

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Spirit Airlines' Inaugural Flight To St. Croix Set For May 24

Business / **Published On May 17, 2018 10:34 AM /**

Staff **May 17, 2018**



ST. CROIX -- In a positive sign of the territory's continuing return to normalcy, Spirit Airlines, which has hosted flights on St. Thomas for sometime, will bring its service to St. Croix beginning this month, with the inaugural flight to the Big Island set for May 24, The Consortium has learned.

The carrier's expansion of business in the territory represents another sign of the rebounding tourism product following the November 2017 storms -- especially on St. Croix -- as normalcy continues to take hold. During an interview in February, Department of Tourism Commissioner Beverly Nicholson-Doty said while St. Thomas was at 50 percent of airline seating capacity, St. Croix, though a smaller market, was faring better.

"Pre-storm there were about 6,000 seats in St. Croix, and as of May 24th we'll be about 5,000 seats, so we're actually faring better in terms of percentages on St. Croix," [the commissioner said](#).

Part of the lag on St. Thomas relative to airlift, the commissioner said, was tied to the roughly 60 percent or more of traditional accommodations that remain closed.

Even so, the commissioner reminded in a recent interview that great progress has been made. "We have several hotels that have reopened... our yachting industry is absolutely glorious and we have wonderful villas. However, it is a journey... we will have more hotels opening at the end of the year and as we look towards the future we really feel that we're going to have an even better tourism product," Mrs. Nicholson-Doty told national and worldwide listeners tuned into the popular news program recently.

She added: "As we bounce back, it's critically important that we update our partners on the significant progress we are making, while taking the necessary steps to ensure that flights return as more accommodations become available," the commissioner said recently.

"Power has been restored across the territory, our beaches and attractions have reopened, cruise lines and airlines have returned and a wide variety of accommodations are available even as our rebuilding and resiliency work continues."