U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

ST. CROIX

The Insider's Guide to the Big Island

TWO TOWNS
ONE
BIG ISLAND



WELCOMETOVI

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WELCOME

Bigger, slower, older, and wonderfully Crucian.

St. Croix is the largest of the U.S. Virgin Islands, about 84 square miles and roughly 40 miles south of St. Thomas. It has two historic towns, rolling hills dotted with stone sugar mills, a rainforest, the easternmost point of the United States, and a reef so good a president made it a national monument.

People from St. Croix are **Crucians**, and they're proud of it. The island has its own food, its own music (quelbe and scratch bands), its own carnival at Christmas, and a pace that rewards visitors who slow down to match it.

This is the third guide in our U.S. Virgin Islands series. Every fare and fee was checked against official and operator sources in November 2026.

TAKE MOKO WITH YOU

Ask WelcomeToVI's AI guide anything, like "Is Sandy Point open this weekend?" or "Where's the best sunset in Frederiksted?", at **welcometovi.com/ai-guide**.

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START HERE

Twelve things that decide your trip

St. Croix rewards visitors who plan a little.

01 **Rent a car**
The island is big and spread out. Taxis are per person and add up fast. A car pays for itself in a day or two.

02 **Drive on the left**
In American cars. The main roads are wide and easy; the back roads are narrow and winding.

03 **Sandy Point keeps its own hours**
Open weekends only, 10–4, and closed entirely April 1 – August 31 for nesting leatherback turtles.

04 **Buck Island is boat-only**
No entry fee. Licensed concession boats leave from Christiansted and Green Cay Marina. Book a day ahead.

05 **Two towns, two moods**
Christiansted is the busier harbour town. Frederiksted is laid-back, with the cruise pier and the sunsets.

06 **Taxis are per person, from the airport too**
Airport to Christiansted is $24 for one or two people, then $14 each for three or more. Fares on page 7.

07 **Getting here from St. Thomas takes planning**
A 2-hour ferry on most days, or a 25-minute seaplane or short flight.

08 **Christmas is carnival**
The Crucian Christmas Festival runs from late December into early January. Book early.

09 **Cash for the small stuff**
Food trucks, roadside stands and many beach bars prefer cash.

10 **Reef-safe sunscreen only**
It's the law in the USVI, and it's essential at Buck Island.

11 **Say good morning**
Greet first, every time. In Crucian culture it's not optional.

12 **Sundays are slow**
Many shops close. Beaches and family cook-outs take over. Plan around it.

GETTING AROUND

The St. Croix fare board

Official fares from the tariff in force since October 2022. Unlike on St. Thomas, the first rate covers **one or two people together**, and each extra person pays the lower "3+" rate.

FROM THE AIRPORT TO	1–2 PEOPLE	3+ EACH
Frederiksted	$18	$9
Christiansted	$24	$14
Sandy Point	$23	$12
Buccaneer	$30	$15
Carambola	$30	$15
Cane Bay Plantation	$30	$15
Tamarind Reef	$32	$17
Green Cay (marina)	$33	$17
Divi Carina Bay	$36	$18
Cotton Valley	$36	$17
Grapetree Bay	$36	$17

FROM CHRISTIANSTED TO	1–2 PEOPLE	3+ EACH
Club St. Croix	$12	$6
Green Cay (marina)	$18	$9
Tamarind Reef	$18	$9
Cotton Valley	$26	$14
Divi Carina Bay	$27	$14
Grapetree Bay	$27	$14
Cane Bay	$36	$17
Frederiksted	$36	$17
Carambola	$45	$18

FROM FREDERIKSTED TO	1–2	3+ EACH
Christiansted	$36	$17
Carambola	$41	$17
Divi Carina Bay	$54	$27

Extras

Luggage	$3 / bag
Oversized item	max $6
Midnight – 6 a.m.	+$3 pp
Waiting (after 5 free min)	$2 / min
Sightseeing tour, 3 hrs	$150 (1–4) · $30 pp (5+)

DO THE MATH

A couple taking taxis from the airport to Christiansted and back, plus one round trip to Frederiksted, pays about $120 in fares. That's often more than a day's car rental.

Fares are set by the V.I. Taxicab Commission and can change. The rate card in the taxi is the final word. Agree the total before you set off.

BEACHES

The beach index

Calm = how sheltered the water usually is · **Snorkel** = reef from shore · **Facilities** = restrooms, food, rentals. Conditions change daily, and all USVI beaches are public by law.

BEACH	SIDE	CALM	SNORKEL	FACILITIES	ENTRY
Sandy Point The longest beach in the USVI and a turtle refuge. Weekends 10–4, closed Apr–Aug. No shade.	West	●●●●○	●○○○○	●○○○○	Free
Rainbow Beach Calm, lively, with a beach bar and water sports. Walkable or a short ride from the pier.	West	●●●●●	●●●○○	●●●●○	Free
Frederiksted Beach Right by town and the pier. Easy swim, great sunsets.	West	●●●●●	●●●○○	●●●○○	Free
Cane Bay Snorkel and dive the famous Wall just offshore. Dive shops and bars.	North	●●●○○	●●●●●	●●●●○	Free
Davis Bay Gorgeous cove. Often rough, so swim with care.	North	●●○○○	●●●○○	●●○○○	Free
Salt River / Columbus Landing History, mangroves and calm water at the national park.	North	●●●●○	●●○○○	●○○○○	Free
Protestant Cay A tiny island in the harbour, a minutes-long ferry ride from the boardwalk.	Christiansted	●●●●●	●●●○○	●●●○○	Free (ferry)
Shoys Quiet, local, with shade under the trees.	East	●●●○○	●●●○○	●○○○○	Free
Cramer Park A local favourite for weekend cook-outs. Calm.	East	●●●●●	●●○○○	●●●○○	Free
Grapetree A long south-shore beach. Can be breezy.	East	●●●●○	●●●○○	●●○○○	Free
Isaac & Jack Bays Hike-in nature preserve. Wild, beautiful, turtle nesting.	East End	●●●●○	●●●●○	●○○○○	Free
Buck Island Turtle Beach plus the underwater trail. See next page.	Offshore	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●○○○	Boat fare

ON THE WATER

Buck Island, reefs & turtles

Buck Island Reef National Monument

A small, uninhabited island about 1.5 miles off the north-east coast. President Kennedy protected it in 1961, and it was expanded in 2001. It's one of the best snorkel days in the Caribbean.

- **No entrance fee**, but it's **boat-only**. Licensed concession boats run half- and full-day trips from the Christiansted waterfront and Green Cay Marina.
- The **underwater snorkel trail** off the east end winds through elkhorn coral with marker plaques.
- **Turtle Beach** on the west end is a classic white-sand stop with a short hiking trail.
- No fishing, no collecting and no touching. Wear a rash guard and reef-safe sunscreen.
- Book a day ahead in high season, and ask what's included (gear, drinks, lunch).

Cane Bay Wall

Just a short swim off Cane Bay Beach, the sea floor drops into a deep wall. It's a world-famous shore dive, and the shallows make good snorkelling. Local dive shops run guided dives and gear rental.

Frederiksted Pier

The pier pilings are a famous night and day dive, known for seahorses and frogfish. Dive only with a guide, and never when a cruise ship is docked or manoeuvring.

Sandy Point rules

- Open **Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.**, outside the nesting closure
- **Closed April 1 – August 31** for leatherback nesting and hatching
- Don't push umbrella poles or stakes into the sand. There may be nests underneath.
- No fires, and leave no trace. Bring your own shade, water and snacks.
- It's the beach from the last scene of *The Shawshank Redemption*

TURTLE WATCH

Want to see nesting leatherbacks? Ask about guided turtle-watch programmes run with the wildlife refuge and local environmental groups during nesting season. Never approach a turtle or use flash.

BIOLUMINESCENCE

Salt River Bay is one of the places to see glowing water. Book a guided night kayak tour on a dark, moonless night.



YOUR GUIDE DOESN'T END HERE

MEET MOKO

Your AI Virgin Islands guide. Ask whether Sandy Point is open, what the taxi to Cane Bay costs, or where to find the best kallaloo, and get the answer a Crucian friend would give you.

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

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