

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**May 9, 2024****For more information, contact:**

Dr. Carlos Madrid
Director of Research/Associate Professor
Micronesia Area Research Center
University of Guam
Tel: (671) 735-2156
Email: madridc@triton.uog.edu

UOG LAUNCHES AUGMENTED REALITY APP TO NAVIGATE HISTORIC HAGATÑA

The Micronesia Area Research Center (MARC) of the University of Guam proudly announces the public release of the App **Bisita: Historic Guam**. This free application, leveraging state-of-the-art technology, offers an immersive experience by digitally reconstructing the city of Hagåtña as it existed in 1890. With enhanced reality technology, users can explore iconic landmarks such as the Tollai Ácho' (San Antonio Bridge), the Plaza de España, the Church of the Dulce Nombre de Maria, and Fort Santa Agueda in Apugan.

It enables visitors, tourists, and local residents to embark on a virtual journey through the historical capital of the Mariana Islands. Whether from the comfort of their homes or while walking the streets of present-day Hagåtña, users can engage with the rich history and culture of the region.

Dr. Carlos Madrid, director of research and professor of Spanish Pacific History at MARC, conducted the research with the collaboration and assistance of UOG graduate JThomas R. Tyquiengco. Dr. Madrid spearheaded the development in collaboration with Isostopy, Inc., using grant funding from the Ministry of Culture of Spain. "The Bisita app is the result of years of research conducted at MARC. Historic and contemporary maps, photographs, and written records were meticulously analyzed to recreate Hagåtña's architectural landscape," stated Madrid.

The digital reconstruction unveils multiple previously unknown features of the city, including the layout of historic houses and the Almacen's shape and distribution. Moreover, the Hagåtña River, integral to the city's history from ancient times until WWII, is also featured. Sound effects, voiceovers in English and Spanish, and a timeline of Guam's history further enrich the user experience.

Dr. Fred Schumann, UOG professor and Cultural Tourism expert who also participates in the initiative, emphasizes the app's significance in sharing Guam's heritage. "This creates new ways to share Guam's rich history and culture with its residents and visitors. Enhancing their experiences at heritage sites, as this app truly does, is a critical endeavor, especially during contemporary times and changeable generations."

Bisita: Historic Guam includes a section that allows users to travel inside the Government Palace, the former colonial seat of government, with detailed recreations of its rooms and furnishings as they were in 1890.

The app's versatility extends beyond tourism and academics, potentially serving as a digital background for historical films or eventually being used in video games. Dr. Madrid envisions that app can expand to other areas and villages of Guam

“Kudos to Dr. Madrid and his research and development team on the launch of the Bisita: Historic Guam app, said UOG President Anita Borja Enriquez. “The app exemplifies the University of Guam's dedication to educational innovation and cultural preservation through the Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center. Users can immerse themselves in the Guam's past, engaging with some of our island's historical landmarks in a truly interactive and accessible way. ”

For more information, contact bisita@triton.uog.edu. Feedback is also encouraged and can be submitted until the end of May.

How to Use the Bisita: Historic Guam app:

To navigate the app, users can click on different levels or slide side to side on the touch screen to access various sections, including travel to Hagåtña, travel to the Government Palace, or travel to the Virtual Museum. Upon selecting the Travel to Hagåtña section, users should point their device screen towards a floor, table or any flat surface, allowing the grey grid to be placed on the screen. Once the grid is positioned, clicking the crossed arrows on the side banner will display on-screen controls for navigating the city. To zoom in, users can use the horizontal red bar. Additionally, other controls allow users to move up and down in the air or move forward and backward at different speeds. Users can also navigate by physically moving the device itself.

Further features of the side banner include the possibility of laying a grid of the contemporary streets of Hagåtña, or to display white vertical cones on top of some of the city's landmarks. By clicking on those cones, one can learn more about that particular location by reading the description or clicking on the voice over button. Bisita: Historic Guam features:

- Free, user-friendly, and ad-free.
- Available at Google Play Store for Android and App Store for iOS devices.
- Android:
https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.isostopysl.Bisita&pcampaignid=web_share
- iOS: <https://apps.apple.com/mx/app/bisita-historic-guam/id6448845880>

These QR codes can also serve to download it for Android and MAC devices.



For Android



For iOS

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Photo attachments:

UOG-Bisita-Photo1.PNG – The Bisita: Historic Guam mobile app showcases an augmented reality image of Hagatña in 1890, projected over contemporary Guam.

UOG-Bisita-Photo2.PNG – The Bisita: Historic Guam mobile app displays a view of the Government Palace projected over contemporary Plaza de España.

UOG-Bisita-Photo3.PNG – Dr. Carlos Madrid, Director of Research and Professor of Spanish Pacific History at the University of Guam Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center led the development of Bisita: Historic Guam, an augmented reality mobile app that accurately depicts images of Hågatña during the 1890's.

UOG-Bisita-Photo3.PNG - Dr. Carlos Madrid, Director of Research and Professor of Spanish Pacific History at the University of Guam Richard F. To11ruM1Qicr onesian Area Research Center led the development of the Bisita: Historic Guam, an augmented reality mobile app that accurately depicts interactive images and video of Hågatña during the 1890's.

UOG-Bisita-Photo4.PNG - The University of Guam held a press conference on May 9 to unveil the Bisita: Historic Guam augmented reality mobile app which accurately depicts interactive images and video of Hågatña during the 1890's. From left to right: Dr. Sharleen Santos Bamba, UOG Senior Vice President and Provost, Maria Eugenia Leon Guerrero, Hågatña Restoration and Redevelopment Authority Board of Commissioners Chairwoman, Cynthia Rapadas, Pacific Historic Parks Regional Director, Dr. Anita Borja Enriquez, UOG President, Dr. Monique Storie, University Libraries Dean, Dr. Carlos Madrid, Micronesian Area Research Center Director of Research and Professor of Spanish Pacific History, JThomas Tyquiengco, Teaching Assistant, Dr. Jose Alban, Assistant Professor of Geography, and Fr. Kenneth Carriveau, Emeritus Professor of Library Sciences.