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USVI Sets First-Quarter Tourism Record as Visitor Arrivals Climb 12 Percent

The U.S. Virgin Islands recorded 303,388 arrivals in the first quarter of 2026, with March alone reaching 121,716 visitors as St. Thomas drove most of the growth and St. Croix also posted year-over-year gains.

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Four American Airlines and one Spirit Airlines aircraft at the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport (HERA) on Thursday, March 28, 2024. By. ERNICE GILBERT, V.I. CONSORTIUM.

The U.S. Virgin Islands continued its tourism growth in the first quarter of 2026, posting record-breaking visitor arrival numbers that the Department of Tourism says reinforce the territory's momentum as a leading Caribbean destination.

According to the department, total arrivals for the first quarter reached 303,388, representing a 12 percent increase year-over-year and a 6 percent rise compared with 2024.

The strongest monthly performance came in March, when the territory recorded 121,716 total arrivals. That figure marked a 23 percent increase over the same month in 2025 and stood 14 percent above the previous high set in 2024.

St. Thomas drove much of that growth in March, recording 98,284 arrivals. That total was up 24 percent compared with 2025 and 17 percent above 2024. St. Croix also posted gains, welcoming 23,432 arrivals, a 20 percent increase year-over-year and a 5 percent rise over 2024.

For the full first quarter, St. Thomas accounted for the majority of the increase, with 246,772 arrivals. That total was up 15 percent year-over-year and 11 percent above 2024. St. Croix recorded 56,616 arrivals, reflecting a 2 percent increase compared with 2025.

“These record-breaking numbers underscore the continued strength and appeal of the U.S. Virgin Islands as a premier Caribbean destination,” said DOT Commissioner Jennifer Matarangas-King. “We are seeing sustained demand across our islands, supported by strategic marketing efforts, strong industry partnerships, and the unique experiences that set the U.S. Virgin Islands apart.”

The department said the territory’s early 2026 growth reflects continued demand from U.S. travelers. It pointed to recent efforts including sports partnerships across the NFL and MLB, media collaborations with iHeartRadio, and promotion of Carnival celebrations across the territory as factors that have helped expand visibility and strengthen interest.

The Department of Tourism said it remains focused on enhancing airlift, strengthening partnerships, and expanding promotional efforts in an effort to sustain growth through the rest of the year.