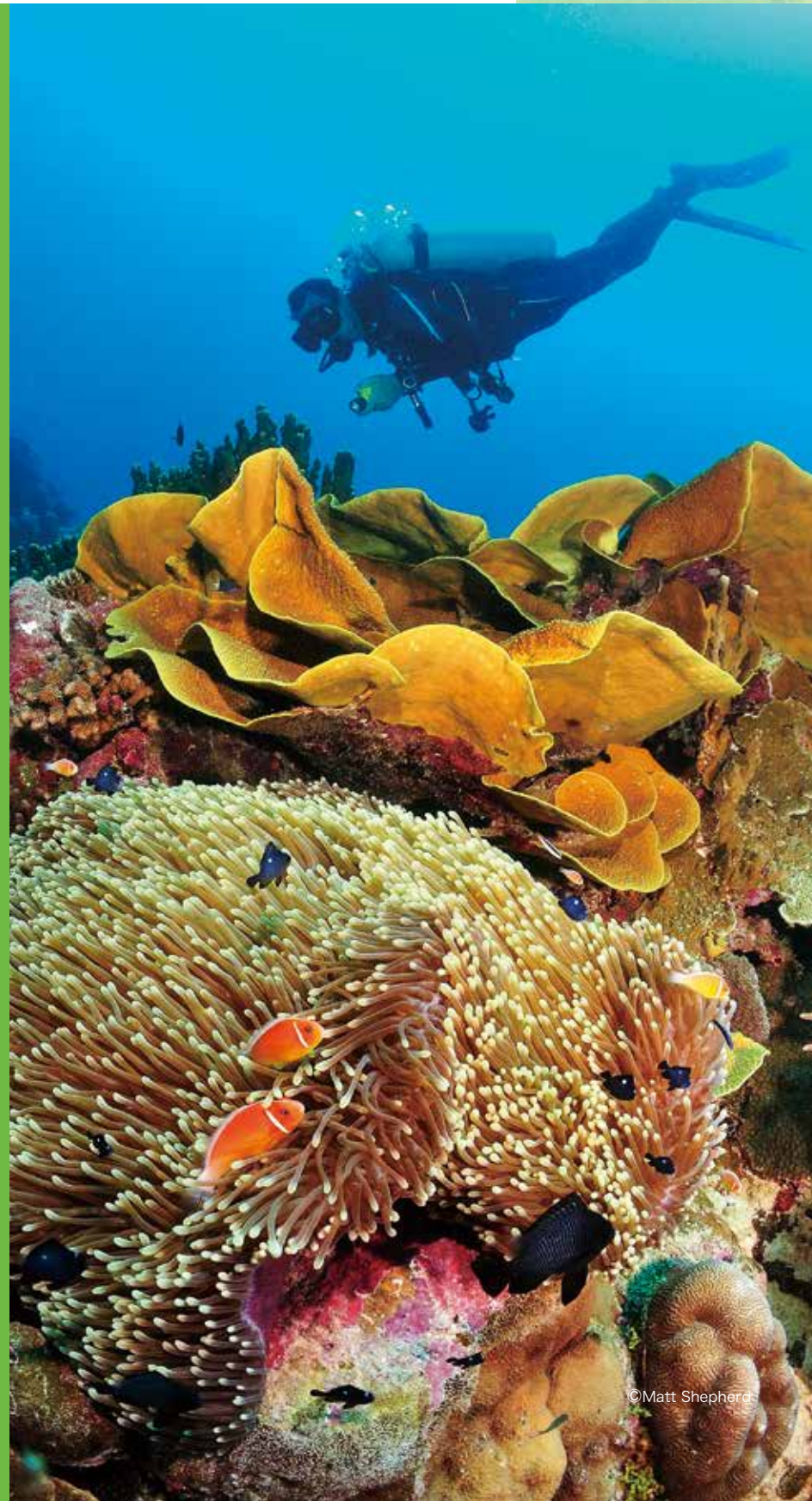


A must-visit diving spot is Dwarf Forest, which was named after the legendary dwarves which are believed to live in the Yela forest. You will dive under the mangrove forest, but the

water is incredibly clear and the corals grow in colonies, which will look like castles or pyramids, or even the artwork of Gaudi's Sagrada Familia.

## Snorkeling in a secret spot

You can also snorkel in the Utwe lagoon, which is one of UNESCO's Biosphere Reserves. This is a secret spot originally discovered by local tour guides, where you can snorkel safely in the shallow waters of the inland sea. In addition to the colorful fish and corals, you can also see amazing roots of mangroves while snorkeling, which will be a precious experience. You can also take a boat to the open sea and enjoy snorkeling at the diving spots.



©Matt Shepherd

### Sunset cruise with the view of Sleeping Lady

Experience a two-hour cruise around Lelu Bay while watching the sunset over the Sleeping Lady, a mountain range looking like a sleeping woman which includes Mt. Finkol, the highest peak on the island. The tour includes light meals and drinks.



### Let's explore dense mangrove forests on a canoe tour

The tour begins at Utwe harbor and will take you out of the big bay into the narrow maze-like mangrove channels. Then a jungle cruise through the dense mangrove forest will start. The light and shadow of the mangroves reflected on the water surface will be like a kaleidoscope.



## To Do List

### Enjoy the luxury of stillness on Sunday in Kosrae Christian Sunday

With a population of about 6,600, almost all residents are devout Protestants. On Sundays, shops and restaurants are closed. The Sabbath is considered to be a day of “no work” so they refrain from work as well as household chores such as cooking and washing, while the people go to church. Eating Kosraean traditional soup cooked the day before for breakfast is a long-standing custom. The beautiful hymn melodies sung at church will refresh your mind. Bright smiles of the friendly residents and children are just as wonderful. The abundant nature and the smiles will give you plenty of relaxation!



### Legend of the Kushushu petal

According to legend, when a couple found out that they couldn't get married because of their parents' disapproval, they split a petal in half to keep as a memento of their last meeting. Since then, the petals of the Kushushu flower have been split in half.



## Must-try foods when you visit Kosrae Local Food & Drink

### Kosrae soup

It is like a tropical version of porridge and very tasty. The ingredients are coconut cream, rice and tuna. Because of their religious culture, Kosraeans prepare the soup on Saturday and eat it on Sunday, which is the same way as the Japanese traditional Osechi dishes.



### Tangerine

Kosraean tangerines are said to have been brought from Kagoshima, Japan in the 1920s. The peel remains green, so you may think they are not ripe even though they are ready to eat. It's sweet and very juicy. Interestingly, Kosrae is the only island within the FSM where they are found.



### Breadfruit and umu (earth oven) cooking

There are many ways to eat breadfruit—baked, steamed or made into chips—and all are delicious. There are two accounts for the origin of the name: one is that it looks like bread when steamed, and the other is that it is often eaten like bread in everyday life. Umu is a traditional Micronesian method of cooking pork, fish and starches wrapped in coconut leaves and steamed on hot stones placed on the ground. When breadfruit is cooked this way, it turns out to have a soft and fluffy texture.



### Fafa

Fafa is one of the local dishes loved by the people of Kosrae. First, they put steamed taro and bananas in a special bowl and pound it with a wooden pounder. The mixture is then shaped into small balls. It is served with sweet syrup made from coconut milk. This is a very nutritious and delicious Kosraean specialty. You must try it!



## Coconut trees are a gift from God!

People on the island use Coconut trees for everything in their lives. The liquid inside young coconuts is so rich in nutrients that it can be called a 'natural sports drink'. As the coconuts mature, the liquid turns into coconut oil. Firstly, the oil is used to make fire, the basis of life. It is also used in cooking and as a hair conditioner. In addition, the hard part around the coconut meat is used as a bowl to serve meals. In other states, even alcohol is made from these trees. The leaf of the tree itself is used as building materials for houses, the trunk for pillars and the leaves for roofs. It is a versatile plant that has nothing to waste.



### Green banana paper products

People on the island produce environmentally friendly products these days, which are now popular souvenirs. Paper is made from banana stem fibers using the Japanese paper making technique, and wallets, pouches and letter writing sets, etc. are made from this paper.



### KOSRAE Visitors Bureau

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# Travel Information



**Access**  
3.5 hour flight from airports in Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka and Fukuoka to Guam. Change planes at Guam airport and fly onward to Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei or Kosrae.

**Travel Time**

Guam ↔ Yap : About 1 hour and 35 minutes  
Guam ↔ Chuuk : About 1 hour and 40 minutes  
Guam ↔ Pohnpei (via Chuuk) : About 2 hours and 30 minutes  
Guam ↔ Kosrae (via Chuuk and Pohnpei) : about 3 hours and 30 minutes

The United Airlines "Island Hopper" from Honolulu to Guam could be the world's most scenic flight. The view from the plane is beautiful and spectacular. The blue waters and white sandy beaches of the islands made of coral reefs are so fantastic that they seem to be out of this world.

## 8 Tips to Enjoy the FSM

### 1. Don't forget to take the necessary steps for travel!

Your passport must be valid for at least 120 days plus the number of days you wish to stay in the country, and a visa is not required for stays of less than 30 days. When leaving the country, you will have to pay the following departure taxes in each state, so make sure you have enough US dollars left in your wallet.  
Yap: \$10 (US\$) Pohnpei: \$20 (US\$)  
Chuuk: \$20 (US\$) Kosrae: \$15 (US\$)  
\*As of March 2021

### 2. Exchange your money into US dollars before you enter the country!

The US dollar is the currency of the FSM. You cannot exchange yen into US dollars in the country, so be sure to have US dollars ready before arriving. Credit cards are accepted in hotels, tour companies and tourist attractions, but are not accepted in many small shops and restaurants.

### 3. Tip appropriately!

Tipping is not customary among local people, but it is common for tourists to leave a tip. The accepted standard is \$1 for each bed making in a hotel, and \$1 to \$2 to be left on a table after dinner at a restaurant.

### 4. Be careful when taking photographs

Do not point your camera at people, private houses and other things related to their privacy. Always follow the instructions of your tour guide and obtain people's permission when taking photographs.

### 5. Bottled water is safe for drinking

Tap water is not suitable for drinking except in some areas. Use filtered drinking water provided by the hotel or bottled water sold in shops.

### 6. Beware of entering private property without permission

Most of the land in the FSM is privately owned, except for some of the downtown areas and main roads, and entering private property without the owner's or manager's permission will be viewed as rude and disrespectful. To visit sightseeing spots around each island, you should join a tour organized by a tour company or hotel, or hire a tour guide. If you follow the local rules, people will be friendly and welcoming.

### 7. Dress appropriately

Light clothes, such as T-shirts, are recommended. The temperature in the FSM does not drop much throughout the year. Women should refrain from wearing mini-skirts or shorts, as exposing their skin is considered taboo. Sarongs will be handy. For outdoor activities, bring a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen. It is bad manners to wear only swimwear in public, except in certain places such as tourist beaches and on boats. When you leave the beach or boat, you should wear shirt and trousers or a towel.

### 8. Watch out for littering

Littering in public places such as streets and parks is against the law in Yap State, and if you are found littering, you will be fined. In any case, it is important to travel in an environmentally conscious manner.

## Basic information

### Time difference

The FSM has two time zones.  
Yap and Chuuk are UTC +10 hours (Japan time +1 hour)  
Pohnpei and Kosrae are UTC +11 hours (Japan time +2 hours)

### Telecommunications

Television, fixed line telephone, cellular phone, fax and Internet (FSM Telecom) services are available across Micronesia. Visit Telecom's information page below, which provides information on restaurants, hotels, etc. in the country.  
<http://www.fm/>  
\*The ccTLD assigned to the FSM is ".fm".  
A popular domain used by FM radio stations, etc. in the world

### Electricity

Standard 110V and US type outlets are used  
(Japanese type outlets can also be used)

For questions about traveling to the FSM, tourism, investment and development, please contact the Embassy of the Federated States of Micronesia.

### Embassy of the Federated States of Micronesia in Japan

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