

# USVI Chosen by Airlines as Leading Choice for Leisure Travel, Dept. of Tourism Says

Tourism / **Published On July 08, 2021 09:27 AM /**

Staff Consortium **July 08, 2021**

Image not found or type unknown



The V.I. Dept. of Tourism said Tuesday that the U.S. Virgin Islands' management of the Covid-19 public health crisis along with savvy marketing tactics are being credited for the confidence airlines have placed in adding and increasing service to both St. Croix and St. Thomas.

Speaking at the recent 2021 Routes Americas air service development event in Orlando, D.O.T. Commissioner Joseph Boschulte said the multi-agency approach to curbing the spread of Covid-19 in the territory has helped travelers and airline executives to select the U.S. Virgin Islands as a leading choice for leisure travel.

“Despite the global travel lockdowns, we have had incredible winter and spring seasons, and we expect to experience one of the strongest summer months in the history of the U.S. Virgin Islands,” said Mr. Boschulte, who reported St. Croix and St. Thomas are registering about 10,000 and 30,000 weekly seats respectively this summer.

“We have welcomed new nonstop service from places like Dallas, Miami, Orlando, New York City and Newark, New Jersey, and increased lift across several gateways,” added Mr. Boschulte, who disclosed that plans are in the works for new service to St. Croix from the mainland United States. “We are also close to consummating a deal for new flights from Canada to St. Croix, and will continue to work on resuming seasonal flights from Denmark,” the tourism executive disclosed.

According to the department, Mr. Boschulte said the response from airline executives in Orlando was exceptional, and as the Territory moves towards the post-vaccination period, he was confident of increased business as refreshed hotels such as Divi Carina Bay Beach Resort & Casino and Renaissance St. Croix Carambola Beach Resort & Spa on St. Croix come back online in the months ahead. He was also optimistic about the eventual return of the iconic Frenchman's Reef Marriott Resort and Noni Beach, a St. Thomas Resort, Autograph Collection, to the accommodations inventory on St. Thomas.

“But what has really been remarkable throughout the pandemic is the sharing economy – Airbnbs, condos and villas – which has kept our economy ticking as we continue to safely welcome thousands of travelers to our shores every day,” he said.

Moving forward, the commissioner said the work of an expanded sales team in the marketplace as well as the continued deployment of innovative marketing tactics, especially across digital platforms, will be critical to maintaining the momentum: “We feel good where the USVI is positioned and are heartened by the intelligence we are receiving about plans for continued growth during the 2021-2022 winter season.”

According to D.O.T., during Routes Americas, the Mr. Boschulte and his team met with representatives from Air Canada, American Airlines, Cape Air, Caribbean Airlines, Copa Airlines, Delta Air Lines, JetBlue Airways, Southwest Airlines, Spirit Airlines, Sun Country Airlines and WestJet Airlines in addition to representatives from data-focused aviation service companies.

The USVI team also hosted an educational travel industry luncheon to provide destination updates to meeting planners, travel agents and journalists in the Orlando area, according to the release.