
CARIBBEAN



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

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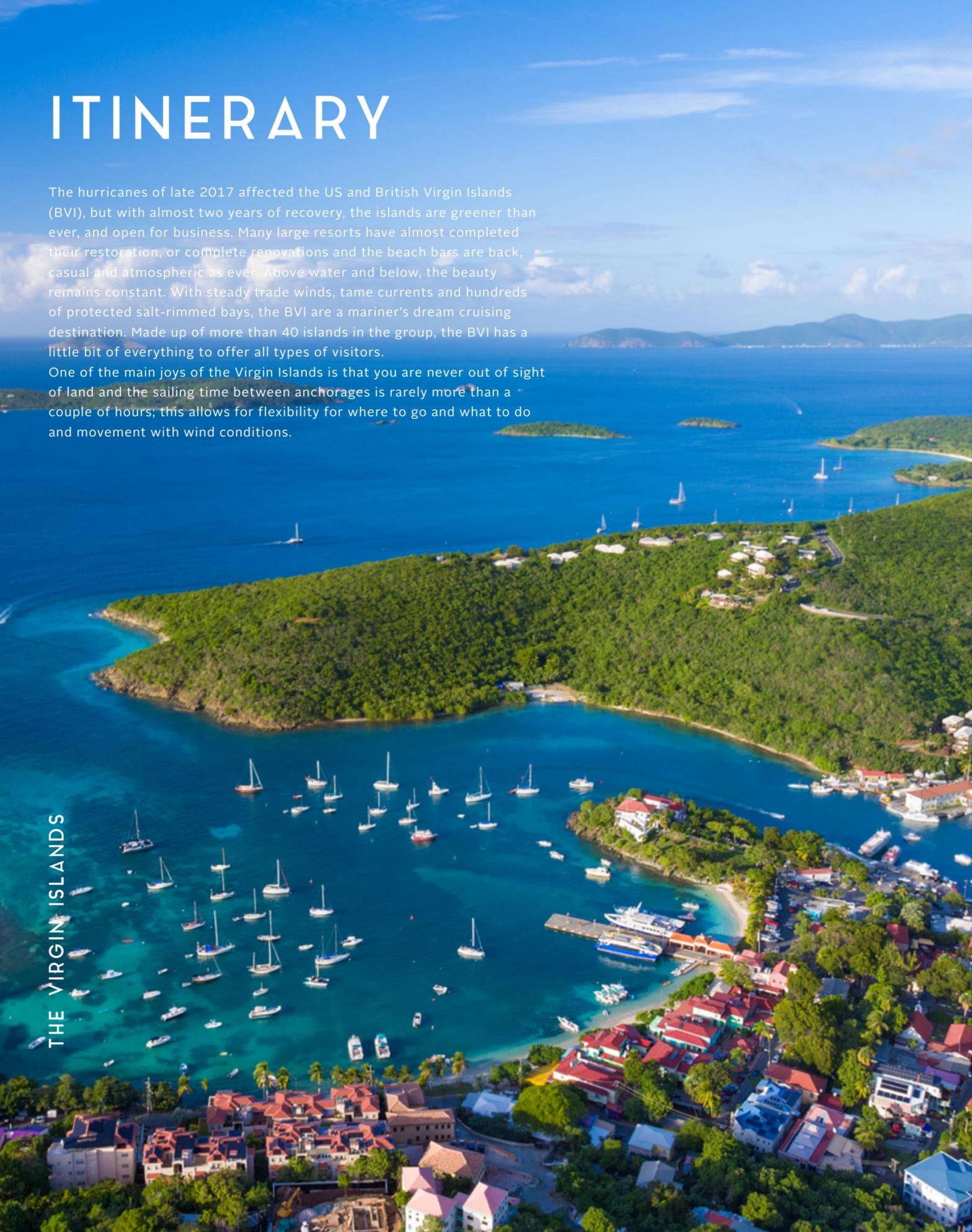


ITINERARY

The hurricanes of late 2017 affected the US and British Virgin Islands (BVI), but with almost two years of recovery, the islands are greener than ever, and open for business. Many large resorts have almost completed their restoration, or complete renovations and the beach bars are back, casual and atmospheric as ever. Above water and below, the beauty remains constant. With steady trade winds, tame currents and hundreds of protected salt-rimmed bays, the BVI are a mariner's dream cruising destination. Made up of more than 40 islands in the group, the BVI has a little bit of everything to offer all types of visitors.

One of the main joys of the Virgin Islands is that you are never out of sight of land and the sailing time between anchorages is rarely more than a couple of hours; this allows for flexibility for where to go and what to do and movement with wind conditions.

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS



DAY 1 - ST THOMAS, USVI

St Thomas, located in the US Virgin Islands, is the Caribbean's gem for vacationers who love the sea, white sand beaches, reefs and diving, shopping, history and photography. The capital, Charlotte Amelie, hosts an array of cruise ships and yachting visitors, together with many duty free shops and merchandise.

For those looking for a quieter venue off the beaten track, Magen's Bay on the north side of the island would be ideal for swimming and snorkeling and is the only bay available to use WaveRunners.

Board your yacht in Yacht Haven Grande today and take off for your holidays!



DAY 2 - SOPER'S HOLE, BVI

Today you will clear customs into Soper's Hole in the BVI, which has been said to be the calm bay that shielded the famous pirate Captain Morgan from the authorities. Another benefit of the post-Irma BVI is that this procedure used to take well over two hours in high season, it now takes little over 20 minutes.

Soper's Hole is a picturesque and friendly location to visit on Tortola, whether you're traveling by sea or land. The famous Pusser's Outpost can be found here in Soper's Hole where you can sample the famous wood distilled local rum. Some suggest after you check in through customs that you pay a visit to Pusser's for a famous Painkiller cocktail. And perhaps visit the shop afterwards!

Next, head over to Privateers Bay on Norman Island in time for lunch. This island was made famous in R.L Stevenson's 'Treasure Island' and looking at the caves today, one cannot help but be swept back in time to the days of pirates and privateers. Once again, this area is quiet, allowing for us to indulge any of our younger guests with a real pirate treasure hunt. A handmade map is found floating through our hulls in an old bottle. We then set off on an epic adventure to follow the map and find the treasure chest hidden in the deepest cave on Norman Island. After lunch and a snorkel in the caves, we move around into the Bight, a bay about five minutes away. Here we choose a secluded corner and guests can sunbathe away the rest of the afternoon, or engage in any of our water sports options. The sunsets here are beautiful and a fast becoming 'classic' photograph in front of the famous Willy T's ship, beached on the sand, is a must.



DAY 3 - PETER ISLAND, BVI

After a sumptuous breakfast, we head over to the stunning Indians, a snorkeling and dive spot, five minutes from the Bight. This spot has barely changed and still offers a host of marine life. They were named The Indians because from the distance, they were thought to resemble a Native American's chief's headdress. The second most popular dive site in the BVI after the wreck of the RMS Rhone, the unique rock formation has depth from 10 to 50ft and features a

tunnel which divers and snorkelers can pass through to the other side. There will be plentiful fish and often various turtles. Next, we head around to Little Harbor on Peter Island, a pristine nook where we stern anchor the yacht to rocks ashore, so that the yacht remains in the same spot and offers a private 'swimming pool' off the back. Here the water is crystal clear and further snorkeling along the bay after lunch often shows it to be a nursery for an abundance of tropical fish. There are a number of hikes on Peter Island for those feeling more energetic. The effects of the hurricane are more noticeable on land but the view out to sea is still inspiring.



DAY 4 - VIRGIN GORDA - THE BATHS

Measuring just eight-and-a-half miles long, Virgin Gorda is the third largest in the British Virgin Island chain. Dramatic slopes plunge from Gorda Peak into the turquoise waters far below.

Virgin Gorda is most famous for the 'Baths', a series of gigantic granite boulders that form caves that are filled with crystal clear water. Guests swim ashore to the beach and work their way through a labyrinth of house sized rocks, with quiet grottos and secret paths, culminating at the stunning Devil's Beach for a swim. Rejoining your yacht anchored at Trunk Bay with its beautiful waters and white sand, this is a place worth taking a moment to reflect and really enjoy paradise. Here we set up a gazebo for shade, with beach towels and chairs, games and music, and we serve a picnic lunch on the beach. This delivers a fantastic photo opportunity, and for those up to a little adventure, there is a slightly more challenging climb to the top of some boulders where you can look back at the whole of the BVI.

This evening after dinner venture to the top deck, get comfortable and watch the night sky the way it was meant to be, in completely undisturbed darkness and without any light from onshore. Once your eyes adjust the ocean will also offer up her secrets, with special sightings of phosphorescent plankton and jellyfish.

DAY 5 - ANEGADA

Anegada is the northernmost of the British Virgin Islands, lying approximately 15 miles north of Virgin Gorda. Anegada is the only inhabited British Virgin Island formed from coral and limestone, rather than being of volcanic origin. While the other islands are mountainous, Anegada is flat and low. Its highest point is only about 28 feet above sea level, earning it its name, which is the Spanish term for the flooded land, "tierra anegada". It is the second largest of the BVI, but it is also the most sparsely populated of the main islands, with a population of 285. Anegada is known for miles of white sand beaches and the 18-mile-long Horseshoe Reef, the largest barrier coral reef in the Caribbean, and the fourth largest on earth.

Besides its pristine beaches and pink flamingos, the island is most famous for its lobster, specifically the beach bars that serve arguably the best sand-in-your toes lobster dinner!



DAY 6 - SANDY SPIT

Depart after breakfast from Anegada for the 12 mile run to Sandy Spit. This tiny bit of sand off Green Cay makes one imagine what mutineers on deserted islands must have experienced, but with a cold drink in your hand, it makes for a dreamy spot to walk with your friends and family and enjoy sun and sand. It's a great place to Stand Up Paddleboard or to kayak and as always the snorkeling is magnificent.

DAY 7 - JOST VAN DYKE, BVI

The most frequented destination in Jost van Dyke is Great Harbor, also known as Belle Vue. The beach strip around the harbor is lined with small bars and restaurants. Since the late 1960s, Foxy's Bar in Great Harbor has been a popular stop for boaters and has since become famous for its New Years Eve Party (known locally as Old Year's Night). Infamous Foxy's is up and running and as colorful as ever. The gift shop is open and is the place to get your BVI mementos or T-shirts. Great Harbor on Jost Van Dyke was one of the places hit hardest by Hurricane Irma and it is truly humbling to see the power of mother nature. However Foxy himself



is often around and more than happy to share his stories and songs about the hurricanes and his life with any travelers over a cold beer. A truly local experience and one we still highly recommend.

Located nearby in White Bay is another famous bar called The Soggy Dollar, appropriately named because when it was built, there was neither a road nor a dock to access the bar, so it was common practice for boaters to anchor off the beach and swim to shore, and pay for their drinks with wet money. A nearby rock formation called the Bubbly Pool is a popular destination as well. It gets its name from the bubbles that form in the water when waves crash against the rocks. Anchoring out allows plenty of privacy at night and tucked up in the corner, the sunset and Sage Mountain is sure to captivate your attention.

Country music's Kenny Chesney recorded his famous song, 'No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems' on and around the island. Several scenes included One Love Bar and Ivan's Stress-Free Bar where it is common for patrons to mix their own drinks and leave their payment in the register. After dinner, relax on the top deck and take in the mesmerising sight of the starlit sky.

DAY 8 - ST THOMAS, USVI

Today we will make our way back to St Thomas where we will bid you adieu and hope you come back to visit again! As you ready your bags in preparation for your departure, we hope you pack all of your fond memories of this adventure in the Virgin Islands.





IYC RECOMMENDS

VIRGIN ISLANDS

VIRGIN GORDA

Virgin Gorda is dominated by the lush green slopes of Gorda Peak; at 1370ft high it rises from the blue Caribbean Sea, forming the shape of the reclining woman that gave the island its name. Spectacular views are found at the top if you brave the hike, but the more sedate way to appreciate the natural wonders of this island paradise is to explore them by boat. The island is the third largest of the British Virgin Islands, and is back up and running following the hurricanes of 2017, offering high-end resort dining, laid back island vibes, and sheltered, pristine cruising grounds.



DON'T MISS

The famous 'Baths', an otherworldly nest of huge granite boulders that hold a maze of water-filled caves, sandy paths and hidden grottoes.

BEST TIME TO VISIT

Warm temperatures year round mean there is never a bad time to visit, but the best weather is said to be from January, extending to the end of Spring.

KEY CRUISING AREAS

The island itself has an area of about eight square miles, with all its cruising grounds in easy reach. Highlights include the superyacht playground of North Sound, Prickly Pear Island's national park, the sheltered Little Dix Bay and at the southern end of Virgin Gorda, where the Baths and Devil's Beach are found.



BEST BEACH

Devil's Beach, the spectacular beach found the other side of the 'Baths' is the stuff of legend, and for this reason it is on every visitor's bucket list. For virgin beauty, head to Prickly Pear national park in the North Sound, a cactus-covered wildlife refuge that offers excellent swimming and snorkeling at its north and eastern beaches.



BEST LOCAL DISH

The official national dish is "fish and fungi" (a cornmeal and okra mix) with butter sauce.

BEST SPOTS FOR WINING AND DINING

A visit to Virgin Gorda's North Sound wouldn't be complete without a visit to the most 'chilled' dining spot on the island, the Fat Virgin Café. Only reached by boat, they have perfected laid back waterside dining and offer Caribbean classics such as roti and conch fritter. Another outstanding beachfront location is offered by the Asian fusion restaurant CocoMaya, whose food is regularly ranked as the best on the island. For a unique outlook and excellent wines try the Rock Café's Treehouse.

LOCAL CULTURE

Although a British territory, the island's identity is very much its own. Enjoy relaxed island vibes, local dishes, and the hospitality of a true island community to the upbeat sounds of the local folk music known as 'fungi'.



TO DO

After a day spent marvelling at the natural wonders found at the Devil's Bay beach and national park, return to your yacht for sunset drinks, then, after dark swim with phosphorescent plankton for an experience that won't be forgotten.