FROM THE DESK OF

Bry Locher

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ST. CROIX REAL ESTATE NEWS

GREETINGS FROM WARM, SUNNY ST. CROIX!

It's a HOT HOT HOT St. Croix Summer! While the thermostat shows temperatures in the high 80s, it feels more like high 90s or even 100 degrees most days. The unexpected rain showers offer a cool reprieve from the scorching heat, but it quickly disappears once the showers end. As a result, we've been adding more beach days into our schedules to cool off from the island sun. St. Croix has a different energy in the summer that's hard to articulate. The number of land and sea visitors declines for the slow season but there is so much to see and do during this time. Live music, fruit festivals, movies on the waterfront, art gallery showings, and celebrations highlighting our Crucian culture are a sampling of the summer fun and are available to all. Also, the warmth of the local people, our unique traditional dishes, the breathtaking views along the island's coastlines, and the crystal-clear waters of our idyllic beaches combine to create a rare travel combination that some tend to miss over the summer.

This month's newsletter shares the island's newest restaurant that marries Crucian cuisine with that of another popular Caribbean destination. You'll also learn about St. Croix's newest excursion that offers an exotic twist on a popular watersport, plus I'll share the works of an amazing nonprofit organization that focuses on research and conservation while supporting students interested in marine biology.

If you're visiting us soon and considering homeownership in the Caribbean, let our Coldwell Banker St. Croix Realty team help you find the perfect home! We have several properties we'd be happy to share with you, ranging from move-in ready single- and multi-family homes to fixer-upper condos and commercial buildings to land primed for building. Give us a call today; we'd love to hear from you.

GET A SPLASH OF EXCITEMENT

with VI Exotic Watersports

The biggest craze in watersports has made its way to St. Croix by way of VI Exotic Watersports! Sleek and smooth, these rental jet cars are the cool cousin to jet skis, where the power and maneuverability of a jet ski combine with the look, feel, and familiar controls of a sports car. The result is a high-energy, open-water excursion that offers an unforgettable, once-in-a-lifetime experience.

When Ronaldo Gonzalez moved back to St. Croix in 2022, he knew he wanted a business that had never existed on island before. Born on St. Croix but raised in Maryland, Gonzalez traveled between the two frequently over the years. With each visit, he felt like something was missing. “I noticed the island needed something exciting and thrilling that could be enjoyed by kids and adults alike,” he recalled. He knew the car detailing business that he had in Maryland would not fulfill the idea he had for St. Croix. After seeing several videos on social media of jet cars zipping along the waters in Dubai, he instantly knew that was the answer. From there, Gonzalez went into research mode to determine how to make jet car rentals on St. Croix a reality. After a year of research obtaining as much information as possible about jet car rentals, VI Exotic Watersports officially launched its services to the public in September 2023.

VI Exotic Watersports offers their thrilling JetCar Adventure from the waterfront at The Fred Resort on the Frederiksted Waterfront. Choose between their 30-minute and 60-minute options for up to 2 people with a combined weight restriction of up to 400 pounds. This unique and exhilarating experience on the open waters of St. Croix is perfect for cruise ship guests, vacationers, corporate retreats, families, and couples. Each jet car is equipped with a 4-cylinder, 4-stroke 1.8-liter high-output Yamaha Marine engine, reaching speeds up to 60 mph. Jet cars offer an additional sense of comfort, especially to those who are often nervous about riding jet skis and tipping over. Thanks to its car-shaped design, it offers increased protection all around while simulating the ride of an exotic car.

Guests can enhance their JetCar Adventure by adding the drone photography package to their booking. 4K videos and pristine images are provided to help guests memorialize their thrilling adventure with VI Exotic Watersports. The newest addition to their offering, the clear kayak photoshoot, captures professional drone photos along the crystal-clear waters on St. Croix that makes every shot picture-perfect!

VI Exotic Watersports is open seven days a week starting at 10am, with the last reservation at 3:30pm. For bookings, visit their website at www.viexoticwatersports.com or call 340.208.9293.

ROOTED IN RESEARCH & CONSERVATION

St. Croix Sea Turtle Project

Did you know St. Croix is home to three species of sea turtles that regularly nest across St. Croix, St. John, and St. Thomas? Each year, leatherback, hawksbill, and green sea turtles find their way to the sandy shores of the U.S. Virgin Islands to nest. Surprisingly, St. Croix has the highest density of sea turtle nests throughout the territory, with more than 15,000 sea turtle activities on the island yearly, resulting in 3,000 to 6,000 nests for all species!

Tracking this information is no easy feat! Thanks to the St. Croix Sea Turtle Project at Sandy Point National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), all sea turtles nesting on beaches across St. Croix are recorded and documented. This nonprofit organization studies and protects sea turtles in collaboration with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), focusing on sea turtle research and conservation. Funded by major research grants, private donors, and fundraising activities, St. Croix Sea Turtle Project provides extensive support for students and volunteers assisting with these projects, including field experience and training, conference attendance and costs, and mentoring during independent research projects. They're sponsored by The Ocean Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization that aims to support, strengthen, and promote organizations dedicated to reversing the trend of destruction of ocean environments around the world.

One of the many important initiatives of St. Croix Sea Turtle Project is Sea Turtle Assistance and Rescue (STAR). This amazing group operates a 24/7 hotline dedicated to responding to sea turtle emergencies through a volunteer network of trained responders. Persons can call 340-690-0474 if they're in the Virgin Islands and encounter sick, distressed, disoriented, or deceased sea turtles. Armed with the details like the location of the sea turtle (island and beach name), the closest access point by car, and description of any visible injuries, the responders go to the location equipped to do everything in their power to rescue the injured turtle.

Outreach and education are at the heart of St. Croix Sea Turtle Project. Their programs focus on sea turtles and their habitats while showcasing the natural beauty of Sandy Point NWR through presentations throughout the island. Discover Our Sea Turtles School Visits are open to local schools and homeschool students from March through June by appointment. St. Croix teachers and homeschool groups are encouraged to sign up for a classroom visit from Sandy Point's outreach team for engaging presentations and hands-on learning about the sea turtles of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Each April, Turtle Watch invites students and young people of St. Croix to witness a nesting leatherback sea turtle or see an emerging leatherback nest up close. While turtle sightings are not guaranteed, these visits are certain to leave students and chaperones inspired and committed to supporting leatherback conservation.

To learn more about St. Croix Sea Turtle Project and their efforts, visit their website at seaturtlecensus.com or visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/stxleatherbacks.

in St. Croix emerged with an assortment of culinary offerings including hosting pop-up events like Brunching on the Farm where 80 percent of the dishes prepared were locally sourced. Seeing the way her food and service brought joy to those she prepared dishes for led to her tagline, "Great food with good vibes."

All these steps led to the grand opening of Jubilee by Yaadie in St. Croix on December 24, 2023 – 12 days after her birthday. While Chef Ashley notes that opening the restaurant has been one the hardest things she's ever done in

A FUSION OF FLAVORS

at Jubilee by Yaadie in St. Croix

The newest restaurant in downtown Christiansted is sure to invoke a sense of joy when you enter its doors! Introducing Jubilee by Yaadie in St. Croix, this fine dining space is the brainchild of Chef Ashley Ellis. Originally from Jamaica, Chef Ashley relocated to St. Croix in 2019 for a fresh start in a new place as a sous chef at one of the island's resorts. Equipped with her bachelor's degree in food service management and culinary arts from the University of Technology in Jamaica, she decided to add to her wealth of work experience. After all, she gained valuable experience at Sandals Resort and a prominent chocolatier in Jamaica followed by a well-known resort in South Florida.

Pop-up dessert sales were the beginning of her entrepreneurial journey on St. Croix. Shortly after, she started a weekly lunch delivery service, providing dishes inspired by her Jamaican roots with a unique twist. Fast forward to mid-2020, Chef Ashley's lunch deliveries kicked into high gear during the pandemic, especially for hospital frontline workers who were still reporting to work daily. Private chef catering at on-island villas was the next step in her St. Croix culinary journey, providing freshly made meals and snacks for visitors to the island. From there, she dove into marketing her brand on social media with a more concentrated focus on food rather than desserts. As a result, Yaadie her life, she leans on her passion for culinary arts and lessons learned from her late grandmother to keep her going. "I learned about hospitality from my grandmother," said Chef Ashley. "She was always making sure everyone had great food and were well taken care of when she entertained at her home in Jamaica." Patsy Pasta is her favorite dish on the menu named after her grandmother who would make pumpkin every Saturday morning. Made with pumpkin cream sauce, fettuccine pasta is tossed together with lobster, spinach, and other veggies. "My grandmother was such a huge part of my culinary journey that having a dish named in her honor was a no-brainer," recalled Chef Ashley.

Jubilee by Yaadie in St. Croix is in downtown Christiansted at 45 King Street. Their summer hours are Thursday to Saturday from 5pm to 9pm and Sunday Brunch from 10am to 3pm. For reservations, call 340-713-3205. You can visit their Facebook page for updates and specials at facebook.com/TheChefAshleyExperience.

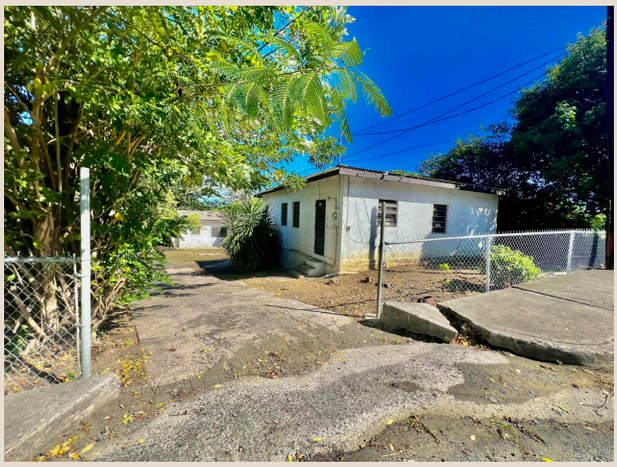
THIS MONTH'S FEATURED PROPERTIES

74 Judith's Fancy • $1,875,000 • MLS 24-1087

LUXURY

Welcome to this delightful waterfront Villa in Judith's Fancy. The tropical ambiance says it all, you can be living your best Island Life with a gorgeous never-ending sea view that stretches to Buck Island and beyond. Watch the boats sail past, take that cooling swim in your private pool, or follow the path to the beach where the natural pool inside the reef awaits you. This 3-bed home boasts a new generator, new split A/Cs, and hurricane impact glass in the primary bed and living areas.

Listing courtesy of Debby Babb



1-2BB Eastern Suburb • $310,000 • MLS 23-1731

RESIDENTIAL

Two free-standing houses on .27 acres. Located on highly visible Hospital Street and surrounded by properties being renovated. Both homes have 2 bedrooms and 1 bath with carports, and are separated by a courtyard lawn. Homes are vacant and being sold AS-IS. Concrete block construction. Lot features large lush trees and landscaping.

Listing courtesy of Mindy Dice & Jen Greenberg

114 Queen's Ridge • $150,000 • MLS 24-1195

CONDOMINIUM

This comfortable 1-bed, 1-bath condo is centrally located near Sunny Isle Shopping Center, JFL Hospital, movie theater, and other services. The condo is on the lower level just opposite the pool, and has a small covered gallery for relaxing outside. The open concept living room and kitchen area is spacious. Full sized washer and dryer in the laundry room. Insta-hot water heater to save energy. Beautiful grounds, off-street parking, and refreshing pool are some of the amenities.

Listing courtesy of Chris & Christie Powers

Rem 93 La Grange • $85,000 • MLS 24-1055

VACANT LAND

Build your home with gorgeous panoramic sea views to the West and South. Enjoy magnificent sunsets as your view overlooks the valley including Frederiksted town and spans sea views from North of the Frederiksted pier to South of Sandy Point. Large 1.7 acre lot slopes toward the sea and has road frontage at two points. Nice neighborhood is located only 2 miles from Frederiksted and even closer to beautiful West End beaches.

Listing courtesy of Diane Burns

Deep Blue Air & Supplies • $100,000 • MLS 24-966

COMMERCIAL

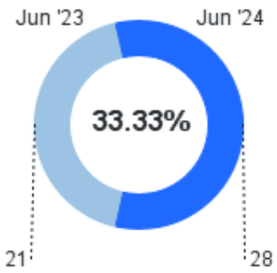
Deep Blue Air & Supplies offers a unique investment opportunity in the compressed air filling industry, with a well-established reputation among commercial fishermen and recreational divers. With nearly a decade of experience in the industry, this thriving business boasts a loyal customer base and a stellar reputation for quality and reliability. Its services extend to carbon fiber tank filling for air and paintball gun enthusiasts.

Listing courtesy of David Fedeles & Stephen Swanton

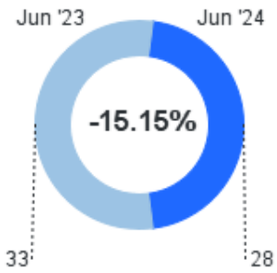
ST. CROIX REAL ESTATE
MARKET WATCH

RESIDENTIAL & CONDO

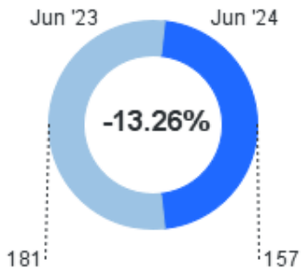
NUMBER OF SALES



NEW LISTINGS



AVERAGE DOM



3.82% ▲ Median Sales Price

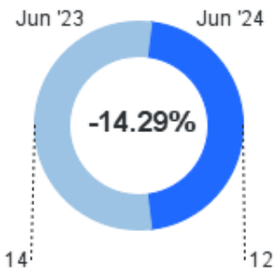
12.51% ▲ Average Sales Price

2.29% ▲ Median List Price

7.17% ▲ Average List Price

CONDOMINIUMS

NUMBER OF SALES



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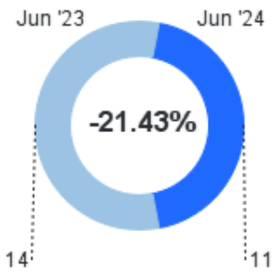

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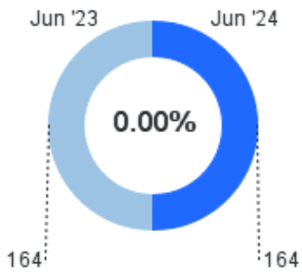


-4.64% ▼ Median Sales Price

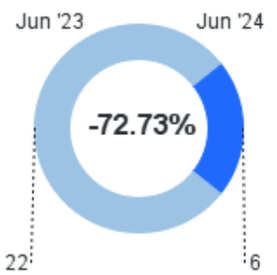
-17.73% ▼ Average Sales Price

-11.35% ▼ Median List Price

-17.33% ▼ Average List Price

VACANT LAND

NUMBER OF SALES



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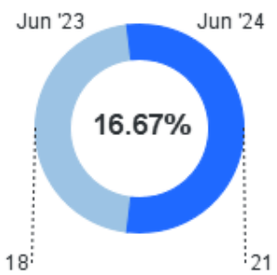

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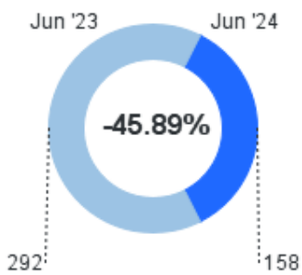


21.34% ▲ Median Sales Price

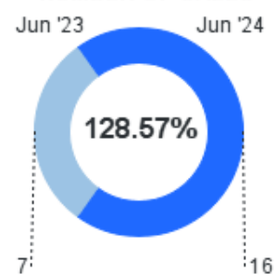
-38.24% ▼ Average Sales Price

15.79% ▲ Median List Price

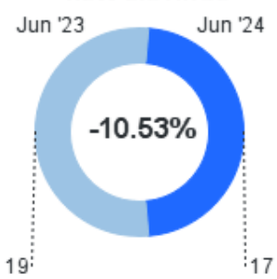
-34.95% ▼ Average List Price

RESIDENTIAL

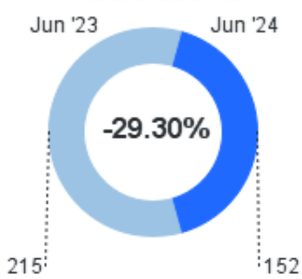
NUMBER OF SALES



NEW LISTINGS



AVERAGE DOM



0.00% Median Sales Price

15.93% ▲ Average Sales Price

-8.00% ▼ Median List Price

4.11% ▲ Average List Price

Comparison to the same period last year. Information from various sources, such as county records and the Multiple Listing Service, and it may include approximations. Although all the information is believed to be accurate, it is not guaranteed, and you should not rely on it without personal verification.

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