

Gab Gab Beach and Japanese WWII Defense Fortification

GHPI 66-03-1128, 66-03-1346, 66-03-1347,
and 66-03-1859

Location: Naval Base Guam

Difficulty Level: Easy

Access (Tier 2): Naval Base access is required. Fortifications are accessible from the parking lot of Gab Gab Beach when the beach is open. It requires no hiking or climbing and is easily viewed at ground level. Surrounding foliage may make the view of fortifications difficult to see.



Site Description:

The Gab Gab Beach area's usage dates back thousands of years. Scattered artifacts, features, and burials lead many to believe that Gab Gab beach may have been a village site. However, any surface evidence, such as latte stones, has been displaced by development throughout the years.

During WWII, the occupying Japanese heavily fortified the beach to defend Apra Harbor. Two former Japanese pillboxes are on the beach's east and west ends. These pillboxes are said to have been constructed by CHamoru labor. The western pillbox is a large cave-like fortification pierced by three openings. This fortification faces north and has a commanding view of the harbor. On the beach's eastern end, the second pillbox is a large gun emplacement built on top of a rocky outcropping. It has a large gunport and a spotter's window. It faces northwest and has an excellent visual command of the harbor entrance. Some camouflage paint can still be seen on its facade.

After the Americans retook Guam in 1944, the Seabees transformed the area into a central recreation area supporting thousands of service personnel. Today Gab Gab continues to be a popular outdoor recreation area for the military and their families to enjoy swimming, snorkeling, and other outdoor activities.

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