WELCOMETOVI · FAMILY EDITION

ISLAND FAMILY FUN

The Family & Kids Guide to the U.S. Virgin Islands



2027 EDITION

Beaches by age · Snorkeling · Junior Rangers
+ kids' activity pages inside

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12 THINGS FAMILIES SHOULD KNOW

The fridge-door list

01 **No passports for kids**
Not needed for a direct U.S.–USVI trip. A BVI day trip needs one for everyone.

02 **Car seats are the law**
Under 8 or under 4'9" means a car or booster seat. Under 14 rides in the back.

03 **Drive on the left**
Left side of the road, steep hills, sharp curves. Expect car sickness.

04 **Mineral sunscreen only**
Sunscreens with oxybenzone, octinoxate or octocrylene are banned for sale.

05 **Water shoes for everyone**
Sea urchins and rocks love bare feet.

06 **Avoid the manchineel tree**
Its little green 'apples' and sap are poisonous. Never shelter under it in rain.

07 **Pick calm bays**
North-shore bays can get winter swells. Check conditions daily.

08 **Go early, rest at noon**
The midday sun is strong. Beach in the morning, pool or nap after lunch.

09 **Earn a Junior Ranger badge**
Free workbooks at the national park visitor centers. Ages about 5–13.

10 **Book animal encounters ahead**
Coral World encounters have age and weight rules, and they sell out.

11 **Cruise-ship days are busy**
Pick the less-busy beaches and attractions when several ships are in port.

12 **Ferries: buy, board, breathe**
Arrive early, keep kids seated, and bring something for motion sickness.

Island pace. Shops and restaurants run on island time, and roads are slow. Plan **one big outing a day** and leave the rest for the beach and the pool. Kids remember the turtles, not the itinerary.

WHICH ISLAND & WHEN TO GO

Match the island to your crew

Island	Why families like it	Good to know
St. Thomas	The most flights, resorts with kids' pools, Coral World, the Skyride, calm beaches and an easy ferry to St. John or Water Island	Busy on big cruise days. Hilly roads.
St. John	National park beaches, turtles at Maho Bay, the Trunk Bay snorkel trail, Junior Ranger badges, wild donkeys	Ferry only. Little nightlife. Villas sit on steep roads.
St. Croix	Room to spread out, a yellow Danish fort, Buck Island snorkeling, the glowing bio-bay, botanical garden	A flight or seaplane from St. Thomas. Distances are bigger, so you'll want a car.

By age

LITTLE ONES (0–5)

Choose a resort or condo with a pool and a shallow, calm beach close by. St. Thomas's east end or Water Island work well. Keep transfers short and nap times sacred.

BIG KIDS (6–12)

Snorkeling, sea turtles, forts, Junior Ranger books and a boat day. St. John plus a couple of days on St. Thomas is a great mix.

TEENS

Snorkel trips, kayaking, the bio-bay at night, hikes to lookouts, and a BVI boat day (passports). St. Croix gives them more freedom.

When to go

Months	What it's like with kids
December – April	The driest, breeziest and busiest months. Winter school breaks fill up, so book early.
June – July	Summer break. It's hot, the seas are often calm and prices are lower. Hurricane season starts June 1, so book flexibly.
August – November	The rainiest stretch and the peak of hurricane season, but also the quietest beaches. Travel insurance is a must.

BEACHES BY AGE

Calm, shallow and fun, island by island

Beach	Island	Why families love it	Best for
Magens Bay	STT	A long, calm, sheltered bay with soft sand and gentle water. Has facilities and a small entry fee.	All ages, especially little ones
Lindquist (Smith Bay Park)	STT	A protected park beach on the east end. Calm and quieter.	Toddlers, picnics
Coki Beach	STT	Fish right off the sand, next to Coral World. Can be lively on cruise days.	First snorkels (6+)
Honeymoon Beach, Water Island	STT	A short ferry hop, calm water and a laid-back feel. The ferry is half the fun.	All ages
Trunk Bay	STJ	A marked underwater snorkel trail. Facilities and an entry fee.	Big kids, teens
Maho Bay	STJ	A shallow, sandy entry, with turtles grazing on the seagrass.	Everyone, turtle spotting
Cinnamon Bay	STJ	A long beach with room to roam, and history close by.	Big kids
Sandy Point	STX	A wide, wild beach and a protected sea turtle nesting area, so access is limited. CONFIRM Check open days.	Nature lovers
Cane Bay	STX	North-shore snorkeling. Waves can be bigger in winter.	Teens, strong swimmers

Read the water. Many beaches have **no lifeguard**. In winter (Nov–Mar), north-shore swells can make usually calm bays rough. If the waves are breaking hard on the sand, pick another beach that day.

Beach kit: a shade tent or umbrella, rash guards, water shoes, a cooler with water, snacks, a first-aid pouch, a dry bag for phones and a bucket for "treasures," which go back before you leave.

ISLAND BINGO

Kids: cross off each thing when you spot it. Five in a row wins!

Sea turtle	Iguana	Sailboat	Pelican diving	Ferry ride
Starfish	Coconut	Rainbow	Seaplane	Cannon
Donkey	Parrotfish	FREE SPACE	Safari taxi	Johnnycake
Mango	Rooster	Cruise ship	Hammock	Lighthouse
Sea glass	Flamboyant tree	Steel pan music	Hermit crab	Sunset

EXPLORER'S NAME

.....

DATE I GOT BINGO

.....

MY PRIZE

.....

Grown-ups: print one card per kid. Bonus rule: the explorer who fills the whole card picks the last-night dinner.

SEA-CREATURE SPOTTER & JOURNAL

Tick it, then write where you saw it

	Creature	How to know it	Where I saw it
☐	**Green sea turtle**	Big flippers, grazes on seagrass	
☐	**Parrotfish**	Rainbow colors, crunches coral into sand	
☐	**Blue tang**	Bright blue, swims in groups	
☐	**Sergeant major**	Yellow with black stripes	
☐	**Cushion sea star**	Chunky orange star on the sand	
☐	**Southern stingray**	Flat and glides along the bottom	
☐	**Squid**	Hovers in a little line, changes color	
☐	**Nurse shark**	Naps under ledges. Leave it be!	
☐	**Trumpetfish**	Long and skinny, hides head-down	
☐	**Brain coral**	Looks like a big brain. Don't touch!	

My island journal

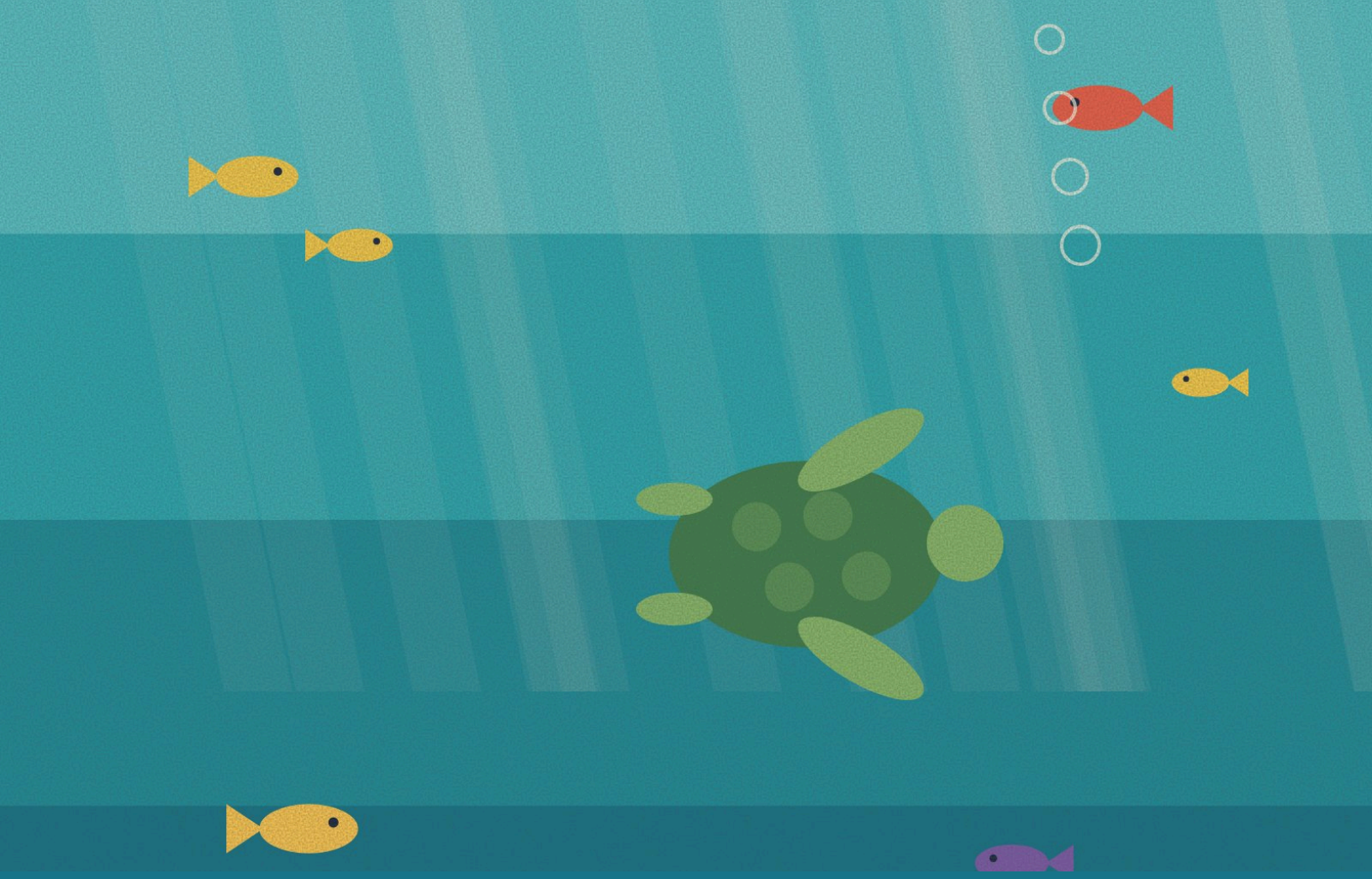
THE BEST THING I DID TODAY

THE COOLEST ANIMAL I SAW

A NEW WORD I LEARNED

MY FAVORITE FOOD ON THE ISLAND

DRAW YOUR FAVORITE MOMENT



"ARE WE THERE YET?" "YES!"

ASK MOKO WHERE THE TURTLES ARE TODAY

Moko is our AI Virgin Islands guide. It finds calm beaches, kid-friendly lunch spots, ferry times and rainy-day ideas in seconds, and it plans your days around nap time.

WELCOMETOVI.COM/AI-GUIDE

Also in the shop: St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix guides, the BVI Day-Trip Guide and the Port Day Guide.