

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Major Airlines Commit Daily Flights To St. Croix And St. Thomas During Holiday Season, Dept. Of Tourism Says

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During recent trips to Atlanta and New York, Dept. of Tourism Commissioner Beverly Nicolson-Doty met with airline executives and media firms to both bolster the territory's air travel options during the holiday rush, and to promote progress being made relative to tourism following Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

That's according to a release D.O.T. issued late Sunday, giving details of Mrs. Nicholson-Doty's efforts.

Sharing the positive news about the return of cruise calls to the USVI, the restoration of the iconic Magens Bay beach, the reopening of The Buccaneer on St. Croix for leisure guests, and the progress the destination has made to welcome visitors back to the islands, Mrs. Nicholson-Doty met with Delta Air Lines in Atlanta and JetBlue Airways in New York to discuss the air service needs of the territory.

In meetings with the airlines' route planning teams, both Delta and JetBlue agreed to continue service to the territory with daily nonstop flights, according to the release. Delta will operate daily service from Atlanta to St. Thomas through April, and is scheduled to operate daily service from Atlanta to St. Croix from Christmas through Three Kings Day (January 6, 2018), three to four flights per week between January and March, and one weekly flight in April and May. JetBlue will continue to operate daily service from San Juan to St. Croix and St. Thomas. Both airlines are giving consideration to upgauging their services based on demand.

In New York, the commissioner appeared on "Good Day New York" with Rosanna Scotto and Lori Stokes, which airs on WNYW-TV (Fox 5), and maintained a busy schedule of media appointments, including interviews with Travel Agent Magazine, Bloomberg Television and The New York Daily News, according to D.O.T.

She also hosted a group of USVI tourism ambassadors at The 40/40 Club, which is owned by hip hop mogul and entrepreneur Jay Z, and managed by Virgin Islanders Sherwin and Sheldon Robinson. The tourism commissioner shared updates on the recovery, plans for promoting the territory in the months ahead and listened to the input and ideas of Virgin Islanders living in the tristate area, according to the release.

"Our tourism ambassadors play an important role in representing the Virgin Islands and many have been active in organizing relief and recovery efforts for the territory," Mrs. Nicholson-Doty said. "It was valuable to connect with Virgin Islanders in New York who shared their continued support and suggestions on how to promote the Territory and rebuild our islands."

The Atlanta visit included a radio interview with Condace Pressley, host of the popular news and talk show, "Perspectives" on WSB-AM; and an interview with travel journalists at CNN.com, according to the release.

"The support and interest we are getting from the media and our travel partners is heartwarming," Mrs. Nicholson-Doty. "We will continue to push those segments of our tourism product that are ready for business, and as we rebuild and more hotel rooms become available, I am confident the USVI will be well poised in the marketplace to attract more visitors back to our shores."