

Emerging Powers

Japan was also making its presence known in the Pacific. Since the 1860s it had been swiftly modernizing, transforming itself through industrialization and militarization from a dynastic feudal society to a regional power. By 1910 Japan had defeated China and Russia in armed conflicts, annexed Korea and Formosa, and occupied Manchuria. An ally of Britain, it took control of Germany's Pacific islands during World War I. Lacking natural resources to sustain its industry, Japan resolved to establish control over what it called the Southern Resource Area—Southeast Asian countries rich in oil, tin, iron, and rubber—putting it on a collision course with European colonial powers.

The Asia-Pacific War

Right: Marines and soldiers make amphibious landing on Tinian during Marianas campaign, 1944.

Left: Evening newspapers around the world carried headlines like this on December 7, 1941. For readers of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, it hit much closer to home.



Knowing Japan's only chance was to reduce U.S. carrier power, Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto planned to lure the U.S. fleet into battle off Midway in June 1942. U.S. intelligence broke the Japanese naval code, allowing the U.S. Navy to set a trap and ambush the Japanese carriers. Japan lost four of its six carriers at Midway and was forced onto the defensive. Allied offensive strategy then took three broad paths: the push across the central Pacific toward the Japanese homeland with a bloody "island-hopping" campaign by U.S. Navy, Marine, and Army forces; the Allied drive in the southwest Pacific toward the Philippines; and the engagement with our allies in the China, Burma, and India theater.

By 1944 the Japanese Navy was wearing down. U.S. submarines decimated Japan's shipping, especially oil tankers bearing the lifeblood of its war machine. It was only a matter of time before Japan surrendered or the Allies invaded its home islands. After U.S. atomic bombs devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan accepted terms of surrender. On September 2, 1945, aboard USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay, the brutal Pacific war came to an end.



1941

After Pearl Harbor, Japan rapidly takes Thailand, Malay Peninsula, Manila, Hong Kong, Gilbert Islands, Wake, and Guam.

1942

Philippines, Burma, and Singapore fall. Japan invades New Guinea. Its victory in Battle of Java Sea effectively ends Allied resistance in Netherlands East Indies. Doolittle Raid demonstrates Japanese vulnerability. Japan occupies U.S. Aleutian islands Attu and Kiska. Months-long Guadalcanal Campaign begins.

1943

U.S. Marines occupy Guadalcanal. Solomon Islands Campaign protects supply line to Australia. Japanese are driven out of Aleutians. Allied campaign to retake New Guinea intensifies. Beginning of major offensives to take Marshall and Caroline islands and retake Gilberts.

1944

U.S. B-29 bombers make first attacks on Japanese homeland. U.S. takes Saipan and Marianas; retakes Guam and Philippines. Japan's invasion of India fails. Japan begins kamikazi attacks in Battle of Leyte Gulf.

1945

Allies retake Philippines, Burma; take Japanese home islands Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Chinese offensives retake important cities in southern China. Firebombings devastate Tokyo and other cities. Atomic bombings, Soviet invasion of Manchuria lead to Japan's surrender, August 14.

1945-1960

Allied troops occupy Japan after surrender. Japan adopts a new constitution in 1947, democratizing the country. The 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty between Japan and the Allied Powers brings an end to the occupation and officially ends the war with Japan. With the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan in 1960, the two countries become allies.

A World Changed by War

The human toll of the war was unprecedented. The U.S. military lost over 106,000 in the Pacific; 2.1 million Japanese sailors, soldiers, and airmen died. From 1937, when Japan occupied China, to 1945 over 20 million civilians in the Pacific and Southeast Asian theaters died from military attacks, massacres, disease, and starvation.

The carnage shocked the world into action. Less than two months after Japan's surrender the United Nations was born in San Francisco. While its peacekeeping missions have not always kept the peace, the UN has been a key international forum and a crucial source of humanitarian aid.

The war also ended the old order in the Pacific region. Sea lanes would now be protected by the U.S. Pacific Fleet. In Southeast Asia and the Pacific Island groups the war hastened the demise of the centuries-old western colonial system. Movements for independence began soon after war's end, and within 10 years most Southeast Asian colonies of Great Britain, the United States, the Netherlands, and France had gained some degree of independence.

Overshadowing all: with the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear weapons had been unleashed on the world. The nuclear arms race was underway, and nations now lived with the unthinkable possibility of nuclear warfare. The first of hundreds of post-war nuclear tests by the U.S., Soviet Union, and other nations was the U.S. "Operation Crossroads" (*below*) off Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands (see *map*). Bikini's inhabitants were relocated before the tests, and the island remains contaminated and uninhabitable.

The U.S. conducted six other tests in the Marshall Islands until 1958. Marshall Islanders suffered directly from testing, but the threat of nuclear weapons affected life worldwide, from Cold War tensions to cultural expressions of anxiety over the nuclear peril.



Memorialization



Central to the park's mission is memorializing those who fell during the attack on O'ahu. The USS Arizona Memorial (above), built over the sunken hull, honors the 1,177 crewmen who died. Designed by architect Alfred Preis, it was dedicated on Memorial Day, 1962. The hull is both a tomb for over 900 sailors who remain within and a living reef providing habitat for marine life.

The USS Oklahoma Memorial honors 429 sailors who died when the ship capsized. The visible hull at the USS Utah Memorial commemorates its 58 dead.

About Your Visit

The park sites are adjacent to the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor. A good place to start is at the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center. It is open daily from 7 am to 5 pm. The last program begins at 3 pm. The visitor center and USS *Arizona* Memorial are closed Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and January 1. The park is just off State Highway 99 (Kamehameha Highway), about a 45-minute drive west of Waikiki.

In the visitor center's Aloha Court you can pick up free tickets for the **USS Arizona Memorial interpretive program** (first-come, first-served). You can also purchase tickets for related **Pearl Harbor Historic Sites**.

The interpretive program includes a brief talk by a National Park Service ranger followed by a 23-minute film on the Pearl Harbor attack. Immediately after the film visitors board a U.S. Navy shuttle boat to the memorial. All visitors disembark on the memorial and return with their shuttle boat. While waiting to take the memorial shuttle, you can visit the visitor center's museum exhibits, bookshop, and snack bar and the nearby shoreline exhibits. Headsets can be rented for an audio tour.

Other area park sites are the **Mooring Quays** along Battleship Row, and on Ford Island the **USS Utah Memorial**, **Chief Petty Officer Bungallows**, and **USS Oklahoma Memorial** (take the Ford Island Shuttle to this site). **Pearl Harbor Historic Sites** include the **USS Bowfin** Submarine Museum and Park, the Battleship **Missouri Memorial**, and the **Pacific Aviation Museum**. Take the Ford Island Shuttle to the last two.

Regulations • Bags or articles that allow concealment are prohibited in the park. Nearby storage lockers are available for a small fee. Visitors may bring a camera and camcorder. • Follow state regulations regarding firearms.

Accessibility The visitor center and its restrooms, movie theater, exhibit area, bookstore, information desk, and drinking fountain are wheelchair-accessible. The U.S. Navy shuttle boats and memorial are also wheelchair-accessible. Service animals are welcome. Call the park number for accessibility information on other sites.

World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument is one of over 390 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks and National Park Service programs in America's communities, visit www.nps.gov.

More Information
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