OFFSHORE SAILING SCHOOL IS IN GREAT COMPANY!
Read About Our British Virgin Islands Sailing School and our BVI Partners in Elite Traveler Magazine – Summer 2019

LAND ahoy! Lift and tack — or, at least sit back and learn the difference between bow and aft when you voyage around the crystalline waters of the British Virgin Islands (BVI). A sailing and yachting paradise, this group of 50-plus isles inspires even the most solid landlubber to take a turn at the helm, whether on snorkel and diving outings or weeklong excursions in the fabled anchylipages. With craggy, emerald muffins of land surrounded by seas so shimmering with blues they appear bewitched, this Caribbean destination offers in mood from its neighbor, the US Virgin Islands. Adopting a more laid-back pace, BVI exclaims the tourist-town hustle, cruise-ship traffic, casinos and bling that defines some nearby vacation islands. Instead, it breathes a skipper profile that embraces understated luxury, one where nature takes the lead. Composed of four bigger islands — Tortola, Virgin Gorda, Anegada and Jost Van Dyke — a bovy of turquoise bays, cloaked coves, reef-fringed beaches and tons of smaller islets, BVI specializes in private-island retreats that feel a world away. For those harboring dreams of a vacation aboard a yacht, there are fully staffed yacht trips and do-it-yourself sailing jaunts. Resound and restored after damage sustained during Hurricane Irma in 2017, this destination offers a trove of experiences like lush national parks, rum purchases at sundown, restaurants rechristened for conch and other local fare, bonfires on the beach and sunny afternoons at sea.

by Becca Hensley

Explore British Virgin Islands

Guide to The British Virgin Islands

Caribbean Cuisine

COCOMAYA
This beachfront restaurant on Virgin Gorda remains the hottest table in BVI. Its opulent deck becomes where the A-list meets the in-the-know. The menu is designed to share, with dishes that range from creative sushi rolls to the famous tempura-wrapped coconut shrimp and spicy oyster salad to the Thai wok dish. End your night with a drink in a lounge chair on the beach. cocomayarestaurant.com

SUGAR MILL RESTAURANT
Notting brooks better, this fine line the long-beloved Sugar Mill Restaurant on Tortola. Enrobed in the status of a 17th-century sugar mill with plenty of al fresco space, this fine restaurant showers its chefs with both daylight and flickering candles for the ultimate romantic meal. With the best Rummel blackouts in the Caribbean, Sugar Mill part of an internationally renowned hotel complex, gets overgrown for its lobster bisque and lobster. Normski sugarmill.com

BRANDYWINE ESTATE RESTAURANT
Tortola’s Brandywine Estate has now been fixed up with a wooden roof for the fans. A breezy place with views of the island, this setting never lets you forget why you’re chosen BVI for your vacation. Taking the Caribbean’s beauty and cooking it up with French flavors, Brandwine’s changing menu might include scallops, oysters, steak, fish — even barn shrimp. Champagne and root by the bottle go without saying. brandywineestate.com

Read “Island Pursuits – Ocean cruising” and “Spinnaker House” on the next page . . .
TROPICAL SUITES

GREAT HOUSE MASTER SUITE
Nicker Island
Live large like Sir Richard Branson on Nicker Island, the family home he purchased in 1976. The flagship for Virgin Limited Edition group, it was rebuilt after Hurricane Irma and reopened in October 2018, better than ever. Consisting of a Balinese-style main house, the fully-staffed, expertly-caddied hideaway includes all meals, beverages, water sports and transfers in its pricing. Take over the 1,480-sq ft Great House Master Suite, located on the main house’s top floor, to harness the ultimate views. Its three terraces flank a stunning outdoor bathtub, shower and hot tub.
From $1,500 per night for exclusive use. Contact Joe Beecroft, reservations manager, joe.becroft@virginlimitededition.com, virginlimitededition.com

MONTASTREA ESTATE VILLA
Oil Nut Bay
Jetsetting yachtmen looking for an island with newly built glamour and five-star resort amenities should head straight to Oil Nut Bay on the yacht ton of Virgin Gorda. Stretching across 300 acres with residences, a marine village and well-appointed villas, Oil Nut Bay is ultra-exclusive and only accessible by boat or helicopter. Relax in the Montastrea Estate Villa, a four-bedroom masterpiece with an airy, indoor/outdoor design, floor-to-ceiling glass windows to showcase the view, fireplace, infinity pool and swim-up bar. The two-level estate is awash in natural and light-blue hues that match the color of the sea, which can be seen from virtually every room.
From $2,850 per night. Contact Kinga Lack, reservations concierge, reservations@oilnutbay.com, +1 284 993 9010, oilnutbay.com

JOST HOUSE VILLA
Guana Island
One of the Caribbean’s few family-owned islands, Guana — named for its south side’s iguana-shaped rock promontory — sprawls across 450 acres of undisturbed blue. There are seven beaches and 12 miles of hiking trails, and with spas for just 25 guests, you’re unlikely to run into anyone else during your excursion. Tuck into the three-bedroom, 10,000-sq ft Jost House Villa, akw a-kw a, the Guana Resort’s private beach house. This villa was built with local or natural materials.
From $4,275 per night. Contact Jason Goldberg, general manager, reservations@guana.com, +1 800 544 6626, guana.com

SPINNAKER HOUSE
Scrub Island Resort, Spa & Marina
Surfing the waves from Tortola’s airport, Scrub Island is the first member of Marriott’s Autograph Collection in the Caribbean. Adding a nice, new-kid spin to the BVI, this shiny, private-island haven nestles into a dramatic cliff above the water. It has delicious restaurants, a serene spa, spacious rooms and jaw-dropping vistas. Filled with contemporary Caribbean interiors of teak wood, palm-frond fans and marble, plus Sub-Zero and Wolf appliances. Private chefs and attendants ensure guests stay on in style. Bring your best friends for a party in the six-bedroom Spinaker House, which sits on the highest point of Scrub Island.
From $3,400 per night. Contact Nancy Williams, director of sales, mlliams@mainstayhotels.com, +1 202 937 0190, scrubisland.com

ISLAND PURSUITS
Ocean cruising
Stowe and Davie Cugat’s Offshore Sailing School (they have two in BVI) reigns as one of the world’s best ways to learn the sport. On Tortola, they certify would-be mariners on 39- or 48-ft monohulls and catamarans, or 37- to 55-ft power catamarans. Over on Scrub Island, eager sailors can take the school’s popular feel-the-track challenges to earn their certifications in one week.
offshoresailing.com

Yachting life
Think the near-constant trade winds, warm temperatures and calm waters for the yachting set, there’s arguably nowhere on Earth that competes with BVI. By your own captain with the support of The Moorings, which offers a complete fleet of catamarans and monohulls, with enough variety to match any fantasy sail itinerary. Choose a personal crew, or a crewed itinerary, or even rent a cabin on board a charter and prepare to explore the archipelago’s sandy beaches, verdant islands, snorkeling opportunities and caves. Have a large group? Choose the Moorings 5800 Legacy, a 56-ft catamaran with six cabins, skipper, chef and captain.
moorings.com

Explore the sights
Design a bespoke, intimate tour with BVI Adventure Tours, a highly-credited organization with friendly captains and staff. Whether it’s a custom excursion to some of the archipelago’s top snorkeling spots, a trip to the iconic Baths (a beach with giant boulders that shelter private natural pools), a desert beach excursion or a historical sightseeing jaunt, they showcase BVI in style. They also do themed outings, such as girlfriend getaways, romantic rendezvous or fun family adventures. Consider a day on Anguilla Island, which has world-class kitesurfing and the Caribbean’s third-largest continuous coral reef.
bviadventurtours.com

Beach picnic
Newchark (BVI’s peerless concierge service and event planners), can ease its well-organized magic wand and make your wish come true. Whether it’s a picnic for two (or 20), on a remote lagoon, a personal train, weddingavens.com or a helicopter tour of the archipelago, Newchark flawlessly executes your wishes.
newchark.com