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# ST. CROIX REAL ESTATE NEWS

MAY 2022



When a well-renowned restaurant closed its doors on St. Croix in 2020, the entire community was left with a void that many were unsure could ever be filled. Less than two years later, the doors to this former popular eatery opened again. This time, a locally owned fine dining restaurant was discovered on the other side of its doors. With clean, minimalist décor and a warm, inviting ambiance, the true surprise is what awaits guests once they cross the threshold.

Unda de Gooseberry Tree is the vision of owner Michael Rey. "The focus for Gooseberry - as it's affectionately called - is to keep our local heritage, culture, and traditions alive through food," said Rey. "As the richness of Caribbean flavors continue to spread across the world, we want to remind everyone - locals and visitors alike - of where the explosion of taste began." No stranger to hard work in the kitchen, Rey has had his fair share of successful restaurants on St. Croix. From the delicious slices of piping hot pizza slices from Pizza Maré to the hearty, home cooked meals of Oceanview Café, Rey has fed St. Croix masses for over 20 years. Once he learned that the former restaurant's location was available, he stepped in to start the process of revamping the space to give it a modern look and feel. "We want guests to have more than a delicious meal, but also a restaurant atmosphere that provides an overall dining experience that keeps you coming back for more."

Gooseberry focuses on preparing food that combines recipes passed down from generations with bold, new pairings highlighting the darling tangy fruit, the gooseberry. The Caribbean gooseberry differs from other gooseberries found around the world. Green in color and tart in flavor, it is often cooked down into a stew and sweetened with brown sugar, ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon and cloves. Rey has successfully incorporated the fruit in a variety of dishes ranging from appetizers and entrees to cocktails and desserts.

Gooseberry opened to the public on February 14, 2022. Much like its predecessor, the restaurant hopes to be around for decades to come as the backdrop for their guests' most memorable moments. Unda de Gooseberry Tree is currently open for dinner Thursday through Saturday from 6pm to 9pm. To make a reservation, visit their website at [www.gooseberrytree.com](http://www.gooseberrytree.com) or call (340) 690-5115.



Photo by Anquanette Gaspard

## Message from Bry...



Bry Locher

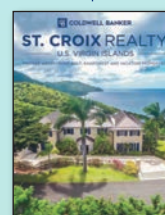
Warm sunny greetings from St. Croix! The hotter-than-normal temps are an indication that summer is right around the corner and the brief rain showers scattered throughout each week are welcomed with open arms. We are excited to learn that Royal Caribbean International has announced plans to nearly triple its calls to St. Croix's cruise port in Frederiksted. This means an increased presence of new visitors to our shores ready to fall in love with our laidback lifestyle, rich culture and friendly people.

We continue to see record visitors to the island! This month's newsletter highlights the return of a widely celebrated event commemorating its 50th year in the works! I will also introduce you to two new businesses on island that are sure to take care of your body and your bellies.

Are you visiting St. Croix soon? I am sure that you will fall in love with this island paradise much like many that have come before you. From there, it is almost impossible to quiet the endless dreams of a charmed Caribbean life; that's where Coldwell Banker St. Croix Realty comes in! The current real estate market includes several stunning properties we'd be happy to show you during your stay. Give us a call today and let us work together to find your dream home on St. Croix.

*Bry*

Bry Locher,  
Regional Sales Director, Managing Broker  
Coldwell Banker St. Croix Realty



This newsletter written by Anquanette Gaspard [agaspard@cruzanfoodie.com](mailto:agaspard@cruzanfoodie.com)

EACH OFFICE IS INDEPENDENTLY OWNED AND OPERATED



# THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF ST. CROIX'S CHERISHED AGRIFEST



**2**022 marks the long-awaited return of St. Croix's ever popular Agriculture and Food Fair, also known as Agrifest. Since 1971, this three-day agricultural festival has attracted attendees from all over the world to the island to taste, touch and feel everything rooted in agriculture from locally grown fruits and vegetables to livestock, arts and crafts and local cuisine. From May 28th to May 30th, attendees will flock to the Rudolph Shulterbrandt Agricultural Complex in Estate Lower Love to celebrate the 50th anniversary of this cultural exposition that shines a light on this cherished source of livelihood on St. Croix – agriculture.

Historically, AgriFest is held each year in February over President's Day weekend. Due to the ongoing uncertainties courtesy of the global pandemic, the event was postponed to May 2022 over Memorial Day weekend.

A few highlights experienced at St. Croix's AgriFest is centered around the four F's: food, fun, family and friends. Once you enter through the gates at the fairgrounds, the limitless sights and smells of St. Croix warmly greet you. The main exhibition hall on the west side of the fairgrounds is where the farmers market is held. There, attendees will encounter an assortment of fruits, vegetables, spices, and a variety of plants on

display and for sale. Several exhibits sponsored by local schools, youth groups, the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture, and the US Department of Agriculture can also be found on display.

There are lots of fun activities on hand for Agrifest-goers. Stop in at the livestock exhibits featuring animals such as goats, chickens, rabbits and peacocks. Visit the petting zoo, ride a donkey or hop on one of the carnival rides with the little ones for an extra dose of fun. Enjoy the melodic tunes from local musicians performing throughout the day and visit several informational booths throughout the fairgrounds where attendees can learn about a variety of agriculture-focused topics.

"This is a true Virgin Islands reunion," said U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture Commissioner Positive T.A. Nelson. "This is where you see it all – our traditions, our food, and our people." Get your fill of local delicacies like kalaloo, red peas soup, roast pork and salmon balls and wash it down with a tall glass of sorrel, limeade, ginger beer, peanut punch or passion fruit juice. Come out and celebrate the 50th annual VI Agrifest from May 28th to May 30th. Admission is \$6 Adults, \$5 Seniors, \$4 Kids 12 and under. Passes for all three days are available for \$12 Adults, \$10 Seniors, \$8 Kids 12 and under.



# RIDE THE WAVE

## *with Freedom Surf Company*



**W**ake up, smile and “seas” the day with a different kind of outing along the sandy shores of St. Croix. Freedom Surf Company owner Trevor Fitch offers surfing and swim lessons for all skill levels, offering a gateway to the surfing lifestyle and the freedom it gives. Trevor always knew he wanted to live in the Caribbean. After graduating from high school and gaining work experience, he took a leap of faith and made the journey to St. Croix. “This island is super special to me and has taught me a lot,” said Trevor. “The main difference between here and living elsewhere is that people enjoy life and live in the moment and being here has allowed me the opportunity to do just that.”

Trevor would volunteer his time and skills at local schools to connect with the youth on the island. Determined to share his love of surfing with them, he started a high school program in June 2021 with a total of 12 kids. He got the idea to offer the program after a family approached him on the beach to give them surf lessons. He was thrilled to see how surfing changed their outlook. “You could see the genuine happiness in each student during the summer camp,” he said. From that point on,



Trevor knew he wanted to do more to teach surfing not only to the island’s youth but as many people on the island as possible. Freedom Surf Company was established in August 2021 and the rest is history.

When asked why people should give surfing a try, Trevor shared how therapeutic the sport is. “There aren’t too many activities that help a person’s spiritual, mental and physical health,” he said. “Surfing is a lot like life being that it is a long journey where learning never ends, and the practice of patience is at the center of it all.”

Ready to give surfing a try? Freedom Surf Company offers a money-back guarantee to all customers. They are confident that each student will be able to stand up on their board and ride a first wave to shore by the end of the first lesson. If not, all money for the lesson is returned. Lessons are \$75 per person with bundle offers available when 3 or more people take a lesson. They offer weekly sales and promotions with various prizes and giveaways. Visit their website at [www.freedomsurfco.com](http://www.freedomsurfco.com) to book your first lesson or call 585.563.9284 for more information.



# THIS MONTH'S FEATURED PROPERTIES



## 110 ANNA'S HOPE | MLS 22-577 | \$3,200,000

This elegant knoll-top estate with sweeping views from Christiansted to Buck Island in the preeminent gated community on St. Croix sits on 1.59 acres. The long manicured driveway gently guides you to the top of one of the highest points in Buccaneer Bay Estates. An elegant water feature with waterfalls leads you to the expansive pool deck that is perfect for entertaining. The primary bedroom suite enjoys privacy in a separate wing adjoining the substantial library. The sophisticated kitchen and living room featuring authentic coral stone walls both open to a spacious covered gallery. Three upstairs bedrooms all lead to a covered gallery with stunning views, shared by the lower level 1BD apartment.

*Listing courtesy of Bry Locher*

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## 103 JUDITH'S FANCY | MLS 22-638 | \$825,000

This Caribbean gem is truly one of a kind! The lovely 3BD, 2BA home situated in the Judith's Fancy neighborhood offers privacy, ocean views, amazing outdoor space and beautiful updates throughout. Spend your mornings sipping coffee on the spacious patio or pool deck, cool off each afternoon in the large swimming pool and sip evening cocktails in the cabana that features an outdoor shower and additional bathroom. Inside you will find new tile, newly installed windows, several split AC's, a beautifully renovated kitchen, diesel generator and solar with Tesla battery back up!

*Listing courtesy of Brooke Cook*



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## 214 CLUB ST. CROIX | MLS 22-537 | \$195,000

Splendid 2nd floor condo with direct, nearby Caribbean Sea views. Complete with a custom made queen size Murphy bed and a new Mitsubishi split air conditioner. Full size kitchen and bath. This has been a very popular rental. Club St. Croix boasts restaurants, pool, tennis and Pickle Ball court, not to mention a dazzling sandy beach. It's both swimmable and walkable. Great snorkeling at the reef. Close proximity to the lovely historic town of Christiansted, nearby grocery, shopping and banking. Fun and Sun at your fingertips.

*Listing courtesy of Lorine Williams*

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## REM 28 DIAMOND | MLS 22-694 | \$1,499,000

Great opportunity to own this prime piece of commercial property consisting of a large parcel of land. 12.27 acres of flat land on paved frequently traveled road. Close to the highway, Enfield Green houses, container port, and airport. 29 Diamond is also listed for sale with different owners.

*Listing courtesy of Chris Powers*



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## 53A&B KING STREET | MLS 22-708 | \$1,700,000

Fantastic opportunity to develop in downtown Frederiksted on high traffic King Street, with very good foot and car visibility. Two story historic property and a charming courtyard with additional buildings offer a multitude of possibilities. The upper level offers large rooms with high ceilings, a historic brick oven, 2 full restrooms and large covered gallery overlooking King Street. Peek-a-boo sea view from the back. Multiple lower level units, most of which are currently rented month to month. Sold as is.

*Listing courtesy of Diane Burns*

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## ST. CROIX REAL ESTATE MARKET WATCH

### CLOSED SALES COMPARISON: 4/30/20-4/30/21 VERSUS 4/30/21-4/30/22

	2020-2021 SOLD	AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	MEDIAN SOLD PRICE	2021-2022 SOLD	AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	MEDIAN SOLD PRICE
Home Sales	188	281	\$407,500	216 ↑	265	\$529,415 ↑
Condo Sales	114	203	\$231,975	157 ↑	192	\$252,500 ↑
Land under \$39,999	85	393	\$29,000	48	383	\$32,000 ↑
Land over \$40,000	97	313	\$65,000	150 ↑	372	\$80,000 ↑
Commercial	10	421	\$422,500	24 ↑	363	\$507,500 ↑

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...

**HOMES  
MEDIAN  
PRICE  
INCREASED  
30%**

Through April, compared to the same period last year.