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The bimonthly publication of the United States Virgin Islands Department of Tourism

## CONTENTS / LINKS

Department of Tourism Outlines Marketing Initiatives to Promote Carnival's 60th Anniversary **1**

Customer Service Corner **2**

USVI Times Spring Spotlight: Harith Wickrema, Chief Visionary Officer of St. John's Eco Serendib Villa and Spa **3**

DOT Hosts Public Meetings to Develop Strategic Vision for Tourism **3**

In Anticipation of Spring & Summer Travel, DOT Taps Travelers at Upcoming Trade Shows **4**

Department of Tourism Expands its Online Video Presence **4**

Small Hotels Update **5**

Looking Back... A Recap of January/February Highlights **6**

March/April Calendar of Events and Partner Updates **6**



## Department of Tourism Outlines Marketing Initiatives to Promote Carnival's 60th Anniversary

The USVI is already warming up for St. Thomas Carnival, and with the 60th Anniversary promising to be one of the most festive celebrations ever, the Department of Tourism is excited to roll out a series of marketing initiatives to promote the 60th Anniversary of Virgin Islands Carnival both locally and abroad.

To generate interest and bookings to St. Thomas for this year's Carnival, the Department launched a 60th Anniversary Carnival Promotion, available exclusively through CheapCaribbean.com. Travelers who book the "60th Anniversary Carnival" promotion on St. Thomas/St. John will receive \$400 instant credit, a \$50 dining certificate (representing a total value of \$450 in savings) and a Carnival gift bag filled with commemorative 60th Anniversary souvenirs. The package is bookable through March 19, 2012 for travel April 14-30, 2012.

(Continued)



Makeda Joseph's winning poster illustrates the spirit of VI Carnival

## Department of Tourism Outlines Marketing Initiatives to Promote Carnival's 60th Anniversary (continued)

To promote this special offer the Department has launched a print and radio advertising campaign as well as a public relations blitz including a social media sweepstakes. The advertising campaign is targeting the Caribbean region in addition to key U.S. cities such as Atlanta, Miami and New York. Radio promotions in those markets entice listeners to book the package while giving away grand prize trips to the USVI to a handful of lucky winners. To engage more social media users and get them excited about Carnival, the DOT has also launched a 60th Anniversary Carnival Sweepstakes on Facebook, which will be further promoted via Twitter and through other social media channels. One lucky fan will receive round-trip airfare for two, a four night stay in St. Thomas, and the opportunity to participate in the Adult's Parade as a member of a Carnival troupe.

To further create buzz about the 60th Anniversary of Carnival and to document the activities of this landmark event, the Department of Tourism has also invited a group of journalists to St. Thomas to experience the sights, sounds and flavors of Carnival first-hand. The journalists, a combination of travel and lifestyle media, influential bloggers, and reporters from the Caribbean and Diaspora, will experience the sun, sand and sea, while participating in a number of Carnival activities.

One of the highlighted activities will take place on the evening of April 24 in the Carnival Village following the Senior Citizens Quelbe Tramp. In honor of the 60th Anniversary, the Department of Tourism is proud to sponsor a special concert kicked off by a performance by Stanley & The Ten Sleepless Knights. The musical lineup also includes a Latin band, a French band, and at least one other popular band in addition to Carnival dancers. A master of ceremonies will rally the crowd with t-shirt and hand towel giveaways as well as dining certificates to be used at booths throughout the Village.

To mark the 60th Anniversary, the Department of Tourism also devised a plan to engage our young people in the celebration. To encourage creativity and artistic expression, the Department invited VI students ages 14-18 to participate in a poster contest revealing what Carnival means to them. The Department of Tourism is now pleased to announce the winner: Makeda Joseph, a 17 year old 12th grader at Charlotte Amalie High School. Ms. Joseph will receive a \$500 savings bond and \$500 will be donated to Charlotte Amalie High School's art department. Additionally, the Department of Tourism will reproduce the winning artwork to create a special edition poster. The other contest finalists are Jazmine Willocks of St. Croix Country Day School; Shannon Newland of Antilles School; and Jerell James of Ivanna Eudora Kean High School. Congratulations to all for your excellent submissions!

## Customer Service Corner

### Engage Every Customer...One Touchpoint at a Time

by Dr. Bryan K. Williams, BW Enterprises

Engaging your customers is not rocket science. With all of the articles, books, blogs, videos and conferences that are available, it can seem that creating an engaging service experience requires a lifetime worth of training. Not true. If you asked me, "how can we improve our service tomorrow?", I would advise you to begin with your touchpoints.

I'm sure that you have heard this word before, but I'll go ahead and define it anyway. A touchpoint is any moment of interaction between two parties -- If I pass you in the hallway, that's a touchpoint; when you answer the phone, that's a touchpoint; when you open the door for someone, that's a touchpoint. If you think about it, there are literally hundreds of touchpoints in a typical workday.

Now here's the interesting part; every touchpoint has either a deposit or a withdrawal. If I'm an employee at Company X, and I pass two customers in the hallway without acknowledging them, that's a withdrawal. If I give eye contact and smile, that's a deposit. Better yet, if I give eye contact, smile, stop, give a greeting, and offer assistance, then that's an even bigger deposit. This same concept works for every touchpoint, every time.

To continue reading this article, click here:  
[http://bwenterprise.net/Blog/Blog\\_Post/10-08-11/Engage\\_every\\_Customer\\_One\\_Touchpoint\\_at\\_a\\_Time.aspx](http://bwenterprise.net/Blog/Blog_Post/10-08-11/Engage_every_Customer_One_Touchpoint_at_a_Time.aspx)

#### About Dr. Bryan K. Williams

Born and raised on St. Thomas, Dr. Bryan K. Williams is a consultant, trainer, and author, who focuses on the areas of service excellence and organizational effectiveness.

## USVI Times Spring Spotlight

### Harith Wickrema, Chief Visionary Officer of St. John's Eco Serendib Villa and Spa

Harith Wickrema, chief visionary officer behind the newly opened Eco Serendib Villa and Spa, has been in love with St. John since the 1980s. He is the president of Harith Productions, an international event production and corporate communications agency, and a faculty member of Temple University's School of Tourism and Hospitality Management. Wickrema is deeply committed to environmental responsibility, and St. John's dedication to preservation, natural beauty and laidback charm captured his heart.

Eco Serendib provides luxury accommodations, amenities and service wed with eco-friendly elements, as well as experiences that truly inspire guests. Wickrema is most proud of the organic "seed to plate" garden offering: Guests can select favorites in advance and harvest them with the horticulturist; a private chef demonstration follows. For his efforts, Wickrema was recognized as one of the top ten hospitality innovators of 2011 in the area of sustainability by *Lodging* magazine.

Not only has Wickrema introduced a one-of-a-kind retreat to the island, but he is also a strong community supporter. For example, nearly 80% of the original building material inventory at the Island Green Building Association's new ReSource Depot was donated by Wickrema. Perhaps most notable, the Eco Serendib Beach Restoration Project, launched in February in partnership with Friends of the Virgin Islands National Park, will plant indigenous trees at beaches to combat erosion while counteracting carbon emissions. "We're honored that we can be of service and hope these initiatives inspire others to do the same," said Wickrema.



Harith Wickrema

## DOT Hosts Public Meetings to Develop Strategic Vision for Tourism

The views of Virgin Islands residents are being sought by the Department of Tourism. Following the November 2011 announcement by Governor John P. de Jongh, Jr. to design and implement a five-year rolling tourism development plan for the territory, the Department of Tourism will host a series of stakeholder meetings this month to ensure public input is taken into account when designing the future of tourism in the USVI. The stakeholder meetings, which are scheduled in both districts, are designed to elicit ideas and recommendations from the community on a wide range of topics relating to our tourism industry.

To ensure maximum participation, the strategic visioning sessions will take place at the St. Thomas and St. Croix campuses of the University of the Virgin Islands, and at UVI's Video Conference Center on St. John, from Monday, March 19 through Thursday, March 22, 2012. Video conferencing technology will link simultaneous dialogue on each island. For example, Monday's session in St. Thomas will be open, via video links, to attendees in St. Croix and St. John, who will participate in their own roundtable discussions. Each session will feature a facilitator, roundtable discussion and input from experts with time for questions and answers. The results of the meetings will be incorporated into the 2012 Governor's Conference on Tourism to be held later this year and embedded within the five-year plan.

The schedule of sessions is as follows:

#### **Monday, March 19 (St. Thomas Session, Video Conferencing in St. Croix/ St. John):**

8:00am-9:30am – Niche Markets Part 1 (Weddings & Honeymoons, Groups & Incentives)  
10:00am-11:30am – Education & Training  
12:30pm-2:00pm – Revitalization & Development of Towns  
2:30pm-4:00pm – Medical Tourism

#### **Tuesday, March 20 (St. Thomas Session, Video Conferencing in St. Croix/ St. John)**

8:00am-9:30am – Film Industry  
10:00am-11:30am – Retail & Craft Development  
12:30pm-2:00pm – Cruise & Airlift Development  
2:30pm-4:00pm – Transportation

#### **Wednesday, March 21 (St. Croix Session, Video Conferencing in St. Thomas/St. John)**

8:00am-9:30am – Gaming  
10:00am-11:30am – Research & Data Collection  
12:30pm-2:00pm – Sports Tourism  
2:30pm-4:00pm – Hotel Development

#### **Thursday, March 22 (St. Croix Session, Video Conferencing in St. Thomas/St. John)**

8:00am-9:30am – Geotourism (Environment, Culture, History & Agriculture)  
10:00am-11:30am – Niche Markets Part 2 (Dive & Culinary)  
12:30pm-2:00pm – Technology  
2:30pm-4:00pm – Activities & Attractions

On the St. Thomas campus, sessions will be held in the Administrative and Conference Center, Rooms 142-B-1B and 146-1A (Located on the top of the hill on the left just before John Brewers Beach). On the St. Croix campus, sessions will be held in the Melvin Evans Center, Room 401. St. John residents can utilize UVI facilities at The Marketplace. Members of the public who cannot attend but would like to submit their ideas, may email comments to [feedback@usvitourismplan.com](mailto:feedback@usvitourismplan.com).

The final plan, incorporating the research and information from the stakeholder sessions and the Governor's Conference on Tourism, will be presented before year-end.

## In Anticipation of Spring & Summer Travel, DOT Taps Travelers at Upcoming Trade Shows

The Department of Tourism's sales team is gearing up to promote the Territory at some of the industry's most popular and important trade shows in anticipation of spring and summer travel. Here is our schedule for March and April:

### Bridal

**Houston Wedding Showcase**  
March 3, Houston, TX  
houstonweddingshowcase.com



**Festival of Brides**  
March 11, Pasadena, CA  
March 25, Pacific Palisades, CA  
May 6, Temecula Valley, CA  
festivalofbrides.com



### Consumer

**The New York Times Travel Show**  
March 2-4, New York, NY  
www.nytravelshow.com



**Adventures in Travel Expo**  
March 17-18, Washington, DC  
www.adventureexpo.com



### Dive

**Beneath the Sea**  
March 23-25, Secaucus, NJ  
beneaththesea.org



### Trade

**Peninsula Shows**  
March 6, West Palm Beach, FL  
March 7, Orlando, FL  
March 8, Tampa, FL  
peninsulashows.com



**Midwest Travel Suppliers Association Showcase**  
April 16, Des Moines, IA  
April 17, Kansas City, MO  
April 18, St. Louis, MO  
midwesttravelsuppliers.com



**International Pow Wow**  
April 21-25, Los Angeles, CA  
www.ustravel.org/events/  
international-pow-wow



**cruise3sixty**  
April 25-30, Ft. Lauderdale, FL  
cruise3sixty.com



## Department of Tourism Expands its Online Video Presence

As part of its commitment to reaching consumers' specific interests, the Department of Tourism is launching an online video campaign in March on the AdoTube and Videology networks. The DOT will run 30 second pre-roll videos that appeal to consumers who are interested in diving, sport fishing and sailing. Additionally, the videos will entice enthusiasts of these activities to plan a trip to the USVI by showing them the variety of activities and beauty each island holds. These online videos will magnify the visual appeal of the U.S. Virgin Islands as a leading vacation destination, while engaging travelers with the video content. The videos will run from March until June and are expected to garner approximately 9 million impressions.

The Department of Tourism also continues to expand its digital reach with the launch of its YouTube channel: youtube.com/myusvi. YouTube reaches over 800 million unique visitors per month, further allowing the DOT to engage and reach a wide audience. The USVI page features TV commercials, videos from in-market activations and segment videos developed through its partnership with Bonnier publications (Bonnier publishes magazines such as *Caribbean Travel + Life*, *ISLANDS*, *Destination Weddings & Honeymoons*, *Sport Fishing* and *Yachting*). The page will continue to grow as video content is developed.



## Small Hotels Update

### Three Intimate Getaways in USVI's Portfolio of Small Hotels

In this issue of USVI Times, we are pleased to highlight three properties from across the Territory: The Waves at Cane Bay on St. Croix, The Inn at Tamarind Court on St. John, and Pavilions and Pools Villa Hotel on St. Thomas.

#### The Waves at Cane Bay, St. Croix

The Waves is situated in a picture-perfect setting -- beachside amid coconut palms on St. Croix's North Shore, just 100 yards from some of the best snorkeling and scuba sites in all the Caribbean. The resort has a dozen rooms and offers personalized service (the owner lives on-site). Rooms feature king-size beds, sea views, air conditioning, wifi, and cable TV. There's an open-air, seaside restaurant offering intimate dining with sunset views, an excellent wine list and homemade desserts. The hotel also features a lagoon salt-water pool. For more information, visit [canebaystcroix.com](http://canebaystcroix.com), or call (800) 545-0603.



#### The Inn at Tamarind Court, St. John

Located in Cruz Bay within walking distance to all the restaurants, shops, bars and nightlife, tennis, ferries and beach shuttles, the Inn at Tamarind Court offers island charm at great rates. It has 20 non-smoking rooms, each with air conditioning, cable TV, wifi and housekeeping service. The hotel offers five types of rooms: the grand suite, apartment (which includes a private bedroom, living room, kitchenette, bath, cable TV and air conditioning), the standard room, and the single. Breakfast is served in the courtyard and the bar is a favorite gathering spot for both locals and visitors alike. For more information, visit [innattamarindcourt.com](http://innattamarindcourt.com) or call (800) 221-1637.



#### Pavilions and Pools Villa Hotel, St. Thomas

Located on St. Thomas' East End, this all suites resort consists of 25 private villas, each set in artful landscaping designed for privacy and tranquility. The hotel has two types of villas: the Caribbean and the International. Caribbean Pavilions consist of a living and dining area, a large bedroom, a full kitchen and bathroom and pool. Each villa faces the pool as well as breathtaking vistas of the ocean. The International Pool Villas are larger and feature private pools, and sun decks. The resort's restaurant, Torcido Taco is open Tuesday through Sunday serving Mexican fare. For more information, visit [pavilionsandpools.com](http://pavilionsandpools.com), or call (800) 524-2001.

## Looking Back...

### A Recap of January/February Highlights

Here are a few winter highlights from the Department of Tourism:

#### Marketing Blitz in Key Northeast Markets

In February, the Department of Tourism participated in a host of in-market activities in Philadelphia, New York and Connecticut, to drive visitors to the islands during the spring travel season.

**Click here** to download the press release highlighting the full schedule of in-market activities.

#### Media Spotlight: "Three Perfect Days: USVI" Cover Feature in *Hemispheres* (United Airlines inflight magazine)

The U.S. Virgin Islands shone in the spotlight of *Hemispheres'* February issue with a "Three Perfect Days: USVI" cover story. The nine-page feature showcased every facet of the Territory – from the history, culture, attractions, restaurants, accommodations and tips from local Virgin Islanders. To check out this extensive coverage, get marketing updates, as well as download brochures and past issues of the USVI Times, visit: [USVImarketing.com](http://USVImarketing.com).

## March/April 2012 Calendar of Events and Partner Updates

### March 3

#### UVI Golden Jubilee Reunion Choir, St. Thomas

UVI alumni from the Virgin Islands, Eastern Caribbean, British Virgin Islands and parts of the United States will perform in commemoration of UVI's 50th Anniversary. The evening will feature an array of music and voices from some of the top vocalists in the community, including Lorna Freeman Dennis, Lawrence Benjamin, Rev. Ambrose Gumbs, and many more. For tickets: (340) 693-1559, [www.reichholdcenter.com](http://www.reichholdcenter.com)

### March 6

#### Free Monthly Film Series, St. John

The St. John Film Society has been selected as a host site for the 2011-2012 "On Screen/In Person" film series sponsored by Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation. There will be a selection of films for viewers to experience, including this month's film "Proceed and Be Bold!" For more information: [www.stjohnfilm.com](http://www.stjohnfilm.com)

### March 9

#### Arts Alive Concert, St. Thomas

##### Ashu- Classical Saxophone

The Arts Alive Concerts occur throughout the year at Tillett Gardens. Typically, a prix fixe dinner is offered before each concert, and the artist's studios are open during intermissions. Both seasonal and individual tickets are available for the 8 p.m. performance. For more information: (340) 775-1929, [www.tillettfoundation.org](http://www.tillettfoundation.org)

### March 9-10

#### Commodore's Cup Regatta, St. John

St. John lays claim to the Annual Commodore's Cup, sponsored by the island's three prominent yacht clubs: St. John Yacht Club, Coral Bay Yacht Club and Nauti Yacht Club. This regatta also benefits the Kids and the Sea (KATS) Program, which educates youth about water safety. For more information: [www.stjohnyachtclub.org/](http://www.stjohnyachtclub.org/)

### March 9-10

#### Candlelight Concert, Estate Whim, St. Croix

This series includes world-class classical music performances under the famous candlelit chandelier in the Whim Plantation Museum Great House. Concerts begin at 7:30 p.m. Tickets cost

\$45 and include a champagne and hors d'oeuvres reception with the musicians. For more information: (340) 772-0598, [www.stcroixlandmarks.com](http://www.stcroixlandmarks.com)

### March 9-11

#### Annual St. Croix International Hospice and Optimist Regatta, St. Croix

Hosted by the St. Croix Yacht Club (SCYC), this event joins a network of nearly 30 regattas in the U.S. and Canada all members of the National Hospice Regatta Alliance. A Cruzan Rum Welcome Party will begin the festivities with live music and beach barbecues to follow throughout the weekend. The festivities will culminate with the Awards Ceremony at 5 p.m. For more information: [www.stcroixyc.com](http://www.stcroixyc.com)

### March 15

#### Art Thursdays, St. Croix

Visitors and residents are invited to join the fun as Christiansted art galleries, retail shops and restaurants stay open late for a series of gallery walks. The purpose of the event is to strengthen and invigorate the St. Croix art community. Visitors can explore the art venues, shop, and enjoy dinner or drinks in Christiansted from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m. For more information: [www.gotostcroix.com](http://www.gotostcroix.com)

### March 16

#### Sunset Jazz, Frederiksted, St. Croix

One of the island's most popular musical events, this is a monthly Friday concert on the Frederiksted Waterfront featuring local jazz musicians. Admission is free and food and drinks are available for purchase at neighborhood bars and restaurants. For more information: (340) 690-0617, [www.gotostcroix.com](http://www.gotostcroix.com)

### March 17

#### India.Arie Concert, St. Thomas

Five-time Grammy Award winner, India.Arie, will hold a concert at the Reichhold Center. Arie, known for her signature neo-soul sound, burst into the music scene in 2001 with her hit song, "Video." With over 3.3 million records sold, she has also wooed fans with other big hits like "I Am Not My Hair," and "Brown Skin." For tickets: (340) 693-1559, [www.reichholdcenter.com](http://www.reichholdcenter.com)

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**March/April 2012 Calendar of Events and Partner Updates** (continued)
**March 17****Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade, St. Croix**

The St. Patrick's Day Parade began in 1969 and remains an important day for the community, beneficiaries, and travelers. All proceeds from the concessions benefit a selection of the island's non-profit organizations. For more information: (340) 718-6106, [www.stpatricksdaysparadestcroixvi.com](http://www.stpatricksdaysparadestcroixvi.com)

**March 18****Art Show, Gallery St. Thomas**

The show will feature the works of Teri Jones and Ronni Harris. Shows are on Friday nights from 5:30 – 9:30 p.m. For more information: (340) 777-636, [www.gallerystthomas.com](http://www.gallerystthomas.com)

**March 21****Arts Alive Concert, St. Thomas**

Sarah Lee Guthrie & Johnny Irion – Country/Rock  
The Arts Alive Concerts occur throughout the year at Tillett Gardens. Typically, a prix fixe dinner is offered before each concert, and the artist's studios are open during intermissions. Both seasonal and individual tickets are available for the 8 p.m. performance. For more information: (340) 775-1929, [www.tillettfoundation.org](http://www.tillettfoundation.org)

**March 23-25****39th International Rolex Regatta, St. Thomas Yacht Club, St. Thomas**

The International Rolex Regatta weekend in the U.S. Virgin Islands is a definite high point for yachters from around the world. The race is known as the "Crown Jewel of the Caribbean." For more information: [www.rolexcupregatta.com](http://www.rolexcupregatta.com)

**March 24****Grow and Learn, St. George Village Botanical Garden, St. Croix**

These educational workshops are hosted by different presenters each month. Workshop topics center on how participants can use their garden most efficiently. For more information: (340) 692-2874, [www.sgvbg.org](http://www.sgvbg.org)

**March 24-25****St. George Botanical Gardens Art in the Garden, St. Croix**

Dedicated to the preservation and conservation of plants, the St. George Village and Botanical Garden offers an art program in the spring for visitors. For more information: (340) 692-2874, [www.sgvbg.org](http://www.sgvbg.org)

**March 31****TRANSFER DAY**

This holiday commemorates the day the islands transferred from being the Danish West Indies to the United States Virgin Islands. A celebration will be held by the St. Croix Landmarks Society at 10 a.m. at the Whim Museum. For more information: (340) 772-0598, [www.stcroixlandmarks.com](http://www.stcroixlandmarks.com).

**March 31****Historic Ruins Ramble/Places that Matter, St. Croix**

These educational hikes will teach visitors about St. Croix's history and culture on guided walks through the hidden ruins of old plantations from the 17th and 18th centuries. The tour begins at 3:00 p.m. and the cost is \$20 per person. Refreshments follow each session. For more information: (340) 772-0598, [www.stcroixlandmarks.com](http://www.stcroixlandmarks.com)

**April 3****Free Monthly Film Series, St. John**

The St. John Film Society has been selected as a host site for the 2011-2012 "On Screen/In Person" film series sponsored by Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation. There will be a selection of films for viewers to experience, including this month's film "Milking the Rhino". For more information: [www.stjohnfilm.com](http://www.stjohnfilm.com)

**April 11-15****Women's Coalition Tennis Classic, St. Croix**

This four day fundraising event is held by the Women's Coalition to raise awareness for crisis intervention. Proceeds from the benefit go towards funding for counseling, safe housing, and training seminars. For more information: (340) 773-9272, [www.wcstx.com](http://www.wcstx.com)

**April 12****Art Thursdays, St. Croix**

Visitors and residents are invited to join the fun as Christiansted art galleries, retail shops and restaurants stay open late for a series of gallery walks. The purpose of the event is to strengthen and invigorate the St. Croix art community. Visitors can explore the art venues, shop, and enjoy dinner or drinks in Christiansted from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m. For more information: [www.gotostcroix.com](http://www.gotostcroix.com)

**April 17-22****2012 St. Croix Food & Wine Experience, St. Croix**

This event showcases the diverse cuisine available on the island. The multi-day event includes gourmet dinners, wine seminars, wine auctions, and the annual culinary competition, A Taste of St. Croix. The event benefits the St. Croix Foundation ([www.stcroixfoundation.org](http://www.stcroixfoundation.org)), a non-profit community foundation that administers a number of local programs, and is recognized as the pre-eminent food and wine event in the Caribbean. For more information: [www.stcroixfoodandwine.com](http://www.stcroixfoodandwine.com)

**April 19****Taste of St Croix, Divi Carina Bay, St. Croix**

Conceived as a way for local restaurateurs to showcase their menus, this event is one of the most popular culinary events on the island. Chefs from the island's many restaurants compete to win top honors in several categories. Meanwhile, St. Croix's main wine and spirit distributors will be on-hand to provide liquid refreshments and tasting sessions. The winners, as judged by a panel of food critics and experts, are announced later in the evening at a prize ceremony. For more information: [www.tasteofstcroix.com](http://www.tasteofstcroix.com)

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**March/April 2012 Calendar of Events and Partner Updates** (continued)
**April 20****Sunset Jazz, Frederiksted, St. Croix**

One of the island's most popular musical events, this is a monthly Friday concert on the Frederiksted Waterfront featuring local jazz musicians. Admission is free and food and drinks are available for purchase at neighborhood bars and restaurants. For more information: (340) 690-0617, [www.gotostcroix.com](http://www.gotostcroix.com)

**April 20****Earth Day Fair, St. John**

The Earth Day Environmental Fair takes place each year at the National Park Service ball field in Cruz Bay. Children are invited to learn about alternative energies, landscaping with native plants, and participate in mock archeology digs through exciting hands-on teaching demonstrations. For more information: [www.friendsvinp.org](http://www.friendsvinp.org)

**April 22****Historic Ruins Ramble/Places that Matter, St. Croix**

These educational hikes will teach visitors about St. Croix's history and culture on guided walks through the hidden ruins of old plantations from the 17th and 18th centuries. The tour begins at 3:00 p.m. and the cost is \$20 per person. Refreshments follow each session. For more information: (340) 772-0598, [www.stcroixlandmarks.com](http://www.stcroixlandmarks.com)

**April 22-28****60th Anniversary of Virgin Islands Carnival, St. Thomas**

Carnival is an annual celebration featuring Virgin Islands tradition and culture. Festivities include a Food Fair featuring local cuisine, candies, pastries and other goods. Other highlights include pageants, musical competitions, fireworks, and two days of parades, featuring mocko jumbies, costumed dancers and local bands. For more information: [www.vicarnival.com](http://www.vicarnival.com)

**April 27****Carnival Children's Parade, St. Thomas**

The streets of St. Thomas are filled with music, extravagant costumes and treats for this festive annual celebration. Children are dressed up in beautiful costumes of sequins, feathers and hats to celebrate St. Thomas' Carnival. For more information: [www.vicarnival.com](http://www.vicarnival.com)

**April 28****Carnival Adult's Parade, St. Thomas**

Men and woman dance through the streets alongside moko jumbies, outfitted in costumes to celebrate St. Thomas' Carnival. For more information: [www.vicarnival.com](http://www.vicarnival.com)

**April 28****Grow and Learn, St. George Village Botanical Garden, St. Croix**

These educational workshops are hosted by different presenters each month. Workshop topics center on how participants can use their garden most efficiently. For more information: (340) 692-2874, [www.sgvbg.org](http://www.sgvbg.org)

**ONGOING EVENTS****Watercolor Class with Lucinda O'Connell, St. Thomas**

Use your imagination and have fun while creating your own watercolor painting. Tuesdays from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Bleuwater Restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton and Fridays from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Coconut Cove Restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton. Fee is \$65 per person. Contact (340) 514-2432 or [lucinda@islands.vi](mailto:lucinda@islands.vi) for details.

**Martini Mondays, St. Croix**

Enjoy 2-for-1 martinis at The Beach Side Café at Sand Castle on the Beach in Frederiksted. St. Croix's beautiful west end sunset is included! Call (340) 772-1205 for more information or to make a reservation.

**Steak and Ale, St. Croix**

The Fort Christiansted Brew Pub hosts Steak and Ale every Monday night – featuring a fantastic steak dinner and your choice of homemade brews. Call (340) 713-9820 for more information or to make a reservation.

**Live Music at Salud! Bistro, St. Croix**

Every Friday and Saturday night, guests are invited to hear live music and enjoy delicious food. For more information, call (340) 718-7900 or visit [www.saludbistro.com](http://www.saludbistro.com).

**Live Jazz, St. Croix**

Enjoy live jazz at Sand Castle on the Beach in Frederiksted every Saturday. 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. For more information, call (340) 772-1205 or visit [www.sandcastleonthebeach.com](http://www.sandcastleonthebeach.com).

**Yoga on Hibiscus Beach, St. Croix**

Every Tuesday and Thursday, get a healthy start to your day and practice yoga at Hibiscus Beach from 8 a.m.-9:30 a.m. All ages welcome. \$8 per class. Call (340) 332-3714 to make a reservation.

**Tai Chi at Yacht Haven Grande, St. Thomas**

Every Monday and Wednesday at 6 p.m., practice Tai Chai during a free class at Yacht Haven Grande, near Louis Vuitton. For more information: (340) 774-9500 or visit [www.yachthavengrande.com](http://www.yachthavengrande.com)

**Zumba at Yacht Haven Grande, St. Thomas**

Every Saturday at 9 a.m., enjoy Zumba during a free class at Yacht Haven Grande, at the Esplanade. For more information: (340) 774-9500 or visit [www.yachthavengrande.com](http://www.yachthavengrande.com)

**Yoga at Yacht Haven Grande, St. Thomas**

Every Friday at 6:15 p.m., enjoy Yoga during a free class at Yacht Haven Grande, at the Esplanade. For more information: (340) 774-9500 or visit [www.yachthavengrande.com](http://www.yachthavengrande.com)

**Entertainment at Fat Turtle at Yacht Haven Grande, St. Thomas**

Every Friday night, Hot Nights features Kenny Floyd Live at 6 p.m. and a DJ Dance Party at 10 p.m. at Fat Turtle at Yacht Haven Grande. For more information: (340) 774-9500 or visit [www.yachthavengrande.com](http://www.yachthavengrande.com)

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## March/April 2012 Calendar of Events and Partner Updates (continued)

### Monday Nights at the Beach Side Café at Sandcastle on the Beach, St. Croix

Martini Mondays features in person the music of Jazzy Blue. For more information: (800) 524-2018 or visit [www.sandcastleonthebeach.com](http://www.sandcastleonthebeach.com)

### Podcast from Paradise

USVI visitors and locals alike can tune into "Podcast from Paradise" each weekday for a daily dose of U.S. Virgin Islands weather, news highlights and a little music with Alex Randall the "Voice of Paradise." Users can subscribe by visiting [www.vinow.com/podcast](http://www.vinow.com/podcast).

## NEWS & UPDATES

### Eco Serendib Villa and Spa Launches Conservation Project

Eco Serendib Villa and Spa, a new eco-friendly, luxury retreat on St. John, has initiated a conservation program in partnership with the Friends of the Virgin Islands National Park to protect the island's pristine beaches from the impact of erosion, while reducing the carbon footprint. The Eco Serendib Beach Restoration Project will re-introduce indigenous trees and shrubs, such as sea grape, at beaches throughout the island. Along with funding the seed money to kick start the program, the Restoration Project will sponsor one tree per day of each reservation in the name of guests. For more information, go to [www.ecoserendib.com](http://www.ecoserendib.com)

### Blue Flag USVI Environmental Education Activities

Blue Flag USVI, in conjunction with the Virgin Islands Network of Environmental Educators (VINE), will host a series of environmental education presentations at the newly certified Blue Flag beaches throughout the month of March. The presentations are free and will be held at each of the respective beaches.

The "Citizen Science Activity" presentation will teach participants how to become a "citizen scientist." Participants will be given brochures to take home, opportunities to sign up for citizen science volunteer programs (including Blue Flag), and will receive guidance on how to become better stewards of the environment. This event starts at 10:00 a.m. on March 10 at Lindbergh Bay – Emerald Beach Resort, St. Thomas. For more information, please visit <http://www.facebook.com/pages/VI-Center-for-Marine-and-Environmental-Studies/273484617154>

The Nature Conservancy's "Sea Turtles through Education and Mitigation" presentation focuses on preventing the theft of sea turtles through effective education and mitigation programs. The demonstration will spread awareness about the threats, show local examples of good education and mitigation programs, and develop ways to improve how hotels share the beaches with sea turtles and other beach organisms. This event starts at 10:00 a.m. March 24 at Palms at Pelican Cove, St. Croix. For more information: <http://www.blueflagusvi.org>

The National Park Service is conducting the REEF Fish Survey Project to educate and enlist divers in the conservation of marine habitats. The REEF Fish Survey Project allows volunteer SCUBA divers and snorkelers to collect and report information on marine fish populations. Data is collected using a fun and easy standardized method and is housed in a publicly-accessible database on REEF's Website. The data will be used by a variety of resource agencies and researchers. This event starts at 10 a.m. on March 10 at Trunk Bay, St. John. For more information: <http://www.reef.org/> and <http://www.virgin.islands.national-park.com/>

For additional information contact: Valerie Peters, Blue Flag USVI Coordinator, [valerie.peters@valevents.com](mailto:valerie.peters@valevents.com) 340 344 8446

## SPECIAL PROMOTIONS

### Best Western Plus Emerald Beach & Best Western Carib Beach Promotions and Packages, St. Thomas

The *Love is in the Air* promotion, available now through April 30, and offers three different packages: *The Emerald*, *The Ruby*, and *The Sapphire*. *The Emerald* includes a bottle of champagne in room upon arrival, breakfast in bed one morning, three course candlelight dinner for two on the beach, and a \$50 gift certificate to Cardow Jewelers. *The Ruby* includes rose petals on the newlyweds' bed, bottle of champagne in room upon arrival, breakfast in bed one morning, his and her robes, 50 minute in-room couple's massage, three course candlelit dinner for two on the beach, and a \$50 gift certificate to Cardow Jewelers. *The Sapphire* includes rose petals on the newlyweds' bed, bottle of champagne in room upon arrival, chocolate covered strawberries, breakfast in bed one morning, his and her robes, 50 minute in-room couples massage, manicure-pedicure for 2 in room or at the spa, three course candlelit dinner for two on the beach, private sunset photo session on the beach, and a \$50 certificate from Cardow Jewelers.

The *To Dive For* package partners with Blue Island Divers and is based on a five night stay that includes three two-tank dives at two different locations. Rates for Emerald Beach start at \$1,176 from now through March 31, 2012; \$1,350 from April 1 through October 31, 2012 and \$1,374 from November 1-30, 2012. Rates at Carib Beach start at \$1,356 from now through March 31, 2012; \$1,200 from April 1 through October 31, 2012 and \$1,266 from November 1-30, 2012. Blackout dates apply.

### Best Western Carib Beach & Best Western Plus Emerald Beach offers a variety of Wedding Packages

The *Elope to Paradise* package includes a wedding specialist, unlimited phone and email consultation, picturesque, orientation breakfast for the bride and groom, non-denominational wedding officiate and wedding ceremony keepsake with Caribbean vows and wedding certificate, required witnesses, tropical bridal bouquet and groom's boutonniere, processional prerecorded music accompaniment, professional photographer for ceremony only with

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**March/April 2012 Calendar of Events and Partner Updates** (continued)

20 pictures and CD ownership, champagne or sparkling cider toast, his and her wedding cupcakes, two certified copies of wedding certificate, and a \$50 gift certificate to Cardow Jewelers. The *Elope to Paradise* package is \$1,100 and does not include the marriage license fee of \$100.

The *Endless Love* package includes personal wedding consultant, unlimited phone and email consultation, picturesque beachfront location, personal escort to the superior court, non-denominational wedding officiate and wedding ceremony keepsake with Caribbean vows and wedding certificate, required witnesses, tropical bridal bouquet and groom's boutonniere, processional taped music accompaniment, professional photographer for one hour with 60 pictures and CD ownership, champagne or sparkling cider toast, 10" white wedding cake with shells, two certified copies of wedding certificate, and a \$50 gift certificate to Cardow Jewelers. The *Endless Love* package is \$1,350 and does not include the marriage license fee of \$100.

The *Rainbow in Paradise Commitment Ceremony* includes a personal wedding consultant, unlimited email and phone consultation, picturesque beachfront location, non-denominational wedding officiate and wedding ceremony keepsake with Caribbean vows and commitment certificate, choice of 2 bouquets or 2 boutonnieres, processional taped music accompaniment, professional photographer for ceremony only with 20 pictures and CD ownership, private lunch on beach deck for 2 with a bottle of champagne, and a \$50 gift certificate to Cardow Jewelers. This package is \$775. With all of these packages, the hotel stay for the wedding night is included and a group rate is available for friends and family.

Special ceremonies can be added to any of the three packages above. These packages include: the *Jump the Broom*, *Wish Upon a Shell Ceremony* and *Caribbean Jewish Wedding*.

"Jumping the Broom" is a ritual based on a centuries-old African tradition of jumping over a gaily-decorated broom as a symbol of entering a new life together with a clean sweep. The *Jump the Broom* package is an additional \$150 and includes a traditional invocation and a one-of-a-kind keepsake wedding broom.

The *Wish Upon a Shell Ceremony* is for the bride and groom who wish to include their family and guests in the marriage ceremony. The guests are all given a shell which has the bride and groom's names and the date of the wedding written on them. During the ceremony, the family and guests are asked to step to the water's edge and make a wish for the future of the bride and groom and then everyone tosses their shells into the water. This package is an additional \$75.

The *Caribbean Jewish Wedding* package can be added onto any wedding package. This package is a traditional Jewish wedding ceremony complete with all the prayers, music, blessings, and customs. This package is \$650 and does not include a Chuppah. For use of a Chuppah with tallit, there's an additional charge of \$180.

For more information, call (800) 792-2742 or visit [www.caribbeachresort.com](http://www.caribbeachresort.com) or [www.emeraldbeach.com](http://www.emeraldbeach.com)

As a reminder, we welcome and value your ideas about how we can work together to improve the tourism industry on our islands. Please visit [www.usvi-ideas.com](http://www.usvi-ideas.com) to share your thoughts with the Department of Tourism.



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To be included in the next set of partner updates, please email your news to [usviteam@mbooth.com](mailto:usviteam@mbooth.com)