

# Top Things to Do in 2024 in St. Thomas

St. Thomas may measure just 32 square miles, but the island offers a host of diversions for travelers looking to enjoy some time in the sun — especially those who love nature, culture and great beaches.

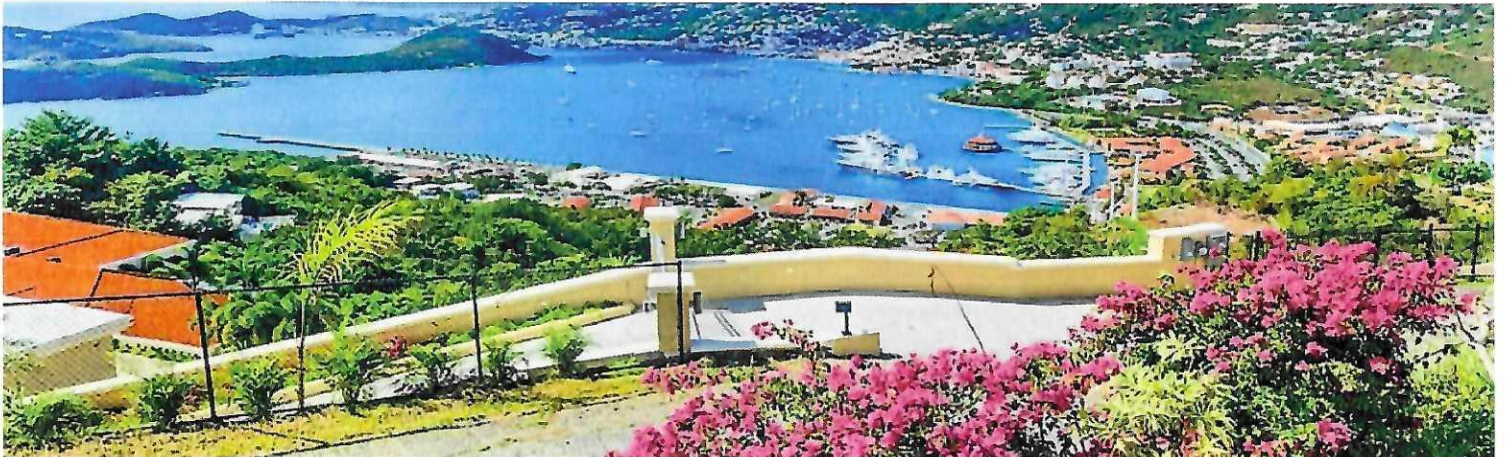
As the best-connected destination in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI), St. Thomas offers the region's largest number of flights to and from the mainland U.S., and it has no passport requirements (a great selling point of the USVI).

There are several great reasons to visit this sun-soaked island in the coming months, as I discovered during a recent visit. Here are some of the top things to do in 2024 in St. Thomas.

## Annual Events

The time is right to start making plans for two annual festivals in St. Thomas. The best known is Carnival, which is next slated for April 26 to May 5, 2024. This destination's take on the pre-Lenten celebration includes a variety of activities, from children's and adult parades and pageants to a food fair, a carnival village and a waterfront J'Ouvert street dance — all with lots of live music and colorful costumes. Reserving hotels and flights as early as possible is recommended for this high-profile event.

Foodies, meanwhile, may want to mark their calendars for the King of the Wing festival, which will take place June 8, 2024. A total of 46 teams competed at the 2023 edition, and a similarly large turnout is expected for next year, as chefs and cooks vie to prove their worth with creative chicken wing recipes. St. Thomas's rugged hills, mountains and natural bays make for some spectacular scenery, and there are lots of ways to appreciate it.



Beach lovers, for example, should plan a trip to Brewers Bay Beach, which is one of the island's most picturesque places for swimming, snorkeling and kayaking in calm, turquoise waters. Snorkelers may even get a chance to spot a sea turtle or two.

Animal lovers should also consider a visit to Coral World Ocean Park, a marine park that follows the principles of Ocean Literacy campaign, a national effort by scientists and educators to increase the public's awareness about the importance of marine conservation. Coral World provides education through a variety of exhibits and activities, including sea lion and dolphin swims and a sea trek along the ocean floor. .

For a faster-paced experience in the air, it's hard to beat the Tree Limin' Extreme zipline park, which is located within the rainforest at St. Peter Mountain. The experience starts with a ride up the mountain in a six-wheel-drive Pinzgauer — a Swiss army vehicle — followed by a breathtaking zipline ride that offers inspiring views of Magen's Bay and even the British Virgin Islands. Kids can zipline tandem or solo, making this an especially family-friendly experience for various ages.

## Cultural and Historical Attractions

Visitors can learn about the fascinating history and culture of St. Thomas at a variety of attractions. One of the island's most historical sites is also one of its simplest: the 99 Steps, a public, open-air staircase built by Danish colonizers in the 18th century to make it easier to traverse the island's hilly terrain. Those who are able to climb the steps — which actually total 103 — can see Blackbeard's Castle a dramatic hilltop structure built by the Danes in 1679 as a watchtower. Whether the infamous pirate known as Blackbeard actually used it is open to debate. (Note: As of press time, Blackbeard's Castle was still closed to the public due to damage from Hurricane Irma.)

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# Tuscan Chicken Skillet

*Bacon, cream, Parmesan -- is your mouth watering yet? There's no need to go out to dinner when you can make this restaurant-style creamy, cheesy chicken and fettuccine at home.*

Level: Easy  
 Total: 40 min  
 Active: 30 min  
 Yield: 4 servings

## Ingredients:

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper  
 12 ounces fettuccine  
 4 slices bacon, chopped  
 1 pound chicken tenders, cut into 1-inch pieces  
 2 cloves garlic, minced  
 4 plum tomatoes, chopped  
 1 cup heavy cream  
 5 ounces baby spinach  
 3/4 cup grated Parmesan  
 3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil

## Directions:

- 1 Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the fettuccine according to package directions; drain.
- 2 Meanwhile, put the bacon in a large, cold skillet, then cook over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until crispy, about 8 minutes; transfer to a plate with a slotted spoon.
- 3 Sprinkle the chicken lightly with salt and pepper and add to the skillet in a single layer. Let cook, undisturbed, until golden brown on the underside, 2 to 3 minutes. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until cooked through, about 4 minutes more. Transfer to the plate with the bacon.
- 4 Reduce the heat to medium and add the garlic, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the tomatoes and cream and bring to a simmer, then add the spinach and stir until just wilted. Add the bacon, chicken, fettuccine and Parmesan and toss with tongs until well coated; season to taste with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with basil and serve.



# Canary Islands

The Canary Islands, located southwest of Spain in the Atlantic Ocean is a hidden gem with great weather year round. Tenerife, the largest of the Canary Islands offers 43 miles of white and black sand beaches, 2 UNESCO World Heritage sites, and a remarkable variety of geographic options—from other-worldly desert landscapes to lush green mountains to stunning seascapes—you could imagine yourself in any of thousands of locations around the globe without ever stepping off this captivating island.

## BEST OF TENERIFE & LA GOMERA: CANARY 2-ISLAND TOUR

5 DAYS, STARTING AT: \$899.00 PER PERSON

This 5-day itinerary will give you a brief but memorable sampling of everything the beautiful Canary Islands have to offer. Deluxe accommodations, superb food, world famous wines, the perfect climate, and a range of outdoor activities - there's not much that Tenerife doesn't have! You'll also get the chance to explore the island of La Gomera.



COSTA ADEJE  
WEATHER



73°F  
clear sky

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
73°F 66°F	73°F 66°F	73°F 68°F	73°F 70°F	72°F 68°F	70°F 64°F	72°F 64°F



## Tenerife North

Spend 6 days exploring the beautiful north side of Tenerife. From the time you arrive at the resort, you'll be able to immerse yourself in the island's natural beauty, distinctive landscapes and terrain, Canarian culture, and activities. Enjoy superb food and world-famous wines, the perfect climate, and unique adventures via a jeep tour, a guided hike, and a cable car ride to the summit of a volcano.

PUERTO DE LA  
CRUZ  
WEATHER



70°F  
few clouds

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
72°F 64°F	73°F 64°F	75°F 66°F	73°F 70°F	70°F 64°F	68°F 63°F	73°F 64°F



STAR CLIPPERS

## GROUPS 2024 AND 2025

### JUNE 9, 2024-SAIL CELEBRITY ECLIPSE TO BERMUDA

Sail on the revolutionized Celebrity Eclipse from Cape Liberty (Bayonne) and spend three glorious days in Bermuda. Your cruise includes accommodations in a balcony cabin, all meals (except for specialty restaurants), beverage package, wi-fi, gratuities and all current port and government taxes. Rate is \$1,899.00 per person double occupancy. NO PASSPORT is required. Two Cabins Left until March 1<sup>st</sup>.

### SEPTEMBER 4, 2024-BLACK HILLS, MT. RUSHMORE, and BADLANDS

Highlights: Mt. Rushmore by day and night, Devil's Tower, Crazy Horse Memorial, Custer State Park and Buffalo Jeep Safari. Six nights hotel, six breakfasts and four dinners, all sightseeing and round-trip air fare. Rate is \$3,395.00 per person double occupancy.

### OCTOBER 13, 2024-NATIONAL PARKS and CANYONS of the SOUTHWEST

Highlights: Grand Canyon and Bryce Canyon, Zion National Park Tram and Hoover Dam. Two nights in Las Vegas and three nights in Mesquite, five breakfasts, one lunch and two dinners, all sightseeing and round-trip air fare. Rate is \$3,395.00 per person double occupancy.

### FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THESE AT OUR WINE & CHEESE INFO NIGHT\*

#### \*OCTOBER 20, 2024-SUNNY PORTUGAL (with optional 4-night Madeira Island extension)

Highlights: Lisbon, Belem, Cork Factory, Evora, Winery visit, Alentejo, Lagos, Algarve, Silves, Setubal, Obidos, and Sintra. Includes eight breakfasts, three lunches and three dinners, all included sightseeing, all current air taxes and fees along with transfers t/from Newark and round-trip airfare. Bookings must be made by April 15<sup>th</sup>. Rate is \$3,999.00 per person double. PASSPORT IS REQUIRED.

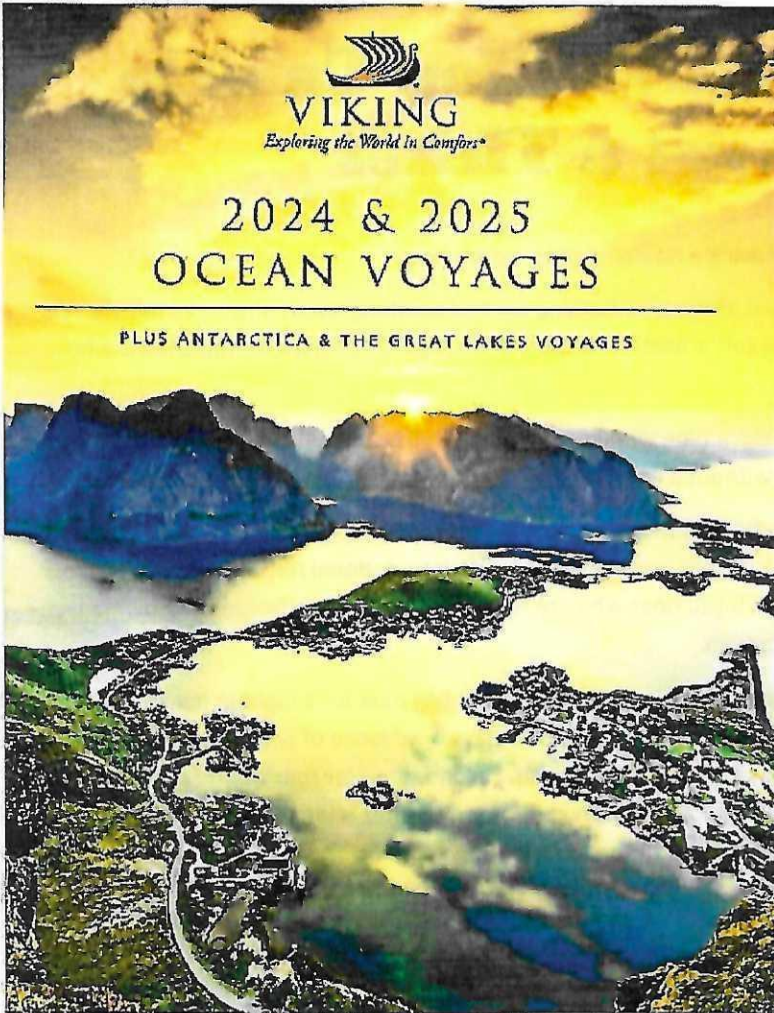
#### \*MARCH 3, 2025-ALASKA'S NORTHERN LIGHTS

Highlights: Anchorage, Northern Lights excursions, Winter Glacier cruise, Prince William Sound, Talkeetna, Alaska Railroad, Fairbanks, and Dog mushing. Two nights in Anchorage, one in Talkeetna and three in Fairbanks, six breakfasts, one lunch and four dinners. With just 12-24 passengers, this is a personal journey and adventure that today's cultural explorers dream of. Rate is \$4,999.00 per person double occupancy including all above and air fare to/from Newark with transfers.

#### NOVEMBER 25, 2025-ICONIC CHRISTMAS MARKETS ABOARD AMA REINA (Nuremburg to Budapest)

Travel back through centuries as you walk along cobblestone streets through grand cities and historic towns bedecked with twinkling Christmas trees and lined with wooden huts gleaming with handcrafted treasures. Nuremberg's festive Christkindlemarkt, the largest and oldest Christmas market in Germany, Regensburg's Artisan Christmas Market, one of Bavaria's most beautiful and romantic, Vienna with its impressive Christmas Market and Budapest where most products are handmade. Revel in a feast for the senses: sparkling lights, festive sounds of children dressed as angels singing carols and the enticing smells of hot-mulled wine, roasted chestnuts, sausages, and sweet treats of every kind. Rates start at \$3,699.00 per person double occupancy. Air fare and pre and post options will be available in early 2025. A deposit of \$400 per person is required. **This special rate is in effect until March 31, 2024.**

**SPECIAL SAILINGS ON STAR CLIPPERS-COME TO OUR WINE AND CHEESE PARTY TO FIND OUT MORE!**



**Blue Diamond Resorts prepares  
Hideaway at Royalton Blue Waters for  
its grand opening**

The eagerly anticipated opening of the new Hideaway at Royalton Blue Waters, An Autograph Collection All-Inclusive Resort Adults-Only, in Montego Bay, Jamaica, is just around the corner, set for late November 2023. The construction of this highly awaited resort has been...



**Eurostar and Thalys have become one**



Thalys is now Eurostar. And that means one single rail network connecting France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, and the UK.

Eurostar now covers a larger network that includes high-speed direct and indirect routes across France, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. That means connections to a wider range of European destinations, including Antwerp, Cologne and Düsseldorf, as well as the major cities usually served, such as London, Paris and Brussels. In winter, the Eurostar Snow service to ski destinations including Chambéry, Albertville, and Moûtiers will operate, and in summer, it will run services to the sunny south of France including Marseilles and Avignon.

The newly expanded network comes accompanied with a sleek and modern rebrand and a new logo, the North Star. The new logo was inspired by the Etoile du Nord, the first train service connecting Brussels, Paris, and Amsterdam. You'll see the logo and the new Eurostar font on both the blue (former Eurostar) and red (former Thalys) trains!



# The U.S. Airports Where You Can Go Past Security Without a Ticket

You can now enjoy everything some airports offer without having a boarding pass. Here's how.

Even in the inevitable stress that can accompany airline travel, there is something we find soothing about airport terminals. It's like a mall of the sky, where you can sit in an atrium eating a soft pretzel for a spell, a nostalgic throwback for millennials who spent their youth hanging out at the mall.

Airports know the pull of nostalgia (and we guess spending extra time with loved ones as well is a draw), as some locations now offer visitor pass programs so you can head to the terminal without a boarding pass to shop, eat, or (we guess) just hang out?

Earlier this month, Orlando became the latest major US airport to launch a visitor pass program, ExperienceMCO. It allows non-traveling public to check out its Terminal C post-security, the newest wing of the Orlando International Airport that opened in 2022. "Whether shopping, dining or spending more time with loved ones who are flying out, guests can choose their own adventure," the airport said in an official announcement of the program.

To use one of these visitor passes to go past security and enter a terminal without a boarding pass for a flight in hand, there are steps and stipulations to follow. First, individuals must apply online here up to seven days in advance of when they want to use a visitor pass. You'll receive a confirmation email that your request has been received. Second, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) will review your request. You'll then receive another email with your approval after midnight on the day of your requested visit. If you are approved, your visitor pass will be attached to that email. Bring your visitor pass with you, and when you arrive at the TSA security checkpoint show it to the TSA agent along with your TSA-approved photo ID.

ExperienceMCO visitor pass holders can only visit Terminal C, and must enter through that terminal's TSA checkpoint. Sorry TSA Pre-Check members, you'll still have to go through the general population security line if you are using an ExperienceMCO visitor pass. Entry using the pass is only between the hours of 10 am and 4 pm and guests using the pass are required to exit the terminal by 8 pm.

Other airports that offer similar visitor pass programs include:

Ontario International Airport in Ontario, California (which we wrote about last year)

Seattle-Tacoma International Airport in Seattle, Washington  
(the first West Coast airport to offer a visitor pass program back in 2018)

Louis Armstrong International Airport in New Orleans

John Wayne Airport in Orange County, California

Detroit Metro Airport in Detroit

