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# The 68th V.I. Carnival on St. Thomas is Right Around the Corner, and the Pre-Carnival Festivities Begin Today

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**Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte and Soca star Alison Hinds pose for a picture during a press conference on Friday. By. ROBERT MOORE/VI CONSORTIUM**

**ST. THOMAS** — Call it an early kick-off event for the 68th annual Carnival on St. Thomas.

Famed soca artist Alison Hinds is the headliner at the Carnival kick-off concert tonight at Market Square on St. Thomas. Performances by the Spectrum Band, Calypso Monarch contestants and other local and regional artists are on the bill.

The British-born, Bajan star is known as the Queen of Soca, and is one of the biggest soca artists in the world. "It is an absolute pleasure for me to be back in the VI. It is one of the places I have been to since my Square One years," Ms. Hinds told an online and press briefing audience at the Department of Tourism on Friday. Before going solo, the Soca star was part of a band called Square One, which produced big hits such as ["Togetherness"](#).

"I'm excited to be a part of the kick-off for Carnival because, after all, you want to start the thing right," she said to a room of full laughter.

[\[Alison Hinds's latest hit, titled West Indian, was released on Dec. 19 on online platforms. Watch it.\]](#)

Below, Ms. Hinds's most popular hit, Roll it Gal

The Department of Tourism's Division of Festivals pulled back the curtain on the artists, events and changes in store for "All Eyes on We for 2020" — the St. Thomas carnival, which gets underway next month.

This year's carnival – officially known as the "Carnival Virgin Islands St. Thomas" because of a [legal dispute](#) over the carnival name – will run from April 4 to May 3rd, ranging from the usual downtown and waterfront carnival sites to a second on the east end of St. Thomas, and for the first time, a second J'ouvert warmup, 'Rum, Powder and Mas' at 5:00 a.m. on April 25th on the Weymouth Rhymer Highway, beginning at the intersection of Cost-U-Less and ending at Fort Mylner.

On April 26, there is a full day of activities planned, including a motor sports/boat race at the waterfront where high-end vessels race for cash prizes totaling \$20,000.

"We also plan to put a very big emphasis on the boat races," Department of Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte said. The bulkheads at the Waterfront will be cleared for seating stands. "We plan to move all the booths off the bulkhead so that people can move through. It's going to be a different set-up."

Additional attractions for the season include the Soca Monarch Village, Food Fair and the Cultural Day where groups and individuals celebrate different aspects of Virgin Islands tradition and culture. The Children's Parade on May 1 and the Adults' Parade on May 2 will remain key fixtures for this year's celebrations.

The Carnival Village, which is free to the public, opens at the Fort Christian Parking Lot on April 24 and highlights top-class entertainment from the territory and the wider region, including the likes of Pumpa, Adam O, Farmer Nappy, Lyrikal, Nadia Batson, Ricardo Dru, Teddyson John and Morgan Heritage.

Other carnival highlights include the Prince and Princess Show on April 12, Toddlers Derby and Best Dressed Doll on April 19, and on April 22 the Stanley and the Sleepless Knights Tramp.

The schedule will be finalized and made public in short order, said Division of Festivals Director Ian Turnbull.