Memorial Day weekend may be the unofficial start of summer, but here in St. Croix summertime fun is already in full swing. Whether your idea of cooling off is actively participating in water activities or something more passive, there’s something for everyone.

April was Earth Month but green living is year-round on our lovely slice of paradise. Healthy options are easy to come by, from finding organic vegetables and farm-raised meat for cooking at home, to dining out at the increasing number of restaurants offering organic choices. Add to that the countless number of ways to enjoy the outdoors—it’s easy to feel that much more connected to Mother Earth while you’re here.

May brings the last Art Thursday for the season, an event that showcases our island’s artists and their creativity. Patrons can enjoy strolling through Christiansted while discovering unique paintings, sculptures, jewelry, and photography. Art Thursday resumes in the fall on November 21 and takes place every third Thursday—I highly recommend scheduling a visit around this fun event.

Of course, I’d like to wish all mothers a Happy Mother’s Day! St. Croix is a magical location to create memories with your children and grandchildren. Summertime is a great time to visit us. We welcome you to our Coldwell Banker St. Croix Realty offices in Christiansted and Frederiksted. We hope to see you soon!

Bry Locher, Managing Broker
Coldwell Banker St. Croix Realty
The St. Croix Food and Wine Experience is an award-winning culinary festival celebrating the best of our island’s cuisine, ambiance, and generosity. Supporting the programs of the St. Croix Foundation, this year’s Food and Wine Experience featured an amazing lineup of chefs and events.

Kicking off the celebration on Thursday was bond@balter that brought the community, along with visiting chefs and sponsors, together to learn about the organizations supported by the St. Croix Foundation. Friday’s Sunset BBQ treated guests to island delights on the Frederiksted Pier, while Saturday’s Cork and Fork hosted diners in an intimate venue at Estate One North with creations by Chef Dale Talde. Saturday’s Wine in the Warehouse featured bites from around the island and wines from around the world at Bohlke International Airways’ hangar. Sunday’s Gourmet Vintner Dinner was held at the former Galleon Restaurant overlooking Green Cay Marina, featuring local chefs Digby Stridiron, Negust Kaza, and Amanda Dougherty, along with visiting celebrity chef Hugh Sinclair, better known as Jamaica’s Chef Irie.

This year marked the St. Croix Food and Wine Experience’s 12th year and proved to the region why St. Croix is a culinary destination worth talking about.
ne stop that isn’t always at the top of a visitor’s itinerary – but should be – is a visit to one of our island’s farm stands. There, you are guaranteed to have your choice of a wide variety of fruits and vegetables…some familiar, some not. Access to fresh, locally grown produce is part of the pleasure of living on an island. Eat the way we do and enjoy local fruit like mango, carambola, pomegranate, passionfruit, genip, soursop, eggfruit, and papaya. Many locals turn these into jams, chutneys, juices, and smoothies to enjoy long past each fruit’s growing season.

Gardening is a year-round activity in our tropical climate, but knowing what and when to plant is the key to success. Yvette Browne of Sejah Farm recommends that backyard gardeners “Look for heat tolerant varieties on the seed packet label. This means your plants should have better germination, and once they sprout they will grow better in dry weather.” Browne also recommends keeping your garden to a small area. “We get insects with the dry weather, and they thrive in the heat,” she explains. Maintaining a small garden will help you keep the pests in check and manage your crops properly.

Luca Gasperi, owner of ARTfarm, encourages homeowners to use as much mulch as possible. “Mulch heavily, water deeply,” he says. He suggests wood chips, hay, and even seaweed as sources of mulch, and recommends that gardeners water plants late in the afternoon to keep evaporation to a minimum. Wind can be a destroying factor for tender plants. While we love our Christmas winds, “They tend to dry everything out – so be careful planting that time of year,” he adds.

Gasperi recommends homeowners look into Hugelkultur, an Eastern European horticultural technique that he’s had some success with himself. Hugelkultur beds are efficient and low maintenance, and are known for producing large yields without the need for water. Wicking beds are another option that handle heat and drought much better than traditional planting.

Browne adds that this past growing season was very good. St. Croix’s summer growing season, which includes watermelon, tomatoes, onions, herbs, and greens, looks as if it will be challenged by the current drought. Gasperi focuses his farming on the winter months because of his naturally drier south shore location.

In St. Croix you’re almost always guaranteed to find fresh, locally grown produce at the grocery store, the market, or dining out. Farm-to-table isn’t just trendy, it’s a healthy choice and supports our local farmers.

So Many Plants, So Little Time

It’s just a short drive but feels a world away – that’s what diners are saying about the new restaurant Salt - Great Pond. Located on a former dairy farm, owners Chris and Kelly Booth say the restaurant has been open just a few months but it’s clear they are quickly gaining a loyal following. The menu is full of fresh and local ingredients with something for everyone, whether you’re a vegan, vegetarian, pescatarian, or carnivore. Chef Chris’ idea was to create an eclectic menu with both small and big plates, inventive sandwiches, and the freshest ingredients he could find. That means that Salt - Great Pond is the perfect spot for anyone looking for a hearty breakfast, a drink and a small bite, a full meal, or even dessert and coffee. Insider tip: the desserts are made in-house!

Cozy up to the mahogany bar and enjoy your favorite beverage and a creatively prepared cheese plate. The restaurant offers a full bar with your choice of local beer on tap, wine, and cocktails. Their wine selection includes bottles of white, rose, red, and port, with wines by the glass that can often only be found by the bottle at other restaurants on the island.

From one of the inside tables you can see Chef Chris and team preparing your meal. Outside on the covered patio you can take in the breeze. And the name? It’s a play on words, says Kelly. The restaurant overlooks St. Croix’s Great Salt Pond.

Salt - Great Pond is open Sunday through Friday. Reservations are suggested for Friday evenings and Sunday Brunch. For hours check saltstx.com or Facebook @saltstx.

GREAT POND

Photo by Miguel Maldonado on Unsplash
2C North Slob
YACHT CLUB HILL is an exceptional West Indian estate with a 3BD/4BA main home, and a 3BD/3BA guest house, each with its own pool and gated entrance. Unbeatable luxury and privacy, for a family or corporate entity seeking spectacular views, top of the line features, and energy efficiency. Split A/C throughout, on 8.4 acres of lush and very private grounds. Hi-tech net metering solar system, rich appointments and solid construction, offer unparalleled comfort. The main house has a gourmet kitchen and the sweeping West Indian welcome staircase gives way to separate masters. Enter-taining is easy and convenient as the great room opens to the outdoor area with pool, BBQ and wet bar.

Listing courtesy of David Fedeles

2A & 3AA Northside

Big Sur of the Caribbean at a fraction of the price and sunsets galore! Prime waterfront property offers sweeping west facing views of the Caribbean Sea and gentle balmy breezes. Newly renovated with 3BD/2BA upstairs and bonus 1 BD/1 BA apartment downstairs. Beautifully remodeled in clean, soothing, soft grays with white accents, ready for your tropical colors. This peaceful and private residence offers new everything; electricity, plumbing, hurricane rated windows, full kitchen remodel with granite countertops and appliances in both units. New decks overlook the gorgeous Caribbean Sea and seashore below. It’s almost like being on your own private island!

Listing courtesy of Diane Burns

203 La Vallee

Enjoy the incredible view and sunsets from this 0.48 acre lot on St. Croix’s north shore. Just five minutes drive from Cane Bay beach, restaurants and some of the best diving in the world. Carambola Golf course designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr., one of the most highly respected designers of the 20th century, is a short drive away too! The lot gets a great breeze and has power nearby. Please see documents for topography and location.

Listing courtesy of Sanni Craft

ST. CROIX REAL ESTATE MARKET WATCH
CLOSED SALES COMPARISON :4/30/17-4/30/18 VERSUS 4/30/18-4/30/19

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Information from the St. Croix Multiple Listing Service

The Good News...

79% MORE CONDOS WERE SOLD

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