



overview



see & do



eat



party



stay



shop



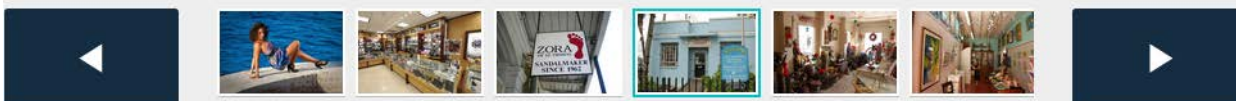
neighborhoods

Best Places to Shop Just Off the Ship in St. Thomas



SHOPPING NEAR CRUISE PORT - ST. THOMAS
6. Native Arts and Crafts Cooperative

Photo courtesy of Karen Elowitz



By **Chelle Koster Walton**
Naples Local Expert

St. Thomas has forever held a lofty reputation among cruise ship passengers for its duty free shops and one of a kind art galleries and specialty boutiques . Since cruise ship passengers are some of the most avid shoppers to visit the island, it makes perfect sense that some of the best shopping is located in and around the cruise ports.

Around the **West Indian Company dock** visitors will find the expansive outdoor **Havensight Mall**, just steps off the ship and offering a comprehensive array of stores that stock everything from luxuries to necessities and inexpensive trinkets. In addition to at least a dozen jewelry shops, you'll find quality electronics and gadgets, beauty and health supplies and beach and surf gear.

Just a short walk from Havensight is a more upscale mall, **Yacht Haven Grande**, where shoppers can find elegant women's fashions, shop for clothes for the kids or stop for lunch or just a cup of good, strong joe.

In downtown **Charlotte Amalie**, which is equidistant between the two cruise ship ports, jewels and gems are king -- about 100 stores tempt travelers with all manner of baubles and bling. But there are also a fair number of specialty shops, such as the fascinating **SOS Antiques**, which specializes in nautical items.

10 Vendors Plaza

Vendors Plaza is an outdoor marketplace next to Fort Christian and the Legislature building, just at the edge of downtown Charlotte Amalie. Local vendors set up tents and booths to sell an assortment of hats, knockoff designer bags, inexpensive jewelry, t-shirts, sundresses and various cheap trinkets. You can also get your hair braided or buy some West Indian food and ice cream from the food vendors who set up around the perimeter. The plaza is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., mostly on days when cruise ships are in port. Bring cash with you - these are small-time merchants, and few, if any, accept plastic.

9 Bella Vera

Locally owned, this chic boutique carries both local and name brand designers. Its line of women's clothing includes every look from casual jeans and T-shirts to sophisticated and flirty cocktail dresses, plus shoes, jewelry and handbags to accessorize. Here is where to shop for your complete cruising fashion needs and unusual styles you will want to show off back home. Branded labels include AG Jeans, Blank, Bleu Feather, Commando, Cosabella, Dolce Vita, Ella Moss, Hudson, Joes, Young Fabulous and Broke, Johnny Was, Parker, Rachel Pally, Sky, Ella Moss, Splendid, Jeffrey Campbell, House of Harlow and Chan Luu. (340-774-0374)

8 Boolchand's Dockside

Most of what you find at Havensight Mall and along downtown streets focus on jewelry. Boolchand's also carries jewelry, and in fact has a partnership with Pandora jewelry. In addition to Pandora charms, fine gem jewelry and watches, Boolchand's also carries a complete selection of duty free goods including cameras, computers, tablets and other electronics and accessories. And, oddly enough, footwear: Boolchand's also has a partnership with Crocs. The store has locations at Havensight and downtown, plus Curacao, Aruba, St. Maarten and Miami, Florida. In operation since 1930, Boolchand's is one of the oldest duty free merchants in the islands. (340-776-0302)

7 Zora of St. Thomas

At the edge of downtown Charlotte Amalie, Zora of St. Thomas is known for its custom made leather sandals, but equally popular are the unique handmade canvas bags, luggage and back packs it sells. It also makes a line of sturdy men's and women's "limin' shoes" in a variety of styles. The one of a kind footwear does not come cheaply. You will pay around \$160 for Zora's strappy sandals, for instance. Her most famous bags are in the shape of fish, birds and other critters. The "Snapper," for once, costs \$35 to \$55 depending on the size. (340-774-2559)

6 Native Arts and Crafts Cooperative

Find the work of more than 150 artisans gathered under one roof at this arts and crafts gallery. The goods are constantly changing as the craftspeople create new designs, but popular offerings include hand-carved calabash bowls, spice racks made from locally harvested wood, hand-woven baskets, straw dolls, quilts and crocheted shopping bags. Hand-painted note cards, local music, food items and regional cookbooks are also available. When you shop here, you are really supporting the local community - including the schoolchildren, senior citizens and people with disabilities, who are among the artisans. The co-op is located on the downtown waterfront, just opposite Vendor's Plaza and next door to the Welcome Center. (340-777-1153)

5 S.O.S. Antiques

St. Thomas is known as a wrecker's haven, and divers to this day find booty on the bottom of the harbor. Hit this waterfront store to find a souvenir of the island's nautical and swashbuckling heritage -- from musket balls to Spanish coins. S.O.S. stands for Shipwrecker's Ocean Salvage. It sells all manner of maps and charts, maritime prints, brass instruments such as sextants and barometers, cannons, swords, flintlock pistols and daggers. Most of the treasure dates from around the 16th century. More easily transportable for the typical visitor, peruse the collection of treasure coins that have been retrieved from local and other shipwrecks around the world. (34-774-2074)

4 Mango Tango Art Gallery

Just outside the hustle and bustle of Charlotte Amalie, this popular, long-standing gallery sells works by local and internationally recognized artists who spend all or part of their time in the Caribbean. In addition to paintings, sculpture and photography, the gallery, which is more than 20 years old, also carries crafts, ceramics, glasswork, textiles, ironwork, wood sculpture and more by the likes of Don Dahlke, Brian Murphy, Dana Wylder and others who have gained world renown. The airy gallery also offers framing services, an impressive selection of historical Caribbean maps and a sampling of Haitian art. (340-777-3060)

3 Charlotte Amalie

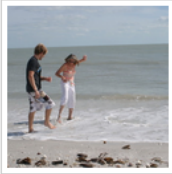
Main Street and the waterfront of downtown Charlotte Amalie offer an impressive array of shops catering to cruise ship passengers and resort guests. Everything from the Tommy Hilfiger outlet to liquor emporiums to chocolate shops line its main avenues and hidden 17th century alleyways, with the majority of stores specializing in jewelry, watches and loose gems. On the side streets and fringes of downtown you'll find popular cafes such as Gladys' Café and Amalia Cafe, plus the Native Arts and Crafts Cooperative and Vendor's Plaza. Sometimes the crass commercialism of downtown Charlotte Amalie can crowd out the charm, but if you duck into a quiet cobbled alleyways, you can still get a sense of the quaint colonial town that once was.

2 Yacht Haven Grande

Yacht Haven Grande is an upscale waterfront development that includes a luxury yacht marina, residential condos, restaurants and more than 40 high-end shopping boutiques. You will find lots of pricey designer brands represented here, including Louis Vuitton, Coach, Gucci, BCBG, Max Azria and Bulgari. But there are also mid-range chains such as White House Black Market, Bebe and Cache, plus a beauty salon and non-chain boutiques selling swimwear, children's clothing and sunglasses. Dining options include casual Fat Turtle, Grande Cru for fine dinner, tasty Fresh Bistro and Bad Ass Coffee. During high season there are regularly scheduled outdoor concerts, parties and other special events. (340-774-9500)

1 Havensight Mall

This mall greets cruise ship passengers who disembark at the West Indian Company dock and is one of the major shopping areas on the island (besides downtown). It encompasses more than 100 duty free and souvenir shops, plus various service providers such as banks and a post office. A number of jewelers have branches here, where you can buy everything from black coral and Austrian crystal to French perfume and Swiss watches at excellent prices. There are also various beachwear shops, an electronics store, a bookstore, a gourmet grocer and a music store. Ancient mahogany trees line the streets, and casual eateries such as the Delly Deck and Senor Frog's provide tasty, inexpensive grub for refueling stops. ((340) 774-1780)



About **Chelle Koster Walton**

Chelle Koster Walton -- the Local Expert for Naples, Florida and the Caribbean -- has been covering the destination for 30 years. Her top-selling *Sarasota, Sanibel Island, and Naples* guidebook (Countryman Press) is in its sixth edition. She was contributing editor for *Caribbean Travel & Life* for 12 years and has written guidebooks on the Bahamas. A veteran travel writer, Chelle has published thousands of articles for *Miami Herald*, *USA TODAY*, *Latitudes*; has written/ contributed to a dozen guidebooks, and produces travel shows for the local PBS station.

Read more about Chelle Koster Walton [here](#).

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