

The Virgin Islands Consortium

60 Cruise Ships Will Visit St. Thomas In December; St. Croix Gets 8

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ST. CROIX -- Of the 68 cruise ships that will visit the U.S. Virgin Islands in December, 60 will dock in St. Thomas and 8 on St. Croix, Department of Tourism (D.O.T.) Commissioner Beverly Nicholson-Doty revealed during Governor Kenneth Mapp's Monday press briefing.

The commissioner also revealed that 25 ships were scheduled to visit St. Thomas this month, while St. Croix will see 5.

The imbalance between the islands relative to cruise ship tourism is a known fact, and St. Thomas has been the USVI's main tourism hub from the onset. But with both islands

being ravaged by the recent Category 5 hurricanes, there had been talk of a significant increase in cruise calls to St. Croix, even if the growth so far has only been modest. [In October](#), Mr. Mapp said St. Croix went from 40 confirmed calls to 90 for the season.

To welcome the ships, there will be a cleanup effort Thursday at Magens Bay in St. Thomas and the Frederiksted waterfront on Friday.

On Saturday, St. Croix will host the Norwegian Dawn, with a capacity of 2,340 passengers and 1,032 crew members. The ship's arrival to the Big Island, as St. Croix is called, marks the return of leisure cruise travelers to the island in almost two months, according to D.O.T. Royal Caribbean's Adventure of the Seas docked on the island on September 17, [just days before Hurricane Maria struck](#).

"St. Croix looks forward to welcoming the passengers and crew of the Norwegian Dawn this weekend, and sharing with them our warm, resilient Crucian spirit," Mrs. Nicholson-Doty said. "We thank the countless Virgin Islanders and relief workers who have been working to restore power, clear roadways, prepare beaches and many of our key attractions so that visitors can experience our special Virgin Islands brand of Caribbean hospitality."

The commissioner explained that taxis, tour operators and government agencies are working together to establish recommended routes for tours.

"Cruise ship passengers contribute important economic activity to the U.S. Virgin Islands," she said. "The combination of cruise traffic, the recovery and construction economy, and the current reopening of hotels to leisure guests on St. Croix are key components of our recovery."

Based on confirmations received from the Virgin Islands Port Authority's Marine Division on St. Croix, the Norwegian Dawn's calls to St. Croix will take place on November 11, 18 and 25, while the smaller Viking Sea, with a capacity of 930 passengers and 550 crew, will arrive on November 15 and 28.

In December, both ships will return to St. Croix's Ann E. Abramson Pier, which will welcome additional calls from Norwegian Gem, Seabourn Sojourn and Seabourn Odyssey.

The anticipated schedule for cruise ship calls to St. Croix follows:

1. November 11 - Norwegian Dawn
2. November 15 - Viking Sea
3. November 18 - Norwegian Dawn
4. November 25 - Norwegian Dawn
5. November 28 - Viking Sea

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1. December 2 - Norwegian Dawn
 2. December 8 - Viking Sea
 3. December 9 - Norwegian Dawn
 4. December 14 - Seabourn Sojourn
 5. December 16 - Norwegian Dawn

6. December 25 - Seabourn Sojourn
7. December 27 - Norwegian Gem
8. December 30 - Seabourn Odyssey

Feature Image: Adventure of the Seas [docked in Frederiksted just days before Hurricane Maria struck the island.](#) (Ernice Gilbert, VIC)

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