

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Record Numbers? 1.75 Million Cruise Ship Visitors To Touch Down In VI During Winter Season

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Ernice Gilbert **October 09, 2018**



Update: Governor Mapp said Tuesday morning he misspoke when he said Friday that 140 cruise ships would visit St. Croix this Winter season. Only 34 ships will be headed to St. Croix this Winter season.

Original Story: The Virgin Islands is on a rebound in a number of industries following the 2017 hurricanes, in some instances much greater than even before Hurricanes Irma and Maria struck the territory in September 2017.

In the construction industry, work opportunities have spiked, with residents rebuilding homes and the Limetree Bay Oil Refining plant, along with the oil storage terminal on St.

Croix, playing a major role in the construction boom.

Also on the rise is the cruise ship sector of the tourism industry. According to Governor Kenneth Mapp, citing recently published cruise ship visitor schedules, the territory is expected to see 1.75 million tourists through the Winter season.

"We have not been at this level of visitation save 10 years ago," Mr. Mapp said [during a Friday press conference](#). "And so our ability to ramp up and work with the cruise industry, and to be able to launch harbor transportation, is now paying dividends because the cruise lines are really pleased to see that we're making the investments in the infrastructure that the vessels can stop and that cruise passengers can be brought back to the Virgin Islands."

The governor also released cruise ship visits to St. Croix for the Winter season. He said the island is expected to welcome 140 cruise ships. "I think that may be a new high for St. Croix," he said.

Cruise ship passengers spend an estimated \$117 dollars during each stop, an amount that has decreased drastically (it used to be over \$200), in part because of competition from the cruise lines themselves. Still, the additional ships -- and in turn the additional spend -- on St. Croix in particular, is sure to boost the local economy even further.

Mr. Mapp and Department of Tourism officials will host Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (F.C.C.A.) representatives today to discuss cruise ship schedules and supporting initiatives territory-wide. A press conference is being held at 10:00 a.m. today at Government House on St. Croix to that end. The Consortium will carry the event live on its [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) platforms. The publication will also interview live Michelle Paige, F.C.C.A. president.