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St. John Festival This Year to Feature Food Fair and \$50 'Love Fete' Headlined by Patrice Roberts

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Soca Recording Artist Patrice Roberts By. SHERWIN LOVELL

The V.I. Department of Tourism announced Wednesday night that its Division of Festivals will feature two events for this year's St. John celebration on July 3 and 4: "Love City Food Fair" and "Love Fete" headlined by Soca recording artist Patrice Roberts.

"Love City Food Fair" and "Love Fête" are being held to encourage visitors and residents to experience the festivities safely, while promoting the division's "Vaccinate to Party Safe" initiative, D.O.T. said.

"Public health safety and celebrating our culture can coexist," said Ian Turnbull, director of the Division of Festivals, who shared that his team has worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to

spotlight U.S. Virgin Islands talent on an international stage.

According to the release, the “Love City Food Fair” will take place on Saturday, July 3, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and will be hosted by noted Virgin Islander and St. John resident Pamela Richards, and Chef Guy Mitchell, former White House chef and creator of “White House Chef Tours”.

This year’s event will feature more than 30 vendors showcasing local food and arts and crafts. Entertainment will be provided by Pan Dragons and VerCtyle Band.

Participating vendors at the food fair must be vaccinated and mandatory mask-wearing will be in effect. Additionally, there will be limited attendee capacity on an hourly basis, in keeping with the territory’s Covid-19 protocols, D.O.T. said.

This year’s St. John celebration will close out with a “Love Fête” on Sunday, July 4, from 7 p.m. to 12 a.m., and will feature musical performances by leading Virgin Islands bands Cool Session Brass and Spectrum Band, as well as local artists John Gotti, Rudy Live and Star Martin. Trinidadian soca artist Patrice Roberts will headline the musical event.

“Love Fête” will accommodate 400 vaccinated patrons and comply with Covid-19 protocols, including mask-wearing and physical distancing, according to the release. It will also be streamed live on the Division of Festivals’ online platforms.

The cost to attend “Love Fête” is \$50, and patrons must present proof of vaccination to receive a ticket.

Both events will be held at the Enighed Pond Parking Lot (adjacent to the car barge dock).

Tickets are currently available at Nella’s Lounge, Northshore Road, Cruz Bay on St. John (340 690-1258), and Meeting the Needs of the Community (formerly Methodist Training & Outreach Center), #11-A, Kronprindsens Gade on St. Thomas (340 690-7772).

“We are thankful that more and more visitors and Virgin Islanders are getting vaccinated,” D.O.T. Commissioner Joseph Boschulte. “This allows us to add more events to our festivals calendar, and move to the full return of our annual celebrations, which highlight our vibrant cultural traditions.”

Sponsors for “Love Fête” include Stoli Vodka and Love City Hard Seltzer, which are distributed by Bellows International and West Indies Company; Virgin Islands Lottery; Maternal and Child Health; Virgin Islands Port Authority (VIPA); 1340 AM WSTA Radio; and Banco Popular.

Upcoming Division of Festivals events include the 69th Crucian Christmas Festival (December 4, 2021 - January 9, 2022) and the 70th Carnival Virgin Islands on St. Thomas (April 2 - May 1, 2022).

Vendors can contact the Department of Tourism’s St. John office at 340 776-6450 for more information.

