



2010 Annual Convention Frenchman's Reef Resort St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands

Tips for Smooth Travel to St. Thomas

Location. St. Thomas is 40 miles east of Puerto Rico. Its northern coast borders the Atlantic Ocean, while the Caribbean Sea washes the beaches to the south. St. Thomas is the second largest of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Shaped like an elongated hourglass, it measures approximately 33 square miles.

Passports. U.S. citizens are not required to have passports when traveling to the U.S. Virgin Islands, but will need documentary evidence of their U.S. citizenship and identity. Proof of U.S. citizenship includes an expired U.S. passport, a certified (original) birth certificate, Certificate of Naturalization, Certificate of Citizenship, or Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States. To prove identity, a valid driver's license or government identification card is acceptable provided they identify you by physical description or photograph. However, for travel overseas and to facilitate reentry into the U.S., a valid U.S. passport is the best documentation available and unquestionably proves your U.S. citizenship.

Pre-Arranged Private Airport Transfers are available with Premier Destination Services. Cost: \$38.00 per person roundtrip (all luggage, gratuity and taxes included). Guests will travel in dedicated air-conditioned vans direct to the resort, non-stop. Luggage will travel with guest. PDS may group NTMA pre-paid guests with other NTMA members arriving on same flight or flights. Reservations can be made through the PDS website at <http://www.premierdestinationservices.net/groups.php> Password is: NTMA 2010 (case sensitive).

Taxis While there isn't a standard type of taxi vehicle, the most popular are vans, open air safaris (converted trucks; truck beds are customized with bench seating in an open-air covered area) and SUVs/cars. Taxis on St. Thomas are not metered; rates are per person and per destination and are set by the VI Taxicab Division. The current rate from the Airport Terminal to Frenchman's Reef is \$10.00 for one passenger and \$8.00 for each additional person, plus luggage fees and gratuity. Look for taxis that carry a dome light and the letters TP on their license plate. Other taxis are not officially licensed and these rates may not apply. Many taxis carry 8-12 passengers and service multiple destinations.

Currency is the U.S. dollar. Travelers' checks and major credit cards are accepted throughout the island. ATM machines located in banks and other commercial locations.

Language. English is the official language of the U.S.V.I. Locals speak it with a Creole or West Indian lilt. Customarily, “good morning, good afternoon, goodnight and good day” all will get you prompt service and many smiles.

Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands is an unincorporated Territory with a non-voting Delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives. All persons born on the Islands are citizens of the United States and U.S. law governs them.

Telephone. You can direct-dial to the U.S. mainland. Most stateside toll-free numbers can also be called from the U.S. Virgin Islands. Dial 911 for police and for an ambulance.

Cell phones. Your cell phone may work here as well. AT&T, Sprint and Cingular all have local service and will allow you to make calls based on your rate plan. Roaming may or may not incur additional charges. Check with your provider for specific rates and coverage.

Time Zone in the U.S. Virgin Islands is Atlantic Standard, one hour ahead of Eastern Standard Time (except during Daylight Savings Time).

Driving. The first thing to know is that you drive on the *left-hand* side of the road. A variety of automobiles are for rent. U.S. driving licenses are recognized. A seat-belt law is strictly enforced. Except for the highway from the airport through town, most roads are narrow, black topped and tend to wind up hills and down. Country speed limits are 35 mph except where noted. In town the limit is 20 mph, if you are lucky. Like most communities, traffic jams occur especially during rush hours. The driver of any vehicle is prohibited from using a cell phone and/or texting (sending and receiving). You will be ticketed.

Duty-Free Shopping. The U.S. Virgin Islands is the Number One shopping destination in the Caribbean. The USVI raised its duty-free allowance to \$1,600 per person. Family members traveling together can make a joint declaration that increases the amount of their allowance. Gifts valued \$100 or less can be mailed (no more than one package per day) and do not need to be declared in the exemption. U.S. visitors are allowed to return with six bottles of liquor if one of the bottles was produced locally. Duty of 6% is charged for purchases totaling more than \$1,600.

Store Hours. Shops and businesses generally are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Most shops stay open later when a cruise ship is in port.

Golf. Mahogany Run is the only golf course on the island. It is approximately 30 minutes from Frenchman’s Reef. For more information visit their website at

<http://www.mahoganyrungolf.com>.