

VI St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands Cruise Port Guide

Your Complete Guide to Frederiksted, Christiansted, Historic Forts & Caribbean Adventure



St. Croix is the **largest of the U.S. Virgin Islands**, yet it remains one of the Caribbean's most underrated cruise destinations. While many travelers are familiar with St. Thomas, St. Croix offers a quieter, more authentic experience filled with colorful Danish architecture, pristine beaches, exceptional snorkeling, rich history, and warm island hospitality.

Whether you're exploring historic towns, snorkeling at a world-famous national monument, touring a rum distillery, or simply relaxing on a beautiful Caribbean beach, St. Croix offers something for every type of traveler.

If you enjoy destinations that feel less crowded and more local, St. Croix may quickly become one of your favorite ports.

Where Do Cruise Ships Dock?



Most cruise ships dock at the **Ann E. Abramson Marine Facility** in **Frederiksted**, on the island's west coast.

The cruise pier is conveniently located within walking distance of:

- Historic downtown
- Restaurants
- Beach
- Shopping
- Local markets
- Taxi stand
- Excursion meeting areas

Unlike many Caribbean ports, you can enjoy a relaxing day without traveling far from the ship.



Explore Frederiksted



Known as "**Freedom City**," Frederiksted offers a charming blend of Danish colonial history and Caribbean culture.

Highlights include:

- Fort Frederik
- Victorian architecture
- Waterfront promenade
- Local cafés
- Boutique shopping
- Historic churches
- Rainbow-colored buildings

Take your time exploring—it's one of the Caribbean's most walkable cruise towns.

★ Top Shore Excursions

🌊 Buck Island Reef National Monument



The island's most famous attraction.

Protected by the U.S. National Park Service, Buck Island features:

- Crystal-clear water
- Coral reefs
- Underwater snorkeling trail
- Sea turtles
- Tropical fish
- White-sand beaches

It's widely considered one of the best snorkeling destinations in the Caribbean.

🏰 Christiansted



Located on the island's north shore.

Highlights include:

- Fort Christiansvaern
- Historic waterfront
- Danish architecture
- Boutique shopping
- Restaurants
- Art galleries
- Boardwalk

Many visitors consider Christiansted one of the most charming towns in the Caribbean.

Cruzan Rum Distillery



Tour one of the Caribbean's most famous rum distilleries.

Learn about:

- Rum production
- Island history
- Aging process
- Tastings

A favorite excursion for adults.

St. George Village Botanical Garden

Discover:

- Tropical flowers
- Historic plantation ruins
- Native wildlife
- Walking trails

A peaceful stop for garden lovers and photographers.

Island Highlights Tour

Visit several of the island's top attractions, including:

- Christiansted
- Frederiksted
- Scenic overlooks
- Historic plantations
- Botanical Gardens

A great introduction for first-time visitors.

Best Beaches

Rainbow Beach



Located within walking distance of the cruise pier.

Features:

- Calm water
- Beach chairs
- Restaurants
- Water sports
- Snorkeling

Perfect if you want to stay close to the ship.



Sandy Point National Wildlife Refuge



One of the Caribbean's longest beaches.

Known for:

- Soft white sand
- Sea turtle nesting
- Beautiful scenery

Please note that public access may be limited during sea turtle nesting season.



Cane Bay Beach

A favorite for:

- Snorkeling
- Scuba diving
- Coral reefs
- Beach bars

One of St. Croix's premier diving locations.



Protestant Cay

A small island just offshore from Christiansted.

Accessible by a short water taxi ride.

Perfect for:

- Swimming
 - Relaxing
 - Snorkeling
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Diving & Snorkeling

St. Croix is internationally recognized for its underwater experiences.

Popular dive and snorkel sites include:

- Buck Island Reef
- Cane Bay Wall
- Frederiksted Pier
- Salt River Canyon

The Frederiksted Pier is famous among underwater photographers thanks to its colorful marine life.



Shopping

Popular purchases include:

- Cruzan Rum
- Caribbean artwork
- Handmade jewelry
- Local spices
- Hot sauces
- Handmade soaps
- Virgin Islands souvenirs

Both Frederiksted and Christiansted offer excellent shopping opportunities.



What to Eat

Don't miss:

- Fresh seafood
- Johnny Cakes
- Conch fritters
- Pates
- Curry goat
- Roti
- Coconut tarts
- Rum cake
- Tropical fruit smoothies

Popular restaurants include:

- Polly's at the Pier
- The Deep End

- Savant
 - Too Chez
 - Rhythm's at Rainbow Beach
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Hidden Gems

If you've visited before, consider exploring:

- Salt River Bay National Historical Park
- Point Udall (the easternmost point in the U.S.)
- Estate Whim Plantation Museum
- Isaac Bay
- Jack & Isaac Bay Preserve
- Mount Eagle

These attractions offer incredible scenery and fewer crowds.

Weather Throughout the Year

St. Croix enjoys warm tropical weather all year.

Winter (December – February)

- Highs: **80–84°F (27–29°C)**
- Lower humidity
- Excellent beach weather

Spring (March – May)

- Highs: **82–86°F (28–30°C)**
- Warm and sunny

Summer (June – August)

- Highs: **87–91°F (31–33°C)**
- Hot and humid
- Brief afternoon showers possible

Fall (September – November)

- Highs: **84–89°F (29–32°C)**
- Warm ocean temperatures
- Fewer visitors

Trade winds help moderate temperatures throughout the year.

Hurricane Season

The Atlantic hurricane season runs from:

June 1 – November 30

Peak activity generally occurs during:

- August
- September
- October

Like the rest of the Virgin Islands, St. Croix occasionally experiences tropical storms and hurricanes. Cruise lines monitor weather closely and adjust itineraries when necessary.

Travel insurance is always recommended.

Getting Around

Transportation options include:

- Taxi
- Cruise excursions
- Rental cars (driving is on the **left** side of the road)
- Local buses (limited service)

Christiansted is approximately **30 minutes** from Frederiksted by taxi.

Taxi fares are generally fixed between popular destinations.

What to Pack

Bring:

- ✓ Swimsuit
- ✓ Reef-safe sunscreen
- ✓ Sunglasses
- ✓ Hat
- ✓ Comfortable walking shoes
- ✓ Snorkeling gear (optional)
- ✓ Waterproof phone pouch
- ✓ Reusable water bottle

Premium Travel Group Tip

If this is your first visit, it's hard to beat a morning snorkeling at **Buck Island Reef National Monument** followed by an afternoon exploring **Christiansted**. You'll experience both the incredible natural beauty and the fascinating history that make St. Croix so unique.

If you're looking for a more relaxing day, **Rainbow Beach** is just a short walk from the cruise pier and offers one of the easiest beach days in the Caribbean.

Continue Exploring the Eastern Caribbean

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Why Visit St. Croix?

St. Croix offers a different side of the U.S. Virgin Islands—one where history, nature, and relaxation come together in perfect balance. From snorkeling one of the Caribbean's finest coral reefs to strolling centuries-old Danish streets and enjoying fresh island cuisine, St. Croix delivers an authentic Caribbean experience that rewards travelers looking to explore beyond the ordinary.

Joe's Logbook

St. Croix is one of those ports that quietly grows on you. It doesn't have the crowds of St. Thomas or the flashy attractions of some other Caribbean islands, but that's part of its charm. The island moves at its own pace, and if you take the time to explore its historic towns, beautiful beaches, and incredible underwater world, you'll discover why so many seasoned cruisers consider it one of the Caribbean's best-kept secrets.