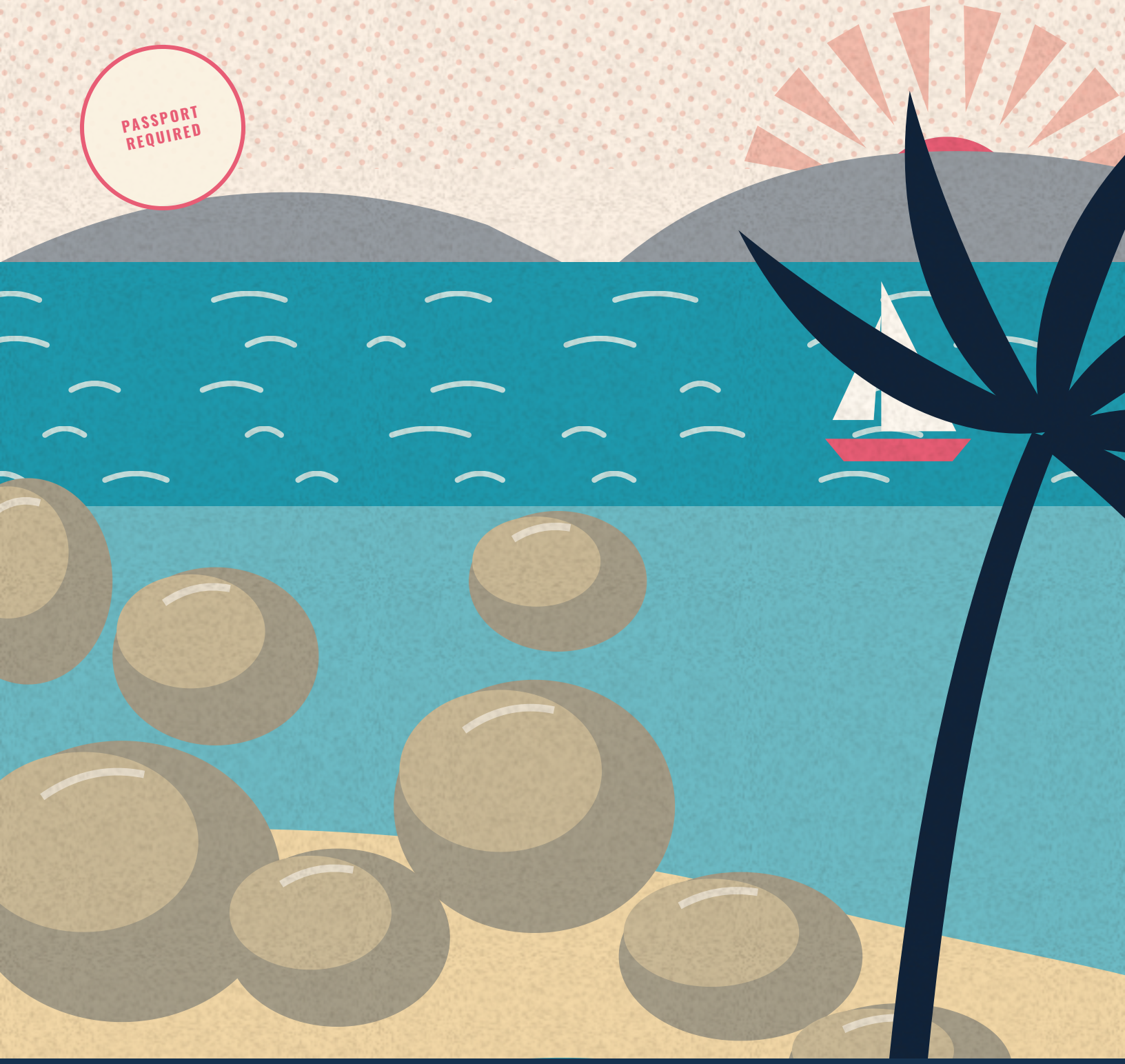
FROM THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

THE BVI

The Insider's Day-Trip Guide to the British Virgin Islands

PASSPORT REQUIRED



WELCOMETOVI

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WELCOME

A different country, a short boat ride away.

From St. Thomas and St. John you can see the British Virgin Islands on the horizon. Jost Van Dyke's beach bars, the giant boulders of The Baths, the caves of Norman Island: they're all a day trip away. You're crossing an international border, though, and that's where most day-trippers come unstuck.

This guide is built for **visitors and residents of the U.S. Virgin Islands** heading over for a day or two. It covers the paperwork, the ferries and what they really cost, and gives you a timed plan for each island that gets you back in time for your flight, your ship or your dinner.

The BVI is a British Overseas Territory with its own immigration, customs, fees and phone networks. It also uses the U.S. dollar and drives on the left, so plenty will feel familiar.

Every rule and fee was checked against official and operator sources in November 2026. Where something was proposed but not yet confirmed, you'll see a CONFIRM tag.

> **ASK MOKO**
> Moko covers the BVI as well. Ask "What ferry gets me to Jost on a Tuesday?" or "Is The Baths busy today?" at **welcometovi.com/ai-guide**.

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START HERE

Twelve things that decide your day

Get these right and the BVI is easy.

01 **Bring a passport. Everyone.**
U.S. citizens included. A passport card or driver's licence won't get you into the BVI.

02 **Do the embarkation card**
Since January 1, 2025, all travellers entering the BVI must complete an online embarkation card. It can be done up to 72 hours ahead.

03 **Budget for fees**
There's a $10 environmental and tourism levy on arrival, and a $20 departure tax when you leave by sea. Ferry tickets don't always include them.

04 **Ferries don't run every day**
The direct routes from St. Thomas and St. John to Jost and Virgin Gorda only run on certain days. Check before you plan.

05 **Customs takes time**
Allow 30–60 minutes or more at immigration, both ways. Holiday weekends are slower.

06 **Come back through U.S. Customs**
On return you clear CBP at Cruz Bay, Red Hook or Charlotte Amalie. Have your passport ready.

07 **Turn off data roaming**
BVI networks charge international rates on U.S. plans. Download offline maps.

08 **Same money, same side of the road**
The BVI uses the U.S. dollar and drives on the left, just like the USVI.

09 **Book boat days early**
Day charters to Jost, Norman and The Baths fill up in high season. Ask exactly which fees are included.

10 **The Baths gets crowded**
Arrive early or late in the day, and check for cruise-ship days and fee changes.

11 **Seas can be rough**
Winter swell can close The Baths and roughen the channels. Take seasickness tablets before you board.

12 **Respect it: it's their home**
"Good morning" first, cover up off the beach, and treat parks and reefs gently.

PAPERWORK

Entering & leaving the BVI

Before you go

- **A valid passport** for every traveller, U.S. citizens included. Visitors from many countries, including the U.S., don't need a visa for a short tourist stay. Non-U.S. citizens should also check they can *re-enter* the United States.
- **The online embarkation card.** From January 1, 2025, everyone entering the BVI must complete one. You can apply up to 72 hours before arrival. Use the official BVI government portal and avoid look-alike sites that charge extra.
- **Your return ticket** and proof of where you're staying if you're overnighting.

Fees you'll pay

Environmental & tourism levy, on arrival	$10
Departure tax when leaving by sea (visitors)	$20
Ferry operator fees and USVI dock fees	varies

The levy is set by the BVI Government and the departure tax per the UK Foreign Office's BVI travel advice. Some ferry fares quote the taxes separately (a "+$28 tax & fees" line is common on USVI–BVI round trips). Always ask what's included.

Coming back to the USVI

- You clear **U.S. Customs and Border Protection** at the ferry terminal in Cruz Bay, Red Hook or Charlotte Amalie
- Have your passport out and your purchases ready to declare
- Rum, cigars and other purchases count toward your U.S. duty-free allowance. Check CBP's current limits before you shop.
- Don't bring back fruit, plants, meat or soil without checking the rules first

Money, phones & driving

- **Money:** the U.S. dollar is the currency. Cards are common; carry cash for taxis and small bars.
- **Phones:** BVI networks count as international roaming. Turn off data roaming or buy a travel pass.
- **Driving:** on the left. Roads are very steep. Use taxis or tours on a day trip.

> **DAY-TRIP TIMING RULE**
> Immigration on both sides can take 30–60 minutes or more. Never book the last ferry if you have a flight or a ship to catch the same evening.

PLANS

Day-trip plans & what they cost

The Baths day (Thu or Sun)

8:00	Inter-Island from Red Hook (8:30 from Cruz Bay)
~9:45	Arrive Spanish Town; BVI immigration and levy
10:30	Taxi to The Baths; walk the trail to Devil's Bay
1:00	Lunch at the top, or a swim at Spring Bay
2:15	Back to the dock; departure tax and check-in
3:00	Ferry home; U.S. Customs on arrival

The charter day (any day)

8:30	Leave Red Hook or Cruz Bay by private charter; customs at Jost or West End
10:00	Sandy Spit and White Bay
12:30	Lunch on board or at a beach bar
2:00	Snorkel the Caves at Norman Island
4:30	Clear out of the BVI, then U.S. Customs back home

A sample budget, per adult

PUBLIC-FERRY JOST DAY	APPROX.
Taxi to Red Hook and back (from St. Thomas town, 2+ people)	$30
Round-trip ferry	~$80
Ferry taxes & fees line ~$28 CONFIRM	
BVI arrival levy (if not included)	$10
Local taxis on Jost	~$10–20
Lunch & drinks	$40–60
Total	**~$200**

Fares and fees vary by operator and season, so treat this as a planning estimate. Private charters are usually priced per boat. Divide by your group size.

> **BUILD IT WITH MOKO**
> Moko can check this week's ferry days and build your BVI day around them.

PRACTICAL

Checklist, calendar & numbers

Day-trip checklist

- [ ] Passport, valid for the whole trip, for every traveller
- [ ] Online BVI embarkation card done (within 72 hours)
- [ ] Ferry tickets and the return time written down
- [ ] Cash for the levy, departure tax, taxis and tips
- [ ] A card for bigger purchases
- [ ] Data roaming off, offline maps downloaded
- [ ] Reef-safe sunscreen and a rash guard
- [ ] Water shoes (The Baths!) and a dry bag
- [ ] Seasickness tablets taken before boarding
- [ ] Hat, water, snacks
- [ ] Receipts for anything you'll declare to U.S. Customs
- [ ] Your hotel, ship or flight time and a phone number

When to go

- **Dec–Apr**: peak season and the best weather, but busier. Book charters early.
- **Winter swell** can close The Baths and the Bubbly Pool
- **Aug–Oct**: peak hurricane risk. Ferries may be reduced.
- **Holidays**: New Year's Eve on Jost is famous and very busy. Book transport early.

BVI calendar highlights

- **Spring**: the BVI Spring Regatta and sailing events
- **Late July – early August**: the Emancipation Festival
- **December 31**: Old Year's Night parties on Jost Van Dyke

Useful contacts

Emergency (BVI)	999 or 911
Inter-Island Boat Services (Red Hook / Cruz Bay → Jost, Virgin Gorda)	(340) 776-6597
BVI National Parks Trust	+1 (284) 393-9284
BVI Tourism: ferry schedules	bvitourism.com
My charter / water taxi	

Sources (checked Nov 4, 2026): Government of the Virgin Islands press release (environmental & tourism levy); UK Foreign Office BVI travel advice (embarkation card, sea departure tax); National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands (Baths day pass) and Virgin Islands News Online (requested fee increases); operator and BVI Tourism ferry schedules. Rules and fees change, so confirm locally. This guide is general information, and WelcomeToVI accepts no liability for changes or errors.



ONE GUIDE FOR ALL THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

MEET MOKO

Your AI guide to the U.S. and British Virgin Islands. Ask which ferry runs today, what the fees are, or whether The Baths is calm, and get the answer an island friend would give you.

WELCOMETOVI.COM/AI-GUIDE

ALSO IN THIS SERIES:
ST. THOMAS · ST. JOHN · ST. CROIX · PORT DAY · THE ISLAND MOVE

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