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## USVI Shines in 2025 Travel Awards, St. Croix Named Culinary Destination of the Year

The U.S. Virgin Islands earned top honors in four categories, including St. Croix for its dynamic food scene, yachting excellence, and event hosting capabilities, while Chef David 'Benji' Benjamin was recognized as Caribbean Chef of the Year

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Melanie Johannes-Titre of Sugar Rush at the 2024 Taste of St. Croix. By. TASTE OF ST CROIX

The U.S. Virgin Islands have been recognized as a leading Caribbean destination, earning top accolades in four categories in the 2025 Caribbean Travel Awards. This annual event, now in its 11th year, highlights the best of Caribbean tourism, honoring excellence in 36 categories as

determined by experts in the travel industry.

The awards celebrate outstanding achievements in tourism, gastronomy, events, and more, reflecting the region's vibrant and diverse travel offerings. The U.S. Virgin Islands distinguished themselves in several areas, underscoring the territory's growing appeal for culinary enthusiasts, yachting aficionados, and event planners.

#### **St. Croix Named Caribbean Culinary Destination of the Year**

St. Croix took home the title of Caribbean Culinary Destination of the Year, thanks to its dynamic and flourishing food scene. The island's capital, Christiansted, offers an array of world-class dining experiences that evoke the charm of a "mini-New Orleans." Visitors can indulge in a variety of culinary delights at acclaimed establishments such as Savant, Too Chez, and the popular tiki bar Breakers Roar on the boardwalk. T

#### **U.S. Virgin Islands Named Caribbean Yachting Destination of the Year**

The entire territory was recognized as the Caribbean Yachting Destination of the Year, highlighting its appeal to sailors and charter boat enthusiasts. With stunning islands like St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John, Water Island, and Buck Island, the USVI has emerged as a premier yachting destination in recent years. The combination of safety, ease of travel between islands, and the natural beauty of the territory has made it a favorite for maritime adventure seekers, particularly in the post-pandemic era.

#### **Event Destination of the Year: U.S. Virgin Islands**

The U.S. Virgin Islands also claimed the title of Event Destination of the Year. This recognition comes as the territory's largest venue, the Frenchman's Reef resort complex, reopened, solidifying the USVI's status as a prime location for meetings, conferences, and events. With easy air access, a business-friendly environment, and a strong portfolio of hotels, the islands are well-equipped to host everything from large corporate events to NCAA basketball tournaments.

#### **Caribbean Chef of the Year: Chef David 'Benji' Benjamin**

In addition to these destination awards, Chef David "Benji" Benjamin, the owner of St. Thomas restaurants Blue Eleven and Indigo 4, was honored as the Caribbean Chef of the Year. Known for his innovative approach to modern Caribbean cuisine, Chef Benjamin continues to raise the culinary bar and showcase the rich flavors of the region.

Dept. of Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte expressed pride and satisfaction with the awards. "This recognition from Caribbean Journal further reinforces the success of our continued efforts to spotlight the territory and all that we have to offer as one of the premier Caribbean destinations," he said. Looking ahead to 2025, Boschulte emphasized collaboration with partners across St. Croix, St. John, and St. Thomas to further promote the territory's unique offerings. "We aim to continue to grow, spotlight, and represent this beautiful place we call home and welcome the world to our shores to fall 'Naturally in Rhythm' the Virgin Islands way," he added.

For more information about the U.S. Virgin Islands and its attractions, visit [www.visitusvi.com](http://www.visitusvi.com)