



News of St. John

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



Reef Safe Sunscreen, Boating and WINNING a Trip to St. John!

April 21, 2023 by Hillary Bonner

Good Morning, Good Morning! I'm writing to all of you today about THREE of my favorite topics! Boating, reef safe sunscreen and the [Island Green Living Earth Month Fundraiser](#). It's very exciting stuff for me when these three topics come together for a little education, some entertaining story telling AND a chance for all of you to enter to win a trip to come visit all of us on St. John! As we have talked about over the past few weeks since the fundraiser launched, Island Green Living is up to some really amazing stuff here on island and they have put together an amazing seven-night prize package for you to enter to win in support of their

efforts. But, today, we chat about reefs, sunscreen and boats...All of which you'll happily experience as the winner of this nearly all-inclusive trip to Love City (valued at over \$11,000!).



As much as the iconic clear blue waters of the Caribbean are a beacon, guiding visitors to this beautiful place, a vast majority of you equally honor what lies beneath the surface of the sea. The coral reef life and sea grass beds surrounding St. John are home to an incredibly diverse underwater eco system. An eco system that, over time, has been threatened and deteriorated by human contact, hurricanes and changing sea temperatures. Evidence goes to show that the effects of sunscreen containing hazardous chemicals has led to both Coral bleaching and deterioration of the beneficial algae that feed the coral. And so, lessening our impact on marine life with one simple change, made by all of us together, can help to preserve this beautiful underwater world that we all love so much. One simple change...Switching up our sunscreen.



Photo Courtesy Leah Randall Hansen- Flyaway Charters

Which is what led the President of Island Green Living, Harith Wickrema, to begin advocating and educating on the dangers of toxic sunscreen, including how harmful it is to coral and marine life, back in 2016. Harith collaborated with [Caribbean Oceanic Restoration and Education Foundation \(CORE\)](#), Kitty Edwards at [Department of Planning and Natural Resources \(DPNR\)](#) and other notable experts to bring the truth about the dangers of the chemicals in sunscreens to the community, legislators and the governor. Over time, they researched, testified at multiple hearings and rallied experts to testify. Garnering the support of Senator Marvin A. Blyden and Senator Janelle K. Sarauw, the team worked tirelessly to get this ban through legislation and, due to these efforts and the ongoing education and advocacy of Island Green Living, our reefs may have a bit more of a fighting chance of flourishing again!



USVI Senators & Island Green President Harith Wickrema celebrate passage of the “Toxic 3 Os” Sunscreen Ban – March 2020

In March of 2020, legislation went into action in the USVI that banned the possession, importation, sale or distribution of any sunscreen containing the Toxic Three O’s – Oxybenzone, octinoxate and octocrylene. But the pandemic took the center stage a way from the immediate enforcement of this groundbreaking legislation that would be the second of its kind in the country and the first of its kind to ban all three of the “O” chemicals (In 2018, Hawaii passed legislation banning the sale of oxybenzone and octinoxate which went into effect in January of 2021).



Photo: St. John Villa Rentals

However, due to the way the legislation is written, banning the importation and sale of the illegal sunscreens, and last year's "sunscreen sweep" led by the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (DLCA), it is now nearly impossible to purchase sunscreen containing the "Toxic Three O's" in the USVI. But the FDA does not currently regulate the use of the terms, "Reef Friendly" or "Reef Safe." Leaving the responsibility on those of you bringing your sunscreen with you from the states to be informed consumers.



Chelsea Drugstore's reef safe sunscreen display

I cannot tell you how many times we have had guests on [Asante](#) who knew about the sunscreen ban and tried to do the right thing by purchasing a sunscreen touting a fun little "Reef Friendly" sticker on the front of it. Only to find out they had been duped once on board and asking us about their selection. Not to fear for those visitors, however! We keep an ample supply of mineral based, reef safe sunscreen on board for our guests to use. But, what about folks in similar situations headed out for a beach day? How many times has this innocent oversight added these hazardous chemicals to our already plagued coral reef systems? Well, if you don't know, you can't make the right decisions. And I inherently believe that people are good and want to make the right decisions (I know, still naive). So, here goes!

HOW TO PICK REEF SAFE SUNSCREEN

- 1 Check the label for toxic ingredients
- 2 Look for non-nanotized zinc oxide or titanium oxide
- 3 Don't fall for "reef safe" labels
- 4 Pick water-resistant sunscreens
- 5 Know that "ocean safe" mainly means "water resistant"
- 6 Avoid spray sunscreens



The simple secret to selecting a sunscreen that is compliant with USVI policy is in the ACTIVE INGREDIENTS! If anything other than Titanium Dioxide or Zinc Oxide (non-nano is best!) is listed in that top section of fine print on your sunscreen selection, it's probably not safe for the reefs. Or for you!



However, if you win this trip from Island Green Living, you can rest assured! In addition to all of the incredible offerings in this nearly all-inclusive prize package (\$1000 in airfare credit from the Department of Tourism, seven nights at Gallows Point Resort and a whirlwind of fun activities, dining and chopping certificates!) the winner of this year's raffle will also receive a supply of

Caribbean Sol, a coral-safe mineral sunscreen that is compliant with the USVI's ban on sunscreen containing the "Toxic 3 O's." If you are ready to stock up for your next planned trip, you can also order direct from their site.



Picture yourself here! The winner of this grand prize package will be calling Gallows Point Resort HOME for seven nights!

Since the ban, Island Green has continued to advocate and educate us as a community on the hazards of the toxic chemicals in sunscreens that are now banned in the USVI. Take a peek at their [SAFE sunscreen website](#) for more information on what to purchase. It's basically an Amazon for reef safe sunscreens that are all ACTUALLY Reef Safe. 😊 It takes the guess work out of your online shopping because they have already done the detective work for you.



The following are a few of my personally favorite sunscreens that protect well, are not super chalky on the application and are safe for your skin, and for the reefs:

- Australian Gold – Botanical Minerals Blend
- Bare Republic – Stay away from the sprays. Even with the right chemical makeup, this stuff has still wrecked the deck of Asante once or twice. If it is dying our deck orange, it's probably doing the same to your skin and the sea. The lotions from this company are awesome tho!
- All Good

And, of course, Caribbean Sol!



Now that you have your reef safe sunscreen selected, let's take a look at where you'll be utilizing that stress free protection while you enjoy your winning trip for two to Love City!



Lovango Resort + Beach Club

While the champagne sand beaches and idyllic blue waters, easily accessible from your ocean view accommodations at Gallows Point Resort are an obvious “must do,” as the winner of **Island Green’s Earth Month Fundraiser**, you will enjoy multiple excursions that will get you out on the water for some beautiful exploration and relaxation!

This year, Lovango Resort + Beach Club has generously donated a Beach Hideaway for Two, valued at \$490. You’ll arrive via Lovango Resorts private ferry and be whisked away for a day of

luxury. Upon arrival, you'll be greeted with a welcome cocktail and escorted to your Caribbean enclave, featuring a private daybed and a bottle of prosecco with breathtaking, unobstructed views. You'll have a dedicated server for the day (other food and beverage are ala carte and at the guests' discretion) and access to the infinity pool, snorkeling, beach and hiking trails.



The Beach Club

Once you have relaxed into your complimentary vacation, courtesy of Island Green Living and their partners, it will be time for some excitement and exploration! The winners of the [Earth Month Fundraiser](#) will receive a \$250 credit to be used towards ANY of Keko's sailing excursions. Enjoy a half day trip, a sunset sail or a full day trip around the USVI or the BVI on this iconic custom-built catamaran with one heck of a story to tell!



Spend a day on this beautiful vessel as a part of your winning prize package- The Kekoa

Known lovingly for her black sails, sleek silver hull and evening canon blasts, this beautiful vessel that has launched not one, not two but THREE maiden voyages will leave you with plenty of stories to tell as well after your day on the water with her and her fantastic crew.



Speaking of St. John icons, you've heard of the taco boat, right? 😊 Well, another fun day during your winning trip to St. John will be filled with boating, floating, tacos and tequila, courtesy of [Salty Daze Charters](#) and [Lime Out!](#) Hop on board Salt Deck, the custom "pontoon" boat in Coral Bay, complete with waterslide, yeti cooler, reef-safe sunscreen, ample shade and awesome reusable cups for a two-hour private taco run for up to twelve guests (Valued at \$350, this trip can also be upgraded to a half day or full day to pack in a bit more fun!).



And during that two-hour tour...You guessed it. TACOS! And not just any tacos. In my humble opinion, they are the BEST. As a part of your prize package, you'll have \$200 to spend towards your taco and cocktail tab while you dwindle the day away on custom-built lily pads while the amazing Lime Out staff "floats" your cocktails and tacos to you from the lime green Caribbean style cottage on pontoons. This dining experience is accessible only by boat and is not to be missed on any trip to St. John. And, as the winner of the Island Green Earth Week Fundraiser raffle, you'll enjoy exclusive transportation AND most of your lunch tab on the house. (Pro tip: Don't skip the shrimp tacos!).



The infamous TACO BOAT>>Lime Out!

And finally, after you have packed so much fun into one week on St. John, spend one of your final Love City sunsets with us on *Sailing Asante*. Sit back and relax with Teddy and I (and Chewy!) on this beautiful Brewer 44, classic monohull sailboat with a rum punch or Painkiller in hand for a two-hour sail around Pillsbury Sound.



As you relax in the bean bags on the bow, the aft seats or in the cockpit, you'll enjoy a sail through the golden hour and into the sun's grand finale for the day with the only sounds surrounding you from the wind and the waves. Charcuterie and all the island info you could ask for are also included on this two-hour private sail for up to six guests, valued at \$400, on [Sailing Asante](#).



Whew! I'm exhausted just thinking about packing all of this FUN and relaxation into one week! Well, what are you waiting for? Head on over to [Island Green Living's website](#) to get your raffle tickets today and try your hand at winning this incredible seven-night stay on St. John, including lodging, \$1000 in airfare credits, your rental car, all of the above excursions and dining and shopping certificates (valued at over \$11,000!).



Ticket sales end at midnight on Sunday of April 30, 2023 and the drawing will take place on [Island Green Living's Facebook page](#) on May 5 at 2pm. Tickets are \$50 each, six for \$250 or 25

for \$1000 and there is no limit to the number of tickets you purchase in support of Island Green Living's amazing programs that aim to protect our land and sea.

Local News

- < Stuff Depot this Saturday (4/29) in Coral Bay
- > New Options for Island Hopping Beginning this April

1 thought on "Reef Safe Sunscreen, Boating and WINNING a Trip to St. John!"



Shirley Cunningham

April 24, 2023 at 5:57 am | Reply

Thank you for the update and great info on the sunscreen. Crossing my fingers to win!

Leave a Comment