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## St. Croix Celebrates Culture and Unity in Vibrant Adults Parade

The Adults Parade, a signature event of the St. Croix Christmas Festival, saw a grand display of revelry and culture with large participation from locals and visitors alike

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The 2024 Adults Parade on St. Croix was a magnificent display of color and revelry. Above, a Regal Dynasty troupe participant. By. CRUSELDA ROBERTS, V.I. CONSORTIUM

ST. CROIX — On Saturday, thousands of Virgin Islanders and visitors either participated in or attended the penultimate event of the St. Croix Christmas Festival: The Adults Parade. For many, the display of revelry, culture and music was the final lap before the commencement of the work week come January 8th.

For Dept. of Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte, the community's unwavering support was the highlight of the entire festival. He promised that his department would "continue to try to grow the festival brand and make sure that we have, ideally, the best festivals in the Caribbean and the world."

Saturday's parade began with an official honor for the Gentlemen of Jones by the Division of Tourism. The 71-year-old nonprofit organization was nominated as the grand marshal of the 2024 Adults Parade and was celebrated for its "dedication and commitment to fostering unity through your creativity, unique presentations and unyielding commitment to excellence."

The award was accepted by Ralph Munchez who has been a member of the Gentlemen of Jones for 40 years. He shared that the group had participated in the parade for 30 consecutive years. "We will continue to do our best for this community," promised Mr. Munchez. This year, Gentlemen of Jones celebrated diversity through the theme "Bollywood".

Among the standout portrayals was that of the St. Croix Majorettes on the occasion of their golden jubilee. Their dazzling performance included current members and alumni, five of whom were original members from 1974.

On the 30th anniversary of the Guardians of Culture Moko Jumbies, 30 moko jumbies danced their way down the parade route, wearing various costumes from years past. Founder Willard John noted that this year's number was a record high. "The best way to preserve culture is to live it," reminded Mr. John, who recently had the Christmas Festival Village, called MokoVille, named in his honor.

Large costume bands like Shamari Haynes' Simply Sophisticated and boasted approximately 1,000 revelers as they marked their 16th year on the road. Regal Dynasty, which closed the colorful parades, also boasted large numbers.

The 2023/2024 Crucian Christmas Festival has been touted as particularly safe, and generally incident free. VIPD Commissioner Ray Martinez thanked his officers for their good work and praised members of the community for following the rules. He promised a similar experience for St. Thomas' carnival celebrations in just four short months.

The Department of Tourism, too, will turn its focus to St. Thomas as soon as the curtains close on the St. Croix Christmas Festival. Indeed, the first teaser was [released Sunday morning](#).