



News of St. John

An Online Blog About the Daily Happenings of St. John, USVI



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WIN Two Tickets to Paradise- Island Green Talks Reef Safe Sunscreen

April 16, 2021 by Hillary Bonner

Over the past few weeks, we have been working with Island Green to promote their “Two Tickets to Paradise” fundraiser. By buying a raffle ticket (or ten!), you not only get the opportunity to [win an ALL-INCLUSIVE trip to St. John](#), but you are also supporting a super important organization on island.

Did you know that non-reef safe sunscreen is actually illegal in the USVI? Our coral reefs here are in trouble and the increased amount of traffic, both on boats and beaches, this year hasn't been helpful to their recovery. But, by using non-toxic sun protection, you can help to preserve our marine life. And Island Green has been at the forefront of the initiatives to protect that precious underwater world that we all enjoy so much!



Image credit: Ruth Lacey

A lot of messages have come in regarding Reef Safe sunscreen, so I asked the folks at Island Green to write something up for you! Read on about the sunscreen initiatives in the USVI and [BUY A RAFFLE TICKET](#) in support of this great cause AND your next St. John getaway.

“The draws of St. John are many – chief among them are the sunny skies and natural beauty both above and below the sea. In order to enjoy all St. John has to offer, it is important to apply sunscreen to protect from the damaging effects of the sun. But scientific research has shown that some sunscreens are doing more harm than good – to our health and the environment. Even sunscreens labeled “reef safe” may contain dangerous chemicals. In fact, the FDA considers only zinc oxide and titanium dioxide, the ingredients found in mineral sunscreen, to be “generally recognized as safe and effective.”



Healthy Coral to the left, Unhealthy Coral to the right.

Island Green Living Association has been leading the charge on safe sunscreen education and awareness in the territory. From town halls and seminars to coordinating efforts with other non-profits, businesses, the government and the community, Island Green has spread the word on the importance of using non-nano mineral sunscreen, avoiding sprays, SPF above 30 and clear formulas. The USVI's passage of a law banning sunscreen containing the "Toxic 3 Os" in 2020 – Oxybenzone, Octinoxate & Octocrylene – was universally applauded.

Help Island Green "Preserve Our Paradise" and win a dream vacation in the process!

But there is still a lack of awareness and lots of misinformation out there. So, Island Green's educational campaign continues!

Mineral sunscreens shield by physically blocking UV rays from the body. Chemical sunscreens work by absorbing the sun's UV rays and then through a chemical reaction, dissipating them. The three most dangerous ingredients which are found in the vast majority of chemical sunscreens are the ones banned in the USVI.



Five simple ways to protect the Marine Life!

Unfortunately these chemicals don't stay on top of the skin. They wash off people's bodies when they swim and cause coral bleaching, 'zombie' coral which looks healthy but is unable to reproduce. They can contaminate through waste water runoff as well. Coral reefs are considered to have the highest biodiversity of any of the planet's eco-systems and are vital to marine life and protecting coastlines. Chemicals in sunscreen also enter people's bloodstreams and have been discovered in breast milk, blood and urine and can disrupt hormones, cause cell damage and severe allergic reactions.

Mineral Sunscreen blocks UV rays

There are a plethora of safe MINERAL sunscreen choices – from small manufacturers such as Stream2Sea and Badger to select formulas offered by bigger brands including Banana Boat, Coppertone, etc. Reading the actual ingredients is the only way to know for sure. Look for non-nano zinc oxide and titanium dioxide as the active ingredients and steer clear of anything listing oxybenzone, octinoxate and octocrylene on the label. And of course hats, rash guards and avoiding direct sunlight when it is strongest are also important safety measures. Find out more information on [Island Green's website](#) including a link to the Safe Sunscreen Council.”

And, about that raffle...

Currently Island Green is about halfway to their fundraising goal of \$150k with two weeks exactly to go until the deadline to purchase tickets. And a lot of that is thanks to your support!

We are in the home stretch now so don't miss your chance to [win this All-Inclusive stay on St. John](#)





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