War in the Pacific

BY AIR, SEA, AND LAND, World War II’s devastation tore across the Pacific Ocean on a scale never before experienced in human history. The warring nations—the United States, Japan, British Empire, Netherlands, and many others—were based thousands of miles away. Caught in the crossfire were the people of the Pacific Islands in whose homelands and waters combat raged for four years.

Hours after their surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, Japan bombed the US Territory of Guam, and within two days invaded the island. Like countless indigenous people occupied by invaders, the Chamorros endured the destruction of their homes and livelihoods, forced labor, imprisonment, and executions. On July 21, 1944, US forces returned to retake the island.

War in the Pacific National Historical Park commemorates the bravery and sacrifice of all those who participated in or were affected by World War II in Pacific Theater campaigns. The park conserves and interprets Guam’s outstanding places, artifacts, history, and culture. Throughout the park are remnants of combat and occupation—artillery, earthenworks, battlefields—slowly succumbing to the elements. What endures is the spirit, dignity, and bravery of those caught up in a world at war.

FOR THE PEOPLE OF GUAM, WAR CAME EARLY AND STAYED LATE

1941
Dec. 7
USN Governor of Guam, Okinawa.

1942
Jan. 10
McMillin

Feb.–March
Japanese

Japanese Occupier

March
Anti-Aircraft Missiles
Japanese return to Guam to reinforce southern Marianas. Social activist
are burned, mothers hanged, those closed, laborers at bayonet
point, Chamorros

April
12–13
The decisive American victory in the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal prevents Japanese
victories.

May 4–8
Perish in 62-mile forced

June
15
US forces invade

Aug. 10
US declares war on

1943
Under Asitali rule,

June 15
US forces invade

Aug. 10
US declares war on

Aug. 15
US drops atomic

1944
March 4
Anti-Aircraft Missiles

July 21
US forces return to

Aug. 21
Japanese

Aug. 23
Japanese

1944–49
144 persons,

Through the years, Guam suffered the brunt of "war's violence. The Japanese had killed and captured thousands; their occupation

A decade was sent out that night that all men should go work in the Soap Factory. . . . Mama would go from house to house with the samples for collecting all the ashes for the soap. We used the soap in labor, of course, or to wash clothes or when bathing. . . . My brother was killed by the Japanese at age six.

In order to support my mother had a soap factory. . . . Mama would go from house to house with the soap samples to collect all the ashes for the soap. We used the soap in labor, of course, or to wash clothes or when bathing. . . . My brother was killed by the Japanese at age six.

They fought together as brothers in arms; they died together and now they sleep side by side . . . To them we have a solemn obligation—the obligation to ensure that their sacrifices will help make this a better and safer world in which to live.

—First Adm. Chester W. Nimitz, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Area, 1945

Under Japanese occupation, Chamorros were subjected to harassment, beating, torture, and execution. They were segregated into forced labor camps that were some of the hardest and most brutal in the Pacific theater.

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Visit of WWII Invasion beach from Asan Bay Overlook

Memorial Wall bas-relief sculpture, Asan Bay Overlook

Japanese 14-cm coastal defense gun, Piti Point

Japanese 20-cm coastal gun at Guam Point

### Explore and More

Aerial and naval barrages—Amphibious assaults—Hard Jingle fighting against well-armed Japanese forces. The events on Guam echo the island-to-island combat throughout the Pacific, with Japanese successfully defending the island. This is a testament to the determination of the Japanese forces.

**ASAN BEACH UNIT**

On July 21, 1944, US Navy ships bombarded the island while the US Third Marine Division rushed to make a beachhead here. The remains of hidden strongholds, caves, and tunnels; they are open or enter any caves at your own risk. For your safety do not enter any caves if you have any questions.

**AGAT UNIT**

A significant Japanese stronghold defended the bay. Elaborate camouflage made it all the more deadly to advancing US Marines and Army forces joined in pushing the Japanese troops to the northern end of the island.

**PATROLMEN WHO Fought ON Guam**

The Liberators’ Memorial at Asan Point, installed for the 50th anniversary of the battle, honors the US military and Chamorro Patrolmen who fought on the island.

**ASAN RIDGE TRAIL**

This path leads you to the remnants of hidden strongholds, caves, and tunnels. Some lands in the park are privately owned. Please respect these property rights and do not trespass.

**LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS**

The park allows access by local organizations for cultural and natural resource projects in their original noncommercial usages. Access to the park ranger if you have questions.

**ASAN INLAND UNIT**

Dense jungle growth and seabirds seaward obese this site where entrenched Japanese troops attacked US Marines fighting to take the high ground.

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