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## USVI Being Lauded by Leading Travel Magazines, Winning Top Tourism and Hospitality Awards

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**Hotel on the Cay will be renamed the Christiansted Harbor Resort Hotel and Marina LLC.  
By. ERNICE GILBERT/ V.I. CONSORTIUM**

The U.S. Virgin Islands is receiving top honors from several prestigious media companies for 2023, the V.I. Dept. of Tourism announced Monday. Conde Nast Traveler, Travel + Leisure, Porthole Cruise and Travel Magazine, Frommer's, Yahoo! Life each gave the beautiful three-island destination top recognition in important sectors for 2023.

The V.I. Department of Tourism is also looking back over a star-studded 2022 having been recognized as a tourism leader with many coveted hospitality awards.

According to the release, editors of Conde Nast Traveler put the USVI at the top of its Best Places to Go in 2023 citing the islands' new hotels, resort openings, the national park, and Carnival festivals.

The editors at Travel + Leisure ranked USVI as one of its 50 best 2023 destinations in its "For Beach Vibes" section.

Yahoo! Life listed the USVI as one of the top ten tropical islands to get to in under three hours from the U.S. Readers of Porthole Cruise and Travel Magazine voted USVI as the Best Caribbean Cruise Destination for 2023.

Frommer's also gave the island territory top billing in its annual Best Places to Go in 2023 list. Staffers and contributors selected places that are heading in new directions, adding fresh attractions, gussying up old standbys, recovering from past challenges, and emerging as formidable competitors for more established tourism epicenters.

"We are delighted to be recognized by these top travel media organizations. It is a great honor and a testament to the work of my colleagues and our partners to receive these awards," stated Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte. "We strive to make our destination one of the best experiences visitors can have and we hope to continue this trajectory in 2023 and beyond."

For its work in 2022, the USVI also was recognized with many different awards, including the Bronze HSMAI Adrian Awards. For 65 years the Adrian Awards have honored excellence in travel marketing. The Caribbean Journal named Commissioner Joseph Boschulte Caribbean Tourism Executive of the Year as well as The Best Caribbean Islands to Visit in 2023 and the readers also voted the USVI the winner of the CJ Caribbean Travelers' Choice Awards 2022.

These readers travel to the Caribbean multiple times each year, scouring the region for the newest and the greatest, searching out hotels, beaches, restaurants, and experiences. The USVI was recognized as the Best Caribbean Wedding Destination; the Best Cruise Port in the Caribbean: St Thomas; the Best Adults-Only Resort in the Caribbean: The Fred, St Croix; and the Best Caribbean Villa Destination: St John.

Also, Conde Nast Traveler ranked the USVI in its prestigious Readers' Choice Awards as the Best Islands in the World. 2022 is the 35th year of the magazine's annual Readers' Choice Awards which continue to capture the travel experiences the Conde Nast Traveler readers love best. Not to be outdone, Global Traveler Magazine just announced the 2022 winners of its 19th annual GT Test Reader Survey Awards and the U.S. Virgin Islands won for Best Offshore Business Location.

Individual resorts and hotels on USVI also received recognition in 2022. Secret Harbour Beach Resort won Tripadvisor 2022 Travelers' Choice Award. This award celebrates businesses that have earned great traveler reviews on Tripadvisor over the last 12 months. As challenging as the pandemic was, Secret Harbour stood out (and continues to stand out) by delighting travelers who stay at the tranquil and well-managed beachfront Caribbean resort. In March of this year, Secret Harbour Beach Resort also was written up by Travel Lemming as the best hotel overall on St. Thomas and other hotels and harbors also received top honors from the travel site.

SMARTmeetings recognized Frenchman's Reef & Morning Star Marriott Beach Resort in 2022 with the Best Island Hotel. Located high above the Caribbean Sea on St. Thomas, the new accommodation includes 384 guest rooms, six restaurants and lounge areas, three oceanfront pools, 72,000 square feet of event space and 2,000 square feet of private dock area.

Conde Nast Traveler editors also voted USVI as having the Best Airbnb in the Caribbean. In this case, Cruz Bay on St. John, won with its cliffside swimming pool, fine Belgian linens, and well-outfitted kitchen (there's an ice cream maker). It is a three-bedroom villa with views of Rendezvous Bay and is close to the Virgin Islands National Park, a 7,000-acre preserve with immaculate beaches and kaleidoscopic coral reefs.

According to the Dept. of Tourism, with at least two new resorts about to open in the USVI, and tourism numbers up 44%, the USVI is gearing up for a very successful 2023. Already the three-island territory has reported the highest hotel occupancy rate in the Caribbean with 72.5% from June 2021 to May 2022 and revenues to match.

This positive outlook is enhanced by the new branding campaign, "Naturally in Rhythm," that supports the hotel recovery and is designed to inspire visitors to fall naturally in rhythm with the diverse culture, natural wonders, and beautiful hotels and resorts of St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. John. The two new properties opening in St. Thomas, the first in 30 years for the island are: The Westin Beach Resort and Spa at Frenchman's Reef; and The Seaborn at Frenchman's Reef, an Autograph Collection, following more than a \$425 million dollar investment in the property.

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