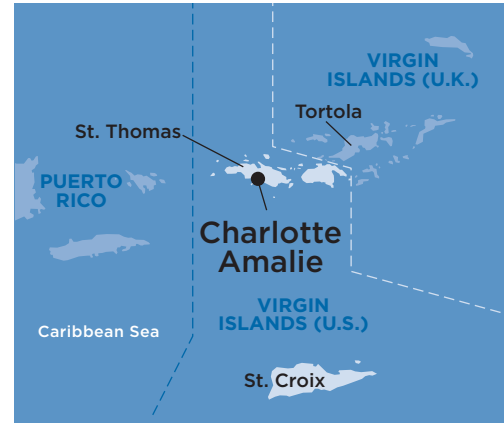


- POINTS OF INTEREST**
- 1 Magens Bay
  - 2 Coral World
  - 3 Mountain Top
  - 4 St. Peter Great House
  - 5 St. John
  - 6 Snorkeling & Diving
  - 7 British Virgin Islands

# ST. THOMAS

## Port Guide



### ST. THOMAS at a glance

**Founded:** While the prehistoric Ciboney people from South America lived here as early as 1500 B.C., St. Thomas was discovered by Columbus on his second voyage and was established as a trading post by the Dutch West India Company in 1657.

**Region:** An unincorporated district, St. Thomas is part of the United States Virgin Islands and is located in the eastern Caribbean, just east of Haiti. It's just 13 miles long by 4 miles wide.

**Population:** 51,181 (est. 2000)

**Climate:** The weather is close to perfect, with year-round temperatures ranging from 73°F to 89°F, depending on the breezes. Scuba season runs April to August, when the water is clearer. Tourist season runs December to May.

**Language:** English

**Currency:** U.S. Dollar (USD). Credit cards are widely accepted.



View of Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas

## THE BEST OF ST. THOMAS

Don't miss out on the top Points of Interest in this port — Book a Princess Excursion and experience them for yourself!

- 1 Magens Bay**  
One of the world's best beaches as selected by *National Geographic* magazine.
- 2 Coral World**  
This 4.5-acre marine park offers an underwater observatory with 360-degree views of fish and other sea creatures, and the opportunity to pet sharks and hand feed stingrays.
- 3 Mountain Top**  
This totally rebuilt mecca on top of a mountain, features souvenir shopping and excellent views of St. Thomas and neighboring islands. It is considered to be the birthplace of the banana daiquiri.
- 4 St. Peter Great House**  
Nestled in the peaks of St. Thomas, this scenic location was originally part of the 150-acre Plantation St. Peter. Today the Great House boasts classic West Indian architecture and 150 species of Caribbean plants and fruits.
- 5 St. John**  
The smallest of the U.S. Virgin Islands is only a 30-minute ferry ride away. Two thirds of the island is a national park. Annaberg Sugar Plantation Ruins and Trunk Bay are two favorite sights.
- 6 Snorkeling & Diving**  
The island's underwater world is beautifully unveiled to both snorkelers and divers, exhibiting sunken boat wrecks, breathtaking coral reefs and a colorful spectrum of marine life.
- 7 British Virgin Islands**  
Virgin Gorda and Tortola are just two of several islands under British rule. Both are laid back and scenic with attractions like The Baths and swimming with the dolphins.

Explore St. Thomas with a Princess Shore Excursion. Visit the Tour Office for more information.

# ST. THOMAS

## Paradise

This warm, welcoming island has two personalities: one part tranquil oasis of relaxing cruises, scenic drives and leisurely strolls; and another part adrenaline pumping zip lines, scuba dives and kayaking. Whether you prefer to kick back or kick into high gear, this fantasy island is greater than the sum of its parts.

### Unclaimed paradise

It may be hard to believe but St. Thomas' powdery white beaches, crystalline waters and lush vegetation made so little an impression upon Columbus when he landed here in 1493 that he didn't even stake a claim. Spain's loss was pirate's gain and the island soon became a haven for notorious buccaneers.

Seizing the opportunity to establish a trade route in the Americas, agents of the Dutch West India Company founded the first settlement in 1672.

Reminders of Dutch colonization are peppered across the island. Feel the centuries unfold as island tours showcase stunning examples such as lovely manor houses listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

In the 17th century, the islands were divided into two territorial units, one English and the other Danish; in 1917, the U.S. purchased the Danish half. Today, tourists have replaced pirates and adventures across the island and under the sea would make Columbus envious.

### Aqua culture

The holy trinity of sand, surf and sun are worshipped here with activities that range from family-friendly getaways to romantic escapes.

There are as many beaches that offer relaxation as there are fish in the sea. Swim in the crystalline waters or stretch out and wiggle your toes in the snow-white sands of Magens Bay, hailed as one of the top 10 beaches in the world by *National Geographic* magazine. Or cruise over to St. John and luxuriate on the sands of Trunk Bay or Honeymoon Beach.

Looking for encounters with local wildlife? Swim, snorkel and scuba among an ocean full of fish or interact with sea lions at Coral World Ocean Park. Want to swim with a dolphin? Then head over to Tortola Island.

For family-sized activities, check out Turtle Cove on Buck Island. But don't let the kids have all the fun. Hop aboard a catamaran and let champagne and relaxing music take you into a world beyond relaxation and romance.



The view from Skyline drive looking across the town of Charlotte Amalie

### Land rovers

Water sports is just one of the many reasons outdoor enthusiasts flock here. There's plenty for landlubbers to enjoy, too.

If you thrive on outdoor adventure then get ready to buckle in, latch on and take off on a gravity-defying, zip lining tour. Marvel at the dramatic views as you zip across the treetops.

A more leisurely way to fly sky high is aboard the St. Thomas Skyride, a modern aerial cable car that rises 700 feet above sea level and glides up to Paradise Point.

For the best of land and sea, the excursion to the Mangrove Lagoon Wildlife Sanctuary and Marine Preserve offers kayaking, snorkeling and hiking while The Baths on Virgin Gorda is a wonderland of rock formations and intriguing sea caves.

### The dry way to see the sea

Experience a splashy array of fish, corals, and sea sponges without getting wet.

View the coral gardens surrounding Coki Point from inside the *Nautilus* semi-submarine, a surface vessel with viewing windows eight feet below the waterline.

Drive under the Caribbean Sea in a BOSS, Breathing Observation Submersible Scooter, for an up close look at the wonders below the surface.

Cruise through the calm harbor waters of Charlotte Amalie aboard the *Kon Tiki*. With steel drums playing and tropical punch in hand, gaze through the glass viewing boxes while learning the island's pirate history.

Whether you're a thrill seeker or prefer to observe from a relaxing spot on the beach, or you like to indulge in sightseeing or have an energetic family to entertain—St. Thomas' multiple personalities offer the perfect vacation destination.

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Local cuisine

After centuries of European and African influences, St. Thomas is a melting pot of culinary delights. Pumpkin fritters, kallaloo (similar to gumbo), johnnycakes, and beans and rice are just a few tasty examples. Typical island fare such as snapper, grouper, yellowtail and tuna are fresh and delicious. You can't go wrong with exotic fruits that mimic the colors of the rainbow: mangoes, papaya, passion fruit, guava and pineapple.

### On a sweet note

By the early 18th century, sugarcane was so popular and profitable an export that the tiny island of St. John had 25 active sugar producing factories. Cruises to the island include a stop at Annaberg Sugar Mill, whose ruins include a church, windmill tower, horse mill, living quarters and a dungeon.

### Step right this way

Charlotte Amalie's famed 99 Steps, which connect the upper and lower parts of town, actually contains 103 steps.

### First impression

The 19th-century Impressionist painter Camille Pissarro was born in St. Thomas in 1830 and moved to France when he was 12.

### Native tongue

During the 18th and 19th centuries Dutch was the dominant language.

### Avast, they be pirates!

Blackbeard wasn't the only pirate to seek refuge on St. Thomas—Bluebeard was a frequent visitor, too.

### Fantasy islands

The Virgin Islands are the western island group of the Leeward Islands and includes St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John, and Water Island.

### Sacred name

Christopher Columbus named the islands after the epic and tragic legend of St. Ursula, a Christian saint, and the 11,000 martyred virgins.

### Mountain high

1,277-foot-tall Bordeaux Mountain on St. John is the highest summit in the Virgin Islands.

### What's in a name?

The official name of the British territory is the Virgin Islands, and the official name of the U.S. territory is the Virgin Islands of the United States.

### Meet the locals

Citizens of the Virgin Islands are called Virgin Islanders.

### Go shopping

Head over to Main Street in Charlotte Amalie and you'll find plenty of upscale boutiques and restaurants.

### Island facts

Folk music known as *quelbe*, a fusion of bamboula rhythms and chants, cariso songs and melodies, is the official traditional music of the Virgin Islands.

The sugar bird, recognized by its bright yellow breast, is the official bird.

The blossom of the yellow elder represents the island's official flower.

"United in Pride and Hope" is the acclaimed motto.

### Tidy sum

The U.S. purchased St. Thomas for \$25 million.

### National holiday

Transfer Day, the official day Denmark relinquished control to the U.S. is celebrated every March 27.

### Drive right

Like in the UK, drivers in the Virgin Islands travel on the left hand side of the road.

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

**Shore Excursions:** Passengers will meet at a specific location for each shore excursion departure. Please refer to your tour ticket and the Princess Patter for the correct place and time. Your Shore Excursion staff or our Tour Operator will be at that location to assist you. It's recommended that you drink bottled water while in port.

**Docking:** Ship docks at Crown Bay. Shops are located at the pier. Or the ship will dock at the West Indian Company pier (WICO) where Havensight shopping center is located.

**Proper Attire:** The weather is consistently pleasant to warm. A light shirt, short and long sleeved for the occasional cool evening.

**Transportation:** From Crown Bay and WICO, downtown Charlotte Amalie is 1-1/2 miles away. Taxi fare from Crown Bay is \$5 per person one way. From WICO pier \$4 per person. Primarily open-sided safari trucks are used, along with vans. Vehicles are not metered. Confirm fare before departing. Ferries operate to St. John.

**Beaches:** Magens Bay is considered one of the finest, approximately 30 minutes away from the ship. Facilities, chairs, and food and beverage are available. Public admission is \$4 per person. Beautiful Trunk Bay, on St. John, is a 30-minute ferry ride away.

**Shopping:** The Caribbean's most famous duty-free shopping port. Excellent buys on jewelry, name brand watches, liquor and linens. There is no sales tax and U.S. Customs allowances are generous for shoppers. Most stores are open 9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Saturday. Sunday hours are 9:00am to 1:00pm. Havensight stores are usually open later.

**Tipping:** Suggested tipping is 15 to 20 percent for good service.

**Banks:** Hours are 8:30am to 3:00pm, Monday through Thursday. Friday hours are 8:30am to 4:00pm.

**Post Office:** Downtown branch is on Main Street. Hours are 7:30am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday. Saturday hours are 7:30am to 12:00pm.

**Emergency Numbers:** Emergency services - 911

**Tourist Information Office:** From Crown Bay pier - Crown Bay Welcome Centre 8268 Crown Bay Center, Building D St. Thomas, USVI, 00802

From WICO pier - Havensight Mall, Bld.3 St. Thomas, USVI, 00802 Tel: (340) 774-8784

**Princess Cruises Port Agent:** In case of an emergency while you are ashore, please contact:

**Virgin Port Services** Tel: (340) 775-1151 Tel: (340) 514-6773 (24 hours)