

**c. 2000 BC:** The Chamorro, an Austronesian people sailing from the Philippines, are the first known humans to reach and settle in the Marianas including Guam, the largest island in Micronesia.

**March 6, 1521:** Ferdinand Magellan's expedition arrives at Guam after a 99-day crossing of the Pacific from Patagonia. This marks the first European contact with the island and the beginning of 350 years of Spanish hegemony. Guam is largely neglected for over a century while the neighboring Philippines emerge as the treasure chest of the Spanish East Indies.

**1668:** The Spanish finally establish a formal colony in Guam, introducing major cultural changes, as well as the introduction of diseases which drastically reduced the Chamorro population.

**1898:** The Spanish-American War leads to U.S. forces landing unopposed on Guam and a bloodless surrender as the Spanish officials on Guam were unaware that Spain and the U.S. were at war.

**1899:** With U.S. victory in the War, the island - along with Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines - is ceded to the USA, marking the beginning of American hegemony. The island is administered by the U.S. Navy, with relatively authoritarian rule and limited civil rights for its inhabitants. Nevertheless, financial and political obstacles prevent the USN from achieving the goal of building the island into 'an oceanic Singapore' and it functions primarily as a way station in the Pacific.

**1935:** The Pan Am China *Clipper* 'Flying Boat' lands in Guam after hopping from San Francisco to Oahu to Midway to Wake Island. This inaugurates trans-Pacific airmail service from San Francisco to Manila. One year later the *Clipper* would begin carrying passengers. The San Francisco-Manila air voyage took 60 hours of flying time, over a total of 6 days including re-fueling and rest stops.

**December 8, 1941:** The Japanese invade and quickly overrun and occupy poorly fortified Guam the same day they attack Pearl Harbor.

**1942-44:** The Japanese rename Guam *Omiya Jima* (Great Shrine Island) and build airfields and expand naval bases. The occupation is harsh, with significant impacts on the Chamorro population, including oppression, forced labor, forced prostitution, and cultural suppression.

**Jul 21-Aug 10, 1944:** U.S. forces recapture Guam in the Battle of Guam, at the cost of great destruction and loss of life. (2000 US troops killed, 16,000 Japanese killed, 600 civilians killed)

**1950:** The Organic Act of Guam is passed by the U.S. Congress, establishing a civilian government for the first time. Though Guam remains an unincorporated territory, this act grants a degree of self-governance. It also granted all Guamanians U.S. citizenship.

**1950s-60s:** Guam sees significant military buildup due to its strategic location, becoming a key U.S. military installation in the Pacific. This period also witnesses economic growth, cultural revival, development of tourism, and increased migration, particularly from the Philippines and other Pacific islands as COFA (the Compact of Free Association with the USA) allows residents of the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, and the Marshall Islands to freely emigrate to Guam. Guam becomes a melting pot of indigenous Chamorro, Spanish, American, Japanese, Filipino, and other Pacific Islander cultures,

**1960s-70s:** The Chamorro people begin a cultural renaissance, aiming to revive and preserve their language and traditions amidst the dominant American culture. At the same time, Guam is a key US base for support of military operations in the Vietnam War.

**1972:** Guam gets a non-voting representative in the U.S Congress.

**1980s-2000s:** Discussions and movements for greater autonomy as a Commonwealth, U.S. state, or even independent nation gain traction, though non-binding referenda indicate the majority of Guamanians support the status quo and Guam remains an unincorporated territory. The island's economy diversifies, with tourism becoming significant alongside military activities.

**2017:** Kim Jong Un threatens to nuke Guam with his new long-range missiles.

**2024:** Guam continues to be a focal point for U.S. military strategy in the Pacific, with ongoing debates about its political status, environmental concerns (e.g., the impact of the imported brown tree snake which has nearly obliterated Guam's bird population), and ongoing Chamorro cultural preservation efforts.