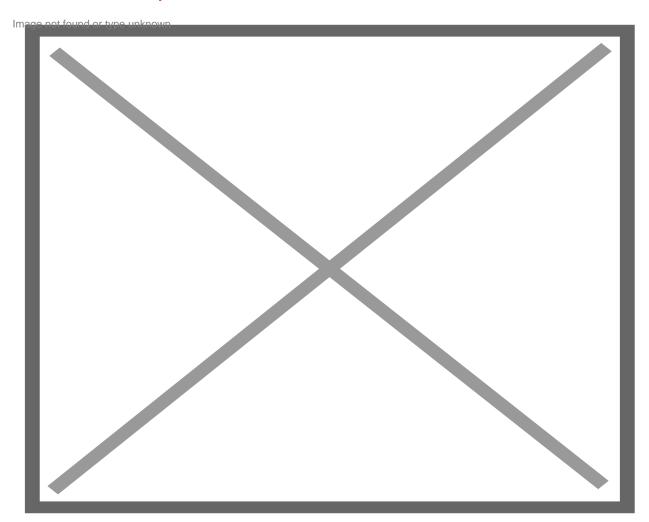
First Full Taste of St. Croix Since Covid-19 Pandemic Set for June 23rd

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Artwork of Taste of St. Croix 2022 By. TASTE OF ST. CROIX

The 22nd Annual Taste of St. Croix will take place on June 23 at the Divi Carina Bay & Casino, event organizers made known via release Friday. Tickets available here.

"As the world re-opens, we continue to showcase St. Croix's wonderful cuisines and some of our best restaurants, live on caribbeanfoodnetworktv.com. This will also be a way to showcase our long-time partner, Divi Carina Bay Resort. Divi Carina Bay Resort re-opened this past February after closing due to destructions suffered from Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017," the release stated as organizers are set to host the first full event since the Covid-19 pandemic.

This year's artwork, created by Luca Gasperi, has been completed and features Dr. Marlon Williams showing his culinary skills at a workshop at Sejah Farm, event organizers said. Sejah Farm is also a past winner and long-time supporter of Taste of St. Croix.

"The territory is wide open for business, which includes the myriad of restaurants, caterers, delis, and many other culinary-type businesses throughout the territory," stated the release.

The last Taste of St. Croix, <u>held in Dec.</u>, was only for individuals vaccinated against Covd-19. At the event, Taste founder Collin Hodge said while he was pleased with how Taste of St. Croix 2021, the 21st annual, turned out, he expressed concern for the culinary industry in the wake of the pandemic. He pointed to inflation which has led to a marked increase in cost of goods, which in turn affects the restaurants, hotels and other aspects of the hospitality industry. In fact the repercussions of the pandemic hit home, leading Mr. Hodge to close the Martinis Lounge and Nightclub in 2020, a facility he'd operated for many years.

To that end, the December event was held with industry partners in mind. "Normally we raise tens of thousands of dollars to give back to the public," he said. "This is to highlight the industry as we reopen to the world."

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