

REEFS RULE AT CORALPALOOZA!

continued

On Saturday, June 8, Sweet Bottom Dive Center hosted Reef Restoration Day. About 30 participants came out to experience coral restoration first-hand – beginning with a classroom educational session, followed by a diving and snorkeling tour of the coral nursery in Cane Bay. Within the coral nursery, which sits in the sandy area between reefs, there are several man-made “planted” structures that hold small coral trees. Once the coral trees grow, volunteers move the tree to the reef to take hold and mature (a process called outplanting). Think of it as underwater gardening!

Jeff says he was delighted to see the groups work together for the benefit of a common goal. Coralpalooza provides a platform for St. Croix organizations to positively affect the coral reefs and the health of our environment. The event promises to grow more popular every year. Learn more about Coralpalooza at www.tritonsrealm.com/en/coralpalooza.



Reef Restoration Day at Sweet Bottom Dive Center.

“The event was a perfect fit to give back to the environment we love to dive in.”

– Jeff Dykstra

Photo Courtesy of Tritons-Realm2

Mutiny Island Vodka – Putting St. Croix on the Map

In the former Island Dairies building sits the new Sion Farm Distillery and the home of Mutiny Island Vodka. Chef Todd Manley’s love for St. Croix led him to open several restaurants on island including The Mill Boardwalk Bar and Brick Oven Pizza, 40 Strand, Rum and Wine Bar Restaurant, and Toast Diner. An after-hours brainstorming session with friends convinced Todd to explore using breadfruit as the vodka’s base, instead of potatoes which are traditionally used. Good instincts, good partners, and good advice led Todd to refine his recipe stateside, where Mutiny Island Vodka was perfected.

As production has scaled up so has the need for breadfruit – a once-under-utilized ingredient. Presently Sion Farm Distillery sources breadfruit from multiple locations including Guatemala, Ecuador, Jamaica, and USVI. Even so, Todd says there is an opportunity for more local farmers to grow breadfruit.

Breadfruit’s modern-day legacy began in Tahiti as part of the well-known Mutiny on the Bounty event from which the vodka gets its name. It is one of the highest-yielding food plants in the world, with a single tree producing 200 or more fruits per season. Its male flower is a natural mosquito repellent. Breadfruit has other practical properties, including a source of flour that is naturally gluten-free.

With Mutiny Island Vodka, St. Croix now offers another local spirit. Experience the world’s first island vodka for yourself at the Sion Farm Distillery in a refreshing Mutiny Mule, Passion Fruit Mojito, or Sion Farm Margarita. Cool off with a frozen Mango Tango, Monkey Business, or Island Dairy Passion Fruit Shake. Hungry? They have a deliciously eclectic menu of munchies and melts. See for yourself and keep up with the latest events by following Sion Farm Distillery and Mutiny Island Vodka on social media.



FRESH START ST. CROIX



Photos Courtesy of Fresh Start St. Croix

Photo by Miguel Maldonado on Unsplash

If you want to get your creative juices flowing there is a supportive network of artists on St. Croix ready to welcome you. Fresh Start St. Croix hosts artistic and functional craft workshops in their Frederiksted location on Strand Street, and every week offers a new artistic experience.

The Tuesday morning sessions, called Friends in the Courtyard, are led by a different Fresh Start member each week. Each workshop is presented from the unique perspective of the artist. All of the supplies are included – just show up! Not an artist? Not a problem. Support and camaraderie are included at no extra charge.

Led by President Sandy Hruska, Fresh Start was created as a solution for those who want to engage their creative side but aren't sure where to start. In addition to weekly classes Fresh Start invites aspiring artists, who may not have the resources to pursue their craft, to lean on them for space, supplies, and advice while they follow their artistic dreams.

Fresh Start is also active in St. Patrick's Catholic School in Frederiksted, and this coming school year they will teach a weekly Fresh Art class for grades K-8.

As Fresh Start membership grows, they hope to expand their program to support more schools across the island. Fresh Start coordinates quarterly beautification projects in Frederiksted (the colorfully painted garbage cans and clever clean-up signs along West End beaches are thanks to Fresh Start members).

“Creativity sets a person free.”

– Sandy Hruska

The Fresh Start retail store is open Tuesdays, Thursdays, and cruise ship days during the summer months. Artists benefit by not only selling their work but also by gaining practical experience in a retail environment.

Hruska says she's happy to see that Fresh Start has spurred other art classes across the island, such as pour painting and sip and paint classes. “Creativity sets a person free,” says Hruska, who appreciates the benefits of social interaction and friendship that have grown from the Fresh Start initiative.

Drop-ins are welcome for the Friends in the Courtyard workshops for a modest \$5 fee. Check their Facebook page, Fresh Start St. Croix, for more information.

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED PROPERTIES



14 Salt River

MLS 19-712 **\$2,100,000**

Cruzan Sands Villa is a spectacular BEACHFRONT property located in a gated community in Salt River. The property is comprised of TWO independent, luxury BEACHFRONT villas both with their own private swimming pool. One is a 3BD and the other is a 2BD, both with similar amenities and complete with rich finishes. Each villa enjoys the comforts of indoor and outdoor living, thoughtfully designed to seamlessly connect the spaces for ideal entertaining and island living. Dine alfresco on the veranda, take a dip in the pool or stroll down to the sandy beach for a morning meditation.

Listing courtesy of Amy Land-de Wilde

MLS 18-1342 **\$499,000**

77 Carlton

This is an extremely well cared for house with its own hurricane shelter. It has a 2-car garage, a large 350-sq. ft. workshop, 2 large and breezy covered porches, and a large yard for the kids to enjoy. This house has only had one owner and has been through all of the hurricanes unscathed. The fruit trees are an added bonus!

Listing courtesy of Debby Babb



206 Granada Del Mar

MLS 19-913 **\$265,000**

Sit back and enjoy the beautiful view of the Caribbean Sea from the covered gallery of this 2BD, 2BA condo. The condo has been upgraded with new bathrooms, new furniture and a modern kitchen with granite countertops and stainless steel appliances. When you need to cool off, head down to the pool where you can relax and enjoy the amazing breeze and stunning views. The complex has a back-up generator and coin operated washer and dryer. Centrally located close to Christiansted, restaurants, beaches and shopping.

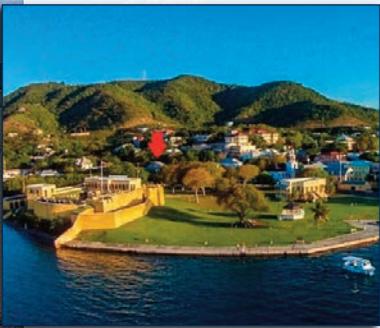
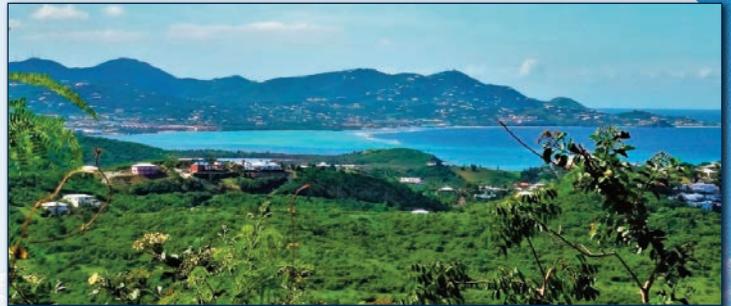
Listing courtesy of Sanni Craft

MLS 17-1632 **\$79,000**

22 Seven Hills

Top of the World! Beautiful lot in a lovely neighborhood with magnificent panoramic views to the soothing Caribbean, Christiansted and South Shore. Great place to build your Caribbean retreat. This good building site is 0.69 acres in the East End, zoned R-2.

Listing courtesy of David Fedeles



2 Church St.

MLS 19-992 **\$165,000**

A rare chance to be part of historic downtown Christiansted! This 0.12-acre corner lot is zoned for endless possibilities and is a candidate for tax credits and heritage grants. Dating back to the 1700's, it consists of 2 buildings and a private courtyard with space for off-street parking. The main residence is 2-story with a beautiful great room and tray ceilings and multiple bedrooms, a bathroom, and kitchen. At one time, it was a jazz club. Downstairs has been used as various businesses. With power and water on-site, a successful buyer would be able to start renovations immediately. It is ready for the right person to bring it back to life!

Listing courtesy of Chris & Christie Powers

ST. CROIX REAL ESTATE MARKET WATCH

Closed Sales Comparison :6/30/17-6/30/18 versus 6/30/18-6/30/19

	2017-2018 SOLD	AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	MEDIAN SOLD PRICE	2018-2019 SOLD	AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	MEDIAN SOLD PRICE
Home Sales	159	324	\$275,000	231 ↑	280	\$275,000
Condo Sales	97	226	\$155,000	139 ↑	204	\$180,000 ↑
Land under \$39,999	56	359	\$25,000	73 ↑	312	\$28,000 ↑
Land over \$40,000	42	448	\$87,500	78 ↑	390	\$75,000
Commercial	16	629	\$386,000	14	307	\$540,000 ↑

Information from the St. Croix Multiple Listing Service

* The average sales price and the average days on market could be skewed greatly by only one sale or because of the small number of annual sales.

The Good News...

The Median SOLD Price for Condos was 16% HIGHER

Through this June, compared to the same period last year.