

destination  
**weddings**  
& honeymoons

destination spotlight

secrets of the bvi

**T**he British Virgin Islands are one the Caribbean's best honeymoon locales, thanks to sexy boutique resorts, a low-key vibe and an incredible array of water sports, from sailing to scuba diving. You may think you know it, but when you scratch under the surface, it gets even better.

the / **zimmerman** / agency

(continued)

# destination spotlight

## Tortola

**THE DRAW** Most visitors who stay on Tortola bypass the capital city of Road Town and head to the island's sleepy West End, where the settlement of Soper's Hole boasts small, independently run inns, funky boutiques and popular eateries like the iconic Pusser's Landing.

**THE SECRET** Set on a secluded peninsula with its own stretch of beach (yet still within walking distance of Soper's), Frenchmans Hotel & Resort is one of those places you mainly hear of via word of mouth. And it's gotten even better, thanks to a renovation finished in January 2009. One- and two-bedroom cottages marry convenience (full kitchens, wraparound porches) with luxury (concierge service, in-room massage service). *From \$250.*

## Jost Van Dyke

**THE DRAW** You'll find the BVI's signature cocktail, the painkiller (made of Pusser's

Rum, cream of coconut, pineapple juice and orange juice), at just about any bar in the BVI. But there's no better place to drink it than where it originated: the Soggy Dollar Bar on White Bay. When it first opened in the 1970s, this popular spot didn't have a dock, so anchoring visitors would have to swim in from their boats — hence the condition of the bills in their wallets, which gave the bar its name. Today the place is almost always packed, thanks to private charters and a ferry from Tortola that disembarks at nearby Great Harbour.

**THE SECRET** Most people come to Jost simply to drink at the Soggy Dollar, but if you plan ahead, you can double the fun. Sea & Land Adventure Sports offers a wild ATV ride around the five-square-mile island. You'll make photo-op stops along the way (keep an eye out for iguanas) and hit a secluded cove for a swim before returning to the beach, where you can camp out on the sand or hit the bar.



## Peter Island

**THE DRAW** Peter Island Resort is one of the BVI's most popular escapes. Guests have their run of the island, which boasts five beaches, a full array of water sports and multiple secluded coves for private picnics. The 52 accommodations range from chic beachfront suites with Jacuzzi tubs and French doors to cliff-top villas with plunge pools and butler service. *From \$590.*

**THE SECRET** You don't have to check in to enjoy the amenities. Some visitors dock their megayachts in the marina while they hit the spa or enjoy a round of drinks at the Tradewinds bar. (Don't have a yacht? Take the ferry over from Tortola.) Sign up for a spa treatment and enjoy access to all of the spa facilities, including an adjacent pool and beach. Or make reservations for a memorable meal at Tradewinds Restaurant on Saturday night, when their weekly seafood buffet serves up a whopping 52 delish dishes, including fresh Caribbean lobster, coconut shrimp, buttery scallops and bananas Foster.

## Virgin Gorda

**THE DRAW** Even if you've never been to the BVI, you've likely heard of the Baths — it's one of the Caribbean's top natural attractions. In that awe-inspiring way only Mother Nature can achieve, giant boulders are scattered along the shore, creating an assortment of tunnels, private pools and underwater swim-throughs. It's like a huge, natural jungle gym; visitors climb wooden ladders, grab onto ropes and crawl through crevices to discover seawater-filled pools hidden in grottos accented with beams of sunlight.

**THE SECRET** As you might expect, a place this cool gets loads of visitors, so don't anticipate having it to yourselves. After playing among the ginormous boulders, most folks head back to the main beach at the entrance to snorkel or swim. But savvy Bath-ers follow the ad hoc trail to the end of the boulders, then take the short overland path to the equally beautiful, but much less crowded, Devil's Bay.

## North Sound Area

**THE DRAW** The BVI's top anchorage is home to a trio of superluxe resorts (including Richard Branson's exclusive Necker Island and elegant Biras Creek), but the preferred spot for sailors is Bitter End Yacht Club. Not only do they have a marina, provision store and lively English-style pub, but guests can check in to wooden-stilted cabanas that seemingly hang in the treetops, to totally get away from it all. There are no in-room TVs or phones; you'll have to settle

for platform beds and two-person hammocks on wraparound decks. *From \$530.*

**THE SECRET** Yes, BEYC is home to an acclaimed sailing school and offers rentals from Hobie Cats to overnight cruisers, but it's not just about boats here. You can also sign up for kiteboarding lessons with a certified instructor, take a snorkel trip to Norman Island or enjoy an alfresco yoga class on a deck overlooking the ocean. ■

## DESTINATION SPOTLIGHT

PAGE 89-91

**British Virgin Islands** [bvitourism.com](http://bvitourism.com)

**Frenchman's Resort & Hotel** [frenchmansbvi.com](http://frenchmansbvi.com)

**Soggy Dollar Bar** [soggydollar.com](http://soggydollar.com)

**Sea & Land Adventure Sports** [bviadventure.com](http://bviadventure.com)

**Peter Island Resort** 800-346-4451, [peterisland.com](http://peterisland.com)

**Bitter End Yacht Club** 800-872-2392, [beyc.com](http://beyc.com)