

# U.S. Virgin Islands

## March 2009 Tourism Indicators

Bureau of Economic Research

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### March 2009 Arrivals down 20.9 percent

Visitor arrivals to the Territory declined sharply in March as the global recession continues to impact travel. Total visitors arrivals dropped 20.9 percent to 243,760 from 308,156 in the same month a year ago. The number of air arrivals fell by 23.0 percent to 62,585 from 81,280 in March of 2008. Cruise passengers fell by 20.1 percent to 181,175 from 226,876 a year earlier. There were 85 cruise ship calls this March compared to 94 for the previous March.

### Arrivals by District

The St. Thomas and St. John district experienced a 21.0 percent decline in air visitors, down to 53,513 from 67,769 last March. The St. Croix district experienced one of the largest year-on-year drop in air visitors—a 32.9 percent decline to 9,072 from 13,511 air visitors for March 2008.

The St. Thomas and St. John district received 20.4 percent fewer cruise passenger than last March, 180,520 compared to 226,876 last year. The St. Thomas and St. John district also reported 85 cruise ship calls, 9.6 percent less than last March. St. Croix hosted 6,266 cruise passengers. There were no cruise ship calls to St. Croix March one year ago.

### Hotel Occupancy

Falling tourist numbers inevitably impact hotel occupancy. Hotels reported a 12.9 percentage point decline in occupancy to 62.4 percent from 75.3 percent in March of 2008. The rate for St. Croix was 41.0 percent compared to 60.9 percent last March. The rate for St. Thomas and St. John was 69.7 percent, 10.2 percentage points below 79.9 percent reported last March. Despite lower occupancy, total room revenues collected increased 47.0 percent to \$2,471,533 compared to \$1,681,080 last March.

### Tourism Statistics January to March 2009

Cumulative figures for the first three months of 2009 show that 734,926 visitors arrived in the Territory, a 14.9 percent drop from 863,919 visitors for the same period in 2008. Cruise passengers arrivals fell by 15.7 percent to 549,406 from 651,902, while air visitors decreased 12.5 percent to 185,520 from 212,017 for the same three-month period in 2008. There were 253 cruise ship calls during this period, or 12.5 percent less calls than last year.

The hotel occupancy rate averaged 63.1 percent for the first quarter of this year, about 9.3 percentage points lower than the corresponding period in 2008. Occupied room nights were 282,149 compared to 317,437 in 2008. Available room nights grew 2.1 percent to 447,446 from 438,455.

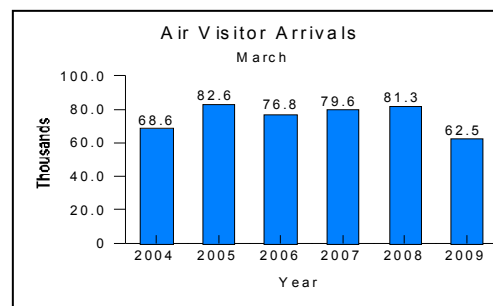
Despite a drop in visitors, hotels reported higher guest registrations in March when compared to last year. There were 277,118 guests staying at hotels compared to 229,630 for the same three-month period in 2008. US mainland guests increased by 22.6 percent. Local resident guests increased by 4.7 percent, while guests from Canada increased 62.4 percent, and European guests increased by 38.0 percent. On the other hand guests' registrations were down for the Other West Indies and Puerto Rico-- 37.7 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively. Guests from Other Areas decreased by 36.4 percent; Central and South America declined by 54.7 and 33.5 percent correspondingly.



## Tourism Statistics for March 2009

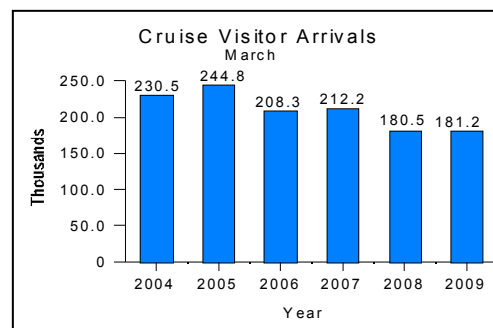
### PASSENGER ARRIVALS

	Mar 09	Feb 09	Mar 08	09 CY Jan-Mar	08 CY Jan-Mar	% Ch. 09/08
Air Visitors	62,585	62,255	81,280	185,519	212,016	-12.5
St. Thomas and St. John	53,513	51,924	67,769	155,170	176,215	-11.9
St. Croix	9,072	10,332	13,511	30,349	35,801	-15.2
Cruise Ship Visitors	181,175	186,405	226,876	549,406	651,902	-15.7
St. Thomas and St. John	180,520	179,797	226,876	544,583	650,026	-16.2
St. Croix	6,266	6,337	0	18,040	1,876	-
Cruise Ship Calls	85	82	94	253	289	-12.5
St. Thomas and St. John	83	81	94	247	288	-14.2
St. Croix	4	5	0	14	1	-



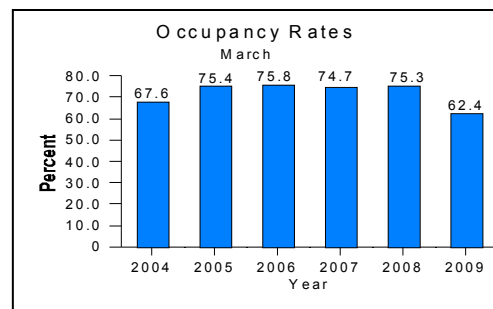
### HOTEL REGISTRATION

	Mar 09	Feb 09	Mar 08	09 CY Jan-Mar	08 CY Jan-Mar	% Ch. 09/08
Total	108,215	90,332	92,727	277,118	229,630	20.7
Residents	6,588	6,120	6,564	18,367	17,549	4.7
Non Residents	101,627	84,212	86,163	258,751	212,081	22.0
United States	95,753	78,835	80,253	242,192	197,029	22.9
Puerto Rico	1,688	1,345	1,669	4,238	4,485	-5.5
Other West Indies	582	373	964	1,409	2,260	-37.7
Canada	1,347	1,467	1,048	4,052	2,495	62.4
Europe	1,970	1,889	1,640	5,882	4,262	38.0
Central America	8	26	42	48	106	-54.7
South America	92	100	129	242	364	-33.5
Other Areas	187	177	417	688	1,081	-36.4
Average Stay (nights)	4.0	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.5	-6.7



### HOTEL ACCOMODATIONS

	Mar 09	Feb 09	Mar 08	09 CY Jan-Mar	08 CY Jan-Mar	% Ch. 09/08
Total Tourist Rooms Available	4,897	4,897	4,893	4,897	4,844	1.1
Occupied Room Nights	95,861	95,379	114,219	282,149	317,437	-11.1
Available Room Nights	153,713	153,715	151,683	447,446	438,455	2.1
Occupancy Rate (%)	62.4	68.1	75.3	63.1	72.4	-
St. Thomas and St. John	69.7	74.8	79.9	69.8	77.3	-
St. Croix	41.0	48.8	60.9	43.4	57.4	-



Note: CY = Calendar Year.

% Ch. 09/08 = year-to-date

Data subject to revision.

Tourism Indicators is a Bureau of Economic Research publication that compiles basic economic and statistical information from numerous sources. The table featured in this publication compares the reported month's data with figures from the preceding month and from the month of one year earlier figure. Data are subject to revision.

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