
Visitor Services Project Virgin Islands National Park Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Virgin Islands National Park during March 1-9, 1997. A total of 1,328 questionnaires were distributed. Visitors returned 1039 questionnaires for a 78% response rate.
- This report profiles Virgin Islands NP visitors. A separate appendix has visitors' comments about their visit; this report and the appendix contain a comment summary.
- Forty-nine percent of the visitors were in family groups. Forty percent of Virgin Islands NP visitors were in groups of two; 30% were in groups of three or four; 22% were in groups of six or more. Fourteen percent of visitors were in guided tour groups; 19% had arrived on a cruise ship. Many visitors (92%) were born in the continental U.S.; 3% were born in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Many visitors (59%) were aged 31-55 and 7% were aged 15 years or younger.
- Among Virgin Islands NP visitors, 5% were international visitors. They were from Canada (40%), Germany (14%), Norway (11%), United Kingdom (7%), Denmark (6%) and 17 other countries. United States visitors were from New York (10%), Massachusetts (10%), Puerto Rico (7%), Pennsylvania (6%) and 40 other states, Washington, D.C. and the Virgin Islands.
- Over one-half of the visitors (52%) were visiting Virgin Islands NP for the first time. On St. John, 38% of the visitors stayed less than one day; 44% stayed 7 or more days. In Virgin Islands NP, 48% stayed less than one day; 29% stayed 7 or more days. Common activities at Virgin Islands NP were snorkeling (81%), sunbathing (80%), swimming (76%), photography (60%), hiking/walking (52%) and visiting ruins (49%).
- Prior to visiting, many visitors used friends/relatives, previous visits and travel guides and tour books as sources of information about the park. Many visitors (60%) said St. John was their primary destination on this trip; 26% came primarily to visit Virgin Islands NP.
- The most visited places in Virgin Islands NP were Trunk Bay (69%), Cinnamon Bay (56%), Annaberg Sugar Mill (51%) and Maho Bay (48%). The most often listed reasons for visiting were to enjoy recreation, view scenery and seek quiet/solitude. Rental vehicles, taxis and boats were the most used forms of transportation to get around in the park.
- For the use, importance and quality of services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups who responded to each question. The most used services or facilities by 835 respondents were the park brochure/map (62%), Trunk Bay restroom/change area (47%) and trails (46%). According to visitors, the most important services were the Cinnamon Bay Campground (88% of 174 respondents), mooring buoys (88% of 82 respondents) and trails (87% of 364 respondents). The best quality services were ranger-led programs (87% of 115 respondents), the park brochure/map (86% of 475 respondents), uniformed park staff (83% of 132 respondents) and the Trunk Bay restroom and change area (77% of 367 respondents).
- On St. John, the average visitor group expenditure was \$1506. The average per capita expenditure was \$495. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more; 50% spent less) was \$400.
- On a future visit, many visitors (75%) would prefer printed materials to learn about the park. The top subjects visitors are interested in are marine ecology (77%) and island history (74%).
- Most visitors (87%) rated the overall quality of services in the park as "good" or "very good." Visitors made many additional comments.

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the
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