GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Virgin Islands Tourism Summit 2026 to Bring Regional and International Tourism Leaders Together

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The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sustainable Development will be hosting the Virgin Islands Tourism Summit 2026, a two-day event that will bring together tourism stakeholders, industry leaders, entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers, and creatives to help shape the future of tourism in the Virgin Islands.

The 10-11 June event will be held in partnership with the BVI Tourist Board & Film Commission and the British Virgin Islands Hotel and Tourism Association (BVIYHTA). It will be held under the theme, “Shaping the Future of Tourism in The Virgin Islands: Partnership, Investment & Direction,” at Peter Island Resort.

Permanent Secretary, Mr. Joseph Smith-Abbott said the event forms part of the partners’ ongoing efforts to strengthen collaboration across the tourism sector and align stakeholders around a shared vision for the sustainable growth, resilience, and development of tourism in the Territory.

Mr. Smith-Abbott said: “The summit represents a collaborative effort between Government and industry and reflects a shared commitment to advancing The Virgin Islands as a premier tourism destination. Through this partnership, the organisers aim to foster meaningful dialogue, strengthen public-private sector collaboration, and identify practical actions that will support the long-term competitiveness and sustainability of the tourism industry.”

The summit will feature a distinguished lineup of regional and international tourism leaders, including keynote speaker Deputy Director, Sustainable Tourism, Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) Narendra Ramgulam, President of the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) Adam Ceserano, Director, Tourism of Sojern Bonnie Borkin Sr., Chief Executive Officer of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) Vanessa Ledesma, and other industry experts whose work continue to influence tourism development across the Caribbean and beyond.

The summit will officially open on Wednesday, 10 June, with remarks from Government officials and a keynote presentation by Deputy Director, Sustainable Tourism, Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) Narendra Ramgulam. Day One will focus on regional direction, sustainable tourism challenges, resilience and recovery, and conclude with a National Tourism Policy Validation and Stakeholder

Alignment Forum.

The summit will also feature a special resilience-focused session titled, “Building Tourism Resilience in the Virgin Islands: Lessons Learned, Preparedness & Recovery.”

Permanent Secretary Smith-Abbott said this timely session will explore how the Virgin Islands can continue strengthening the resilience of its tourism industry in the face of natural disasters and other external shocks while drawing on lessons learned from Hurricanes Irma and Maria and subsequent recovery efforts.

Representatives from the Department of Disaster Management and other key stakeholders will share insights on disaster preparedness, emergency response coordination, business continuity planning, recovery strategies, and collaborative approaches to building a stronger and more resilient tourism sector.

A major highlight of this year’s programme will be the introduction of BVI Market Connect: Partner Exchange on 11 June. BVI Market Connect will serve as a dedicated networking platform connecting local tourism businesses and stakeholders with the BVI Tourist Board & Film Commission’s global sales, marketing, and public relations representatives and agency partners. There will also be presentations from leading international tourism experts, including Bonnie Borkin of Sojern and Vanessa Ledesma of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association.

The programme will further explore the growing role of entertainment tourism through a special session examining how culture, events, and unique visitor experiences can be leveraged to strengthen destination branding, increase visitor spending, and create year-round tourism opportunities. The summit will conclude with a closing plenary session focused on translating discussions into action and identifying strategic priorities that will help guide the continued development and competitiveness of the Virgin Islands tourism industry.

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sustainable Development, the BVI Tourist Board & Film Commission, and the British Virgin Islands Hotel and Tourism Association encourage tourism stakeholders, hospitality professionals,

entrepreneurs, investors, creatives, community organisations, and members of the public to participate in this important event and contribute to shaping the future of tourism in The Virgin Islands. To support participation and accessibility for attendees travelling from across the Territory, complimentary ferry transportation will be provided to Peter Island Resort for registered summit participants.

EVENT DETAILS

Virgin Islands Tourism Summit 2026

Theme: Shaping the Future of Tourism in The Virgin Islands: Partnership, Investment & Direction

Dates: 10–11 June 2026

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. daily

Venue: Peter Island Resort

Registration is open until Friday, 5 June 2026.

Register here: https://forms.gle/ZzCuqyag7KbdJghR7

For additional information, contact the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sustainable Development at mtcsd@gov.vg or (284) 468-2161.

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About:

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sustainable Development is responsible for advancing the Territory's tourism sector, preserving and promoting cultural heritage, and implementing policies that support sustainable growth and environmental stewardship.

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Additional Documents or Media

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