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## U.S. Virgin Islands Achieves Record Air Access Growth at Routes Americas

**Positive feedback underscores the territory's efforts to boost tourism through enhanced air connectivity**

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BOGOTA, COLOMBIA — The V.I. Dept. of Tourism announced Wednesday that the U.S. Virgin Islands has made significant strides in expanding air access and fostering airline partnerships, as evidenced by its standout performance at Routes Americas 2024 in Bogota, Colombia, from March 19th to 21st.

Under the leadership of D.O.T. Commissioner Joseph Boschulte, the USVI delegation showcased strategic expertise in enhancing the territory's aviation connectivity and tourism potential, according a press release from the department.

During the event, the USVI team engaged in productive discussions with 13 major industry stakeholders, including leading airlines like American, Delta, Southwest, Spirit Airways, JetBlue, and United. These meetings focused on strategies for opening new market gateways, improving existing routes, and mitigating seasonal fluctuations to optimize tourism growth in the territory.



Mr. Boschulte highlighted the success of these discussions, noting the encouraging feedback from airline partners. "Our efforts at Routes Americas 2024 have been pivotal in strengthening ties with key airlines and advancing air access initiatives for the USVI," he said. "The positive responses we've received are a testament to our commitment to offering exceptional travel experiences."

The delegation's proactive presentation of market analysis, upcoming marketing campaigns, and cooperative opportunities received high praise from airline representatives, setting the stage for future collaboration on scheduling and network planning.

Mr. Boschulte also reported unparalleled growth in air arrivals for the current winter season, signaling a robust period for USVI tourism. "The record-breaking increase in air traffic, particularly to St. Thomas and St. Croix, underscores the effectiveness of our air access initiatives and the strong support from our airline partners," the tourism commissioner commented.

From January to August 2024, the USVI anticipates a remarkable 28% year-over-year increase in air arrivals compared to 2023, with early 2024 figures already showing an 18% rise over the same period in 2022. Projections for the 2023/2024 Continental US Winter season suggest a 25% increase over the previous winter and a 15% increase over the 2021/2022 season.

Specifically, St. Thomas and St. Croix are experiencing substantial growth, with projections indicating a 20% increase for St. Thomas and an impressive 48% increase for St. Croix for the December to March 2023/2024 period, compared to the previous winter. Additionally, both islands have seen significant year-over-year growth from January to August 2024, with St. Thomas up 28% from 2023 and St. Croix up 17%, further highlighting the Territory's upward

trend in tourism.

The V.I. Dept. of Tourism said it is committed to leveraging the momentum from Routes Americas 2024 to continue enhancing air access, nurturing airline partnerships, and providing unparalleled travel experiences. With a focus on sustainable growth and success, the USVI is poised for a bright future in the tourism industry.

For further details on the U.S. Virgin Islands and what it has to offer, visit:  
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