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Caneel Beach Reopens for Public Access as Part of Phased Restoration at V.I. National Park

Caneel Beach will open daily from 7 AM to 5 PM starting August 1, as part of the phased reopening plan following federal ownership affirmation

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Caneel Bay, St. John USVI By. GETTY IMAGES

The V.I. National Park has announced the opening of Caneel Beach for public access starting August 1. This step is part of the phased reopening of Caneel Bay, following the Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) plan that has been implemented since the Virgin Islands District Court affirmed federal ownership of Caneel Bay Resort lands and improvements in April 2024.

The land-based opening of Caneel Beach marks a milestone in restoring public access to the area. Park Superintendent Penny Del Bene expressed her satisfaction with the progress, stating, “We are very pleased to continue taking positive steps to open areas of Caneel back up to the public and continue providing safe and memorable experiences in Virgin Islands National Park.”

Operating hours for Caneel Beach will be from 7 AM to 5 PM daily. Visitors are advised to use only designated public areas and avoid sections that remain closed due to safety concerns. There will be three public parking lots available, and the park has installed trash cans and Port-o-Johns for visitor convenience. Clear signage will direct visitors to and from the public parking areas and Caneel Beach.

In addition to beach access, visitors will have access to a designated viewing area for the historic ruins of Caneel’s Durloo Sugar Plantation, a significant site related to the 1733 African Revolution on St. John. However, the adjacent Caneel Beach dock will not be open for use, and there will be no access to Caneel Beach via trails or foot traffic from Honeymoon Beach at this time. Honeymoon Beach will remain open to the public and can be accessed by the Lind Point Trail, shuttles from the Caneel Bay entrance, or by boat.

The V.I. National Park extended gratitude to the communities of St. John and St. Thomas for their continued support and engagement. The National Park Service said it remains committed to providing public access and recreational opportunities while preserving the natural and historical significance of the area.

For more information on the phased reopening and park access, visitors are encouraged to visit the Virgin Islands National Park website or contact park services directly.