

## AN ISLAND EXPLORATION BY LAND AND SEA



photos: Steve Simonsen, [www.stevesimonsen.com](http://www.stevesimonsen.com)

SIX DAYS, THREE ISLANDS, AND ample fun highlight TPL Trips' return to the U.S. Virgin Islands. This journey of exploration includes visits to TPL project sites on St. John, St. Thomas, and St. Croix.

At spectacular Virgin Islands National Park we will be joined by Superintendent Mark Hargrove and Rafe Boulon, a St. John native and the park's chief of resource management. They will escort us to picture-perfect beaches at Hawksnest Bay, Trunk Bay, and Maho Bay, site of a recent TPL preservation project—the largest addition to the

park since its creation in 1956. Stepping back 300 years into the Danish sugarcane era, we will then tour the 18th-century Annaberg Plantation Sugar Mill ruins, the most productive of the more than 109 cane and cotton plantations that once dotted the island.

In the afternoon, we will be joined by Ginger Garrison, U.S. Geological Survey coral reef ecologist and Jeff Miller, Caribbean fisheries biologist for snorkeling at Lovango Cay. As on subsequent days, we will begin our evening with “sundowners”—which is what island residents call cocktail

hour—followed this night by dinner at the beachfront home of longtime residents and TPL supporters on St. John.

On the next morning, Eleanor Gibney—TPL partner and the author of *Native Trees & Plants of East End, St. John*—has offered to lead us on an easy hike through an island forest. Or you may choose a more challenging hike on the park's Reef Bay Trail—featuring a 2.6-mile descent to the remarkable pre-Columbian Petroglyph Pool at Reef Bay.

To begin the second part of our journey, we'll travel by seaplane to Christiansted, on St. Croix, via St. Thomas. Joined by park superintendent Joel Tutein, we will tour prehistoric and colonial archaeological features of Christiansted National Historic Site and the Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve. This evening we'll enjoy a reception hosted by noted preservationist Richard Hampton Jenrette—author of *Adventures with Old Houses*—at Cane Garden Bay Estate, his magnificently restored, late-18th-century Danish plantation house.

The next day, we'll sail in comfort to 19,000-acre Buck Island National Marine Monument for a snorkeling tour of the spectacular Buck Island reef. Zandy Hillis-Star, a marine biologist and the monument's chief of resource management, will join us to describe the local marine life. We'll end our day and our journey with sundowners and dinner at Estate Boetzburg with author and historian of colonial St. Croix Robert Amandus Johnson.



### TRIP DETAILS

DATES: March 23–28, 2010  
 DAYS/NIGHTS: 6/5  
 MAX. GROUP SIZE: 16  
 PRICE (PER PERSON):  
 Double \$3,340 Single \$4,140  
 HOSTS: Russ Nelson, TPL  
 Minnesota Advisory Council  
 member, and Nancy Nelson