

GUIDE TO THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS



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Virgin Islands with

BVI Holidays

BVI GUIDE



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WHERE ARE THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS?

The British Virgin Islands, or BVI for short, are located 60 miles east of Puerto Rico in the northern Caribbean. They are one of the UK's overseas territories and although they have their own government, they come under the United Kingdom's jurisdiction.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

The best route is from London Gatwick non-stop to Antigua, then four days a week, inter-Caribbean Airways operates a non-stop service between Antigua and Beef Island (Tortola) or Liat the Caribbean airline operate a daily indirect service. Another option is to charter a private aircraft from Antigua to Tortola – more expensive but you would be met straight off the transatlantic flight and after clearing immigration and customs, taken to your waiting aircraft. Connections are available from Glasgow and Edinburgh to Gatwick and it is possible to fly from Manchester via Paris and St Maarten to the BVI but this route is more expensive.



The currency is the US dollar.



WHY WOULD I WANT TO VISIT THE BVI?



The British Virgin Islands are the way the Caribbean used to be 30 or more years ago....unspoilt, uncrowded and uncommercialised. The masses tend to disembark in Antigua and head for one of the 365 beaches, whereas a select few will board a smaller plane and head for the beautiful BVI.

The BVI is a very safe destination with very little crime unlike some of the larger Caribbean Islands. In fact, the British Virgin Islands are so safe that some of the hotels do not even provide room keys!

The BVI Islanders are courteous, friendly people who will welcome you warmly wherever you go.

No two hotels or villas are the same – they are all different and all individually designed. The hotels are small and select, ensuring personal service at all times. From small and inexpensive, to four and five star deluxe, to Richard Branson's Necker Island. There is something for almost everyone and the majority of the beaches are almost deserted.





WHAT IS THERE TO DO?

Lots of things!

If your passion is sailing, the British Virgin Islands are unsurpassable and the best way to see these beautiful islands is from the water. The waters are crystal clear and easy to navigate, there is no fog, you are always in sight of land and there are plenty of deserted beaches and anchorages for you to explore.

Bareboat or crewed, monohulls, catamarans or power boats – the BVI has it all. A very popular choice is to have some time ashore and some time afloat, then you have the best of both worlds!

If you are a diver – look no further – there is a myriad of life beneath the waves and the BVI is an excellent choice for every level of diver – plenty of shallows with the occasional drop-off, very few currents and plenty of sheltered dive sites. There are many wrecks but the ‘Wreck of the Rhone’ is one of the most famous and popular dives and lies in depths from 20 to 80 feet with the water temperature around 80-86 degrees Fahrenheit.

Anegada is the BVI’s only completely coral island and the largest Barrier coral reef in the Caribbean. It is also the fourth largest barrier reef on earth and home to an amazing variety of marine life – a diver’s paradise.

If rest, relaxation, stunning beaches and crystal clear waters to swim and snorkel in are all you want to do on holiday, then the British Virgin Islands have this in abundance.

WHERE SHOULD I STAY AND WHICH ISLAND SHOULD I CHOOSE

This is the beauty of the BVI – all the islands are very different and provide a wide choice of activities for singles, couples and families or just a group of friends.

Virgin Gorda tends to be quieter than Tortola as Tortola is home to the banking capital of the BVI. The capital - Road Town is busy and bustling with people going about their daily business. Road Town is also home to Government House where the Premier (Prime Minister) of the British Virgin Islands resides.

For families travelling to the British Virgin Islands, the [Bitter End Yacht Club](#) on Virgin Gorda has plenty to keep all members of your family occupied and interested. The hotel has a vast fleet of over 100 vessels and includes sailboats of various shapes and sizes, kayaks and hobie cats, Boston whalers and stand up paddle boards. They even hold Yoga classes on the stand up paddle boards! Bitter End also offers kite surfing, windsurfing, sunset cruises, blue water excursions to other islands and daily snorkel trips. There is a sailing school and a dive facility located at Bitter End.



Singles and couples also love Bitter End with all these wonderful facilities and every year in November, they hold the Pro-Am Regatta which is great fun and open for everyone to join in. Put your name down to crew with some of the most famous names in sailing.

So much is included in the cost at the Bitter End Yacht Club – it is excellent value for money.

Virgin Gorda

[Virgin Gorda](#) is home to many beautiful villas and apartments and the Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour is a great spot to relax with a chilled Pain Killer or cold beer and watch the world go by. Mad Dog café/bar is close to the Baths and a really funky place to have a great sandwich and....the best Pina Colada on the island.

You must visit the Copper Mine while on Virgin Gorda – it's a National Park and houses the ruins of an abandoned 19th century copper mine on the south eastern side of the island. Be sure and stop at the Mine Shaft café/restaurant for a cold drink on the way. For the energetic, a climb to the top of Gorda Peak is a must – it's also National Park and the views are stunning.

Guavaberry Spring Bay

[Guavaberry Spring Bay](#) on Virgin Gorda offers self-catering wooden cottages on stilts set in a natural tropical landscape and a few minutes walk to the stunning white sand beach at Spring Bay. The world famous Baths are a few minutes drive from Guavaberry.

Tortola

[Tortola](#) has much to offer with varying types of accommodation – [The Lighthouse Villas](#) on Cane Garden Bay offer a selection of one and two bedroom apartments – perfect for families and couples and has many beach restaurants and bars right on the doorstep.

There is a good selection of water sports on the beach and you can hire a little motor boat and take yourself over to Jost van Dyke to visit the famous Soggy Dollar Bar on yet another stunning white sand beach. [Mongoose Apartments](#) are situated at the other end of Cane Garden Bay close to the beach but nestled in a leafy glade – they offer comfortable one bedroom apartments. Of course, there are many more lovely hotels and villas to choose from on beautiful Tortola.

A visit to the 400 year old Callwood Rum Distillery on Tortola is a must. Listen to an interesting talk on the process of making rum and sample the different types of rum.

The Botanical Gardens in Road Town is small but worth a visit – wander down the avenue of royal palms to the fountain and paths that disappear into shady pergolas.

Guana Island

[Guana Island](#) is perfect for that wonderful romantic holiday for just you two. It is an 850 acre island with only 15 individual hilltop rooms, 3 villas and a romantic little hideaway with its own pool called North Beach Cottage. Guana offers water sports on its stunning white sand beach, tennis, yoga classes and dozens of interesting hiking and walking trails. Guests are welcome to feed fresh fruit to the amazing 6' long iguanas to which Guana Island is home. They are tame and truly magnificent reptiles. Guana can also be rented in its entirety for groups of up to 42 people.

Anegada

Meaning the “drowned” island – [Anegada](#) is the flattest island in the British Virgin Islands and the most northern. It is also almost completely surrounded by coral. The beaches are stunning; the sea is turquoise and the snorkelling incredible. [Anegada Beach Club](#) is the only hotel in the BVI to offer Luxury Tents on the beach. Of course, they have comfortable king and twin bedded rooms as well, which overlook the pool. Anegada Beach Club also offers kite surfing between the months of October and May with world class instructors, if you have never done this before.

These are only a very small example of the many islands available to you in the beautiful British Virgin Islands. If you would welcome some assistance in choosing the island and accommodation most suited to your individual needs, please do call me on 01279 871188 or email joyce@bviolidays.com and I will be happy to help.



Frenchmans, Tortola – small collection of one and two bedroom villas with pool, tennis courts and restaurant.





HOW MUCH IS THIS GOING TO COST ME?

This is the big question at the back of most peoples' minds. Let me dispel the myth right now that the BVI is "only for the rich and famous". Not a true statement. Of course certain people have a budget to work to while others, not so much and if you are thinking of taking a group to [Necker Island](#), then you would fall into the "not so much" category. To give you an approximate idea, accommodation costs in the BVI start from around £1600.00 per person for 7 nights in the low season for flights and self-catering accommodation. This is subject to fluctuation in the currency exchange rate and of course the time of year you wish to travel, but it is a guide to help you with your planning. Please call me with an idea of your budget and I will be happy to make some suggestions for you.

THE OTHER STUFF...

You will require a valid 10 year passport for entry into the British Virgin Islands. If you do not hold a British passport, you will need to contact the Foreign Office and they will advise you regarding visas etc.



No inoculations are required.



Voltage is 110 so you will need a travel adaptor.



The average temperature is around 28 degrees.



No topless sunbathing is allowed in the BVI.



Time difference between the BVI and the UK is -4 GMT and -5 BST



WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?

If you like what you have read in my Guide to the British Virgin Islands, you are very welcome to call me for a free telephone consultation on 01279 87 11 88 and I will be happy to take you through various options that may be suitable for you and your family, partner or...just for you! Alternatively use my contact form by clicking here: [Contact Us](#) Do feel free to e-mail this to your friends too!

I look forward to hearing from you and remember...this could be YOU in any of these amazing photographs!



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