

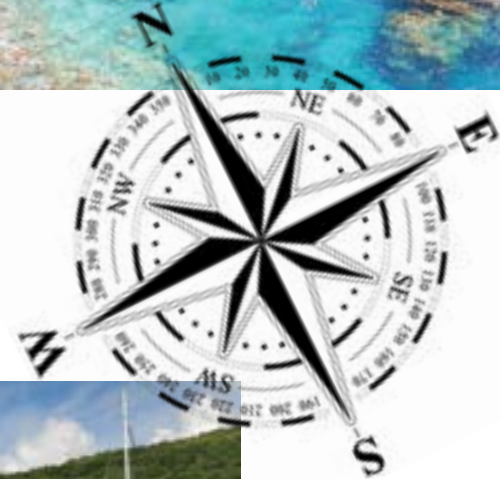
GO

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS • AUDI Q7

BY KIM-MARIE EVANS



Check in for a night's stay is on a first come-first served basis at the coveted moorings close to each resort.



ISLAND 411

THEY MIGHT BE BRITISH BUT YOU'LL BE HAD- PRESSED TO FIND FISH AND CHIPS IN THIS CARIBBEAN PARADISE. THE COLLECTION OF HER MAJESTY'S ISLANDS IS JUST EAST OF PUERTO RICO AND EASILY REACHED FROM THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS.

Sail Away

With warm winds and land almost always visible, sailing the BVI is as popular with novices and families as it is with seasoned yachties

Imagine waking each morning to a different tranquil view, your chef has the coffee on and you shake off the remnants of a night well-slept with a dive into a sea of the bluest water. Chartering a yacht to explore the British

Virgin Islands is easier than you might imagine, and more affordable.

This archipelago of sixty islands was once ruled by pirates and is now the playground of the rich and famous, and suntanned and aimless alike. »

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PORSCHE



Soggy Dollar Bar, Jost Van Dyke

the morning, paddleboard in to the Cooper Island Beach Club for a latte. The charming town square offers lightning fast Wi-Fi, excellent beach attire shopping and gelato, all in about 500 square feet of space. Not only do yachties love it. So do sea turtles, and there is a better than average chance of swimming with a few. (Turtles, not yachties.)

EAT AND DRINK

5 JOST VAN DYKE

SOGGY DOLLAR BAR

This legendary bar enjoys almost mythical fame. There is really no way to reach the bar—or the laundry line for your soaked Washingtons—without getting wet, hence the name.

WILLYT'S

A stop at this floating bar that mostly resembles an abandoned pirate ship is a must for bragging rights and Instagram cred. There is also a dubious restaurant, which is most famous for the late-night debauchery that ensues.

WHERE TO GO

There are as many private beaches and secret snorkel spots in the BVI as there are choices of rum. We narrow it down to a few can't-miss spots.

1 VIRGIN GORDA



TOURIST ATTRACTION: THE BATHS

This collection of sky-high boulders is the BVI's most popular tourist attraction. These lava leftovers from up to 70 million years ago form a series of grottoes that flood with seawater. Arrive by boat and swim in for a day of sloshing through tidal pools, clambering over boulders and squeezing through narrow passages for the reward of pristine sugar sand beaches. Go at sunrise or late afternoon to avoid the crowds.

2 ANEGADA



BEST BEACH: THE WHOLE ISLAND

Described by *The New York Times* as one of the best beaches in the whole of the

Caribbean, Anegada lives up to the hype. The eleven-mile-long island is one of the least visited of the British Virgin Islands, partially because it is so remote. Anegada is about fifteen miles north of Virgin Gorda—itself a backwater in the sparsely populated island chain—and is a flat coral island where mile after mile of beach extends in undeveloped solitude.

3 THE INDIANS



SNORKELING: THE INDIANS

Consistently listed as one of the best snorkeling spots in all of the BVI, this collection of rocks is little more than a stop off between Peter and Norman Island. Only accessible by boat, the



snorkeling and nearby caves at the Indians are legendary. You'll see almost every variety of reef fish and crustacean, as well as schools of harmless jellyfish in the summer. Sea fans and corals of every hue dot the walls. Arrive early for a mooring.

4 COOPER ISLAND



SHOPPING: COOPER ISLAND

The tiny island may be only a mile long, but it's chock-full of casual beachfront luxury. Moor just offshore and in



6 NORMAN ISLAND

PIRATES BIGHT

Pirates Bight sits on the hauntingly beautiful Norman Island, which is said to have been the inspiration for Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. It is the only commercial venture here. Sail in for a lunch of lobster salad and stay for the famous cannon shot at happy hour. »

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CONTINUED FROM
PAGE 46, SAIL AWAY



HOW TO CHARTER

Work with a reputable charter company like iYachtClub out of St. Thomas. This family-owned business has a stellar reputation and provides white glove service. You'll need to choose your boat, number of days and whether you want to sail **Bare Boat** (no captain or crew), **Captain Only**, or **Full Crew** (chef and meals included). Prior to setting sail, the boat will be stocked with all your favorite food and drinks. Prices for a fully crewed boat start at around \$2,000 per night and vary based on size of boat and season.

Fair warning: The "Festive Season" of Christmas to New Year's books up months in advance. For information or reservations go to iYachtClub.com or call direct 855-924-8252.

—Kim-Marie Evans



Crossover to Bliss

Audi's new Q7 raises the stakes



AUDI Q7

Price (as tested): \$61,945

Drivetrain: 333-hp 3.0-liter supercharged V-6 w/AWD

EPA Mileage Rating:
18 city/27 highway

If you like to drive—or at least feel that the driving experience should have a touch of exhilaration—you have already considered an Audi. No matter the model, you know an Audi is going to make you feel like the captain of a fabulous ship. Take the new Q7, which dealers can't keep in stock. (Danbury Audi came through and loaned me one for the test drive.) I thought the old Q7 was a glamorous gunboat, but the redesign is something to behold.

It all became clear when I was sailing around the back roads north of the Merritt. The drive select had been set to Comfort mode and everything was as creamy as a giant éclair. Then I snapped it to Dynamic, and it was like a sleeping cat instantly springing up on its haunches. The revs held longer for instant power, the suspension firmed up, and the Q7's whole attitude turned a little snarlier. It was suddenly a wholly different vehicle. In Dynamic mode, the car tracked beautifully through turns. What was completely missing was that top-heavy yaw still cursing some of the larger SUVs. With a heft-reducing aluminum body, this Audi feels light on its feet

and retains a car-like composure. Not bad for a crossover with three rows of seats.

When heavy traffic reappears, flick it back to Comfort mode and everything is instantly luxurious again.

In the parking lot, the air suspension will lower the rear end to ease loading the luggage. The all-wheel-drive Quattro system sees you through the slush. Oh, and the high-tech goodies abound. With its internet connection, the dashboard's optional Virtual Cockpit will actually show the Google Earth photograph of your surrounding terrain in sharp 3-D imagery. Don't plan on getting lost with this. Audiophiles will surely upgrade to the Bang & Olufsen sound system. (Can one be an Audiophile audiophile?)

Craig Falgiano of Danbury Audi noted the high volume of repeat business the brand gets. "People might start with the sporty A4 and then move up, or they want two. Once you get going with Audi, you want to stay."

I get it. Every time I've given back a test Audi, it's been with a steaming reluctance.

—Chris Hodenfield

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