

Media Kit: Jost Van Dyke

Barefoot Beach And Island Of Mystery

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS – Situated just outside of the necklace of the British Virgin Islands, slightly northwest of the West End of Tortola, Jost Van Dyke is a perfect stopover among BVI island hoppers, exuding a ‘lost in time’ feel with undeveloped beaches and shack bars, punctuated by its lack of manmade amenities -- no televisions, no computers, no distractions. Here, the beach is the main road. Just 10 square-kilometers, Jost Van Dyke is home to only 150 permanent residents and a handful of accommodations, however the island is one of the most popular day excursions in the BVI offering several restaurants, bars and plenty of barren beach, where the only requirement is sunscreen.

The welcoming hub of Great Harbour, outlined by an offshore reef, is a flat bay decorated with a mini-armada of yachts and sailboats and flanked by steep hillsides dotted with colourful homes and roaming goats. Along the lengthy stretch of beach, hammocks are strung nearly between every other tree.

Water taxis moving from Great Harbour to White Bay in the west throw day-trippers into the island’s stress-free atmosphere feet first -- literally. Taxis anchor just off shore, prompting journeymen to wade through waves to the beach. With the sun lingering closely, clothes dry almost instantaneously.

Aptly named for its blinding white, crescent beach, White Bay boasts remarkably calm waters that are a fully saturated hue of turquoise. So clear, even from above in the cliffs, moving shoals of fish - seen trying to elude hungry pelicans -streak through the water in the form of indigo blue stripes.

A series of small islets lay just off the eastern coast, including Diamond Cay, taking visitors off-road on goat trails leading to the Bubbly Pool where at high tide water rushes over jagged rocks to create a natural sea spa churning up champagne-like bubbles. The uninhabited Green Cay and Sandy Spit (a small patch of sand in the middle of the sea) welcome sailors to drop anchor and relax undisturbed save for brief breaks to snorkel or dive. Just a mile south, Sandy Cay is the epitome of a tropical isle with gently sloping beach, varying botanical landscape and dramatic surfside cliffs with rugged rocks below.

In addition to unspoiled beaches, Jost Van Dyke is known for its many laid-back bars and restaurants, including the infamous Foxy’s Tamarind Bar in Great Harbour, opened by native islander Philicianno “Foxy” Callwood in the 1960s. Marked by a rusted anchor in the sand adorned with a ripped pirate’s flag, Foxy’s is a true beach bar with no walls and a makeshift ceiling of wood and tin. Filled with the curried scents of fresh roti, Foxy’s is a testament to the past as visitors leave a piece of themselves on the island by tacking business cards, photos and signed T-shirts to any piece of exposed timber.

Corsairs

At Ivan’s Stress Free Bar in White Bay, the motto ‘no shoes, no shirts, no problems’ is brought to life. Operated on the honour system, Ivan allows docking visitors to help themselves behind the bar so he is able to mingle with guests. A friendly host who prefers hugs to handshakes; Ivan has an affinity for shells and provides visitors with slats of wooden boards, seashells and clay to create their own decoration to be hung inside. The most recognizable shell décor was created by country music star Kenny Chesney who shared Ivan’s stress-free motto with the world in his “No Shoes, No Shirts, No Problems” video. After his television debut, Ivan also accompanied Kenny to the U.S. in 2005 to perform as an opening act for one of his sold-out concerts.

Rudys

Down the beach from Ivan's lies the famous Soggy Dollar Bar -- originator of the Painkiller -- an intoxicating frozen concoction mixing orange juice, pineapple juice, cream of coconut and a scraping of nutmeg on top with the main pain-killing ingredient, rum. The outdoor bar received its name from the drenched dollars handed over by sailors who swam ashore for famous libations and still maintains the tradition today.

A visit to Jost Van Dyke would not be complete without indulging in flavourful, authentic cuisine prepared by multi-generational islanders. In Little Harbour, Abe's by the Sea is known for satisfying sailors with his menu of fish, lobster, conch and on request, a festive pig roast, while Ali Baba's (a member of the Baba family whose real name is Ali) on Great Harbour serves up exotic breeds of fish including wahoo and kingfish.

One of the most uniquely flavoured dishes on Jost Van Dyke is the Sandcastle Hen -- a Cornish hen marinated in rum, honey lime and garlic and then grilled to perfection -- found at White Bay's Sandcastle Hotel.

The BVI, consistently recognized as one of the most breathtaking destinations in the world and the undisputed Sailing Capital of the World, presents 60 islands for exploring its secrets. The BVI is rich with the storied islands of Norman (the inspiration for Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island,") Dead man's Chest and Anegada, while the islands of Peter, Necker, and Guana anchor luxury resorts and sun worshippers find a haven on Cooper Island and Virgin Gorda. Whether it is discovering the natural phenomena of The Baths or diving the Indians, Sandy Spit or fabled Wreck of the Rhone, the BVI is bountiful with Nature's Little Secrets.

To discover these secrets and create new ones, call the British Virgin Islands Tourist Board toll free: 800.835.8530 or visit www.bvitourism.com.