



Jost Van Dyke

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Why Go?

Jost (pronounced 'yoast') is a little island with a big personality. It may only take up 4 sq miles of teal-blue sea, but its reputation has spread thousands of miles beyond. A lot of that is due to calypsonian and philosopher Foxy Callwood, the island's main man.

In the late 1960s, free-spirited boaters found Jost's shores, and Foxy built a bar to greet them. Its good-time reputation spread far and wide, and soon folks such as Jimmy Buffett and Keith Richards were dropping by for a drink.

Today Jost is no secret to yachters and glitterati but, despite its fame, it remains an unspoiled oasis of green hills fringed by blinding white sand. There's a small clutch of restaurants, beach bars and guesthouses, but blissfully little else. As one local put it, 'When Main St is still a beach, you know life is good.'

When to Go

Mid-December through April is the dry and sunny high season on the 'barefoot island'. Jost also packs a crowd over Memorial Day weekend in late May, for Foxy's Woodenboat Regatta; around Halloween in late October for Foxy's Cat Fight Regatta; and on New Year's Eve, for Foxy's blowout to end all blowouts. Fridays and Saturdays are the best days to be on the island for live music, barbecues and other festivities. Many places close entirely in September and early October.

History

For over 400 years Jost has been an oasis for seafarers and adventurers. A Dutch pirate (the island's namesake) used the island as a base in the 17th century. In the 18th century it became a homestead for Quakers escaping religious tyranny in England. Quaker surnames, such as Lettsome and Callwood, survive among the islanders, mostly descendants of freed Quaker slaves.

Once Foxy Callwood built his bar in the late 1960s, the tide ebbed and flowed for a quarter century and not much changed. Electricity arrived in 1991 and roads were cut a few years later.



Festivals & Events

Foxy's (www.foxysbar.com) sponsors the main events, which rage island-wide.

Foxy's Woodenboat Regatta (late May) It draws classic wooden yachts from all over the Caribbean for four days of light racing and heavy partying.

Foxy's Cat Fight Regatta (late Oct) Ditto the above, only substitute catamarans for

wooden boats and add a costumed Hal-loween party at the end.

New Year's Eve (Dec 31) Hundreds of boats show up in Jost's harbors on New Year's Eve. Party Central is Foxy's, where there is constant live reggae and calypso. The other island beach bars are full of action as well.

Getting There & Around

BOAT

Most visitors arrive by yacht. Landlubbers can get here by ferry from Tortola or St John. Ferries land at the pier on the west side of Great Harbour. It's about a 10-minute walk from the pier to the town center.

New Horizon Ferry (☎284-495-9278; round trip \$25) Sails five times daily to/from Tortola's West End (twice in the morning, three times in the afternoon); it's a 25-minute trip; cash only.

Inter-Island (☎340-776-6597; www.interislandboatservices.vi; round trip \$70) Sails twice daily to/from Red Hook, St Thomas, and Cruz Bay, St John. It leaves Jost at 9:15am and 3pm. No service Wednesday or Thursday.



Jost Van Dyke Highlights

1 Hoist a namesake lager and hear improvised calypso at **Foxy's** (p178)

2 Sharpen your ring-toss skills with a Painkiller at the **Soggy Dollar Bar** (p182)

3 Splash in the waves and sea fizz at **Bubbly Pool** (p182)

4 Pour yourself a drink using the honor system

at **Ivan's Stress Free Bar** (p182)

5 Pick a night, pick a bar for live music and a beach barbecue at **Great Harbour** (p178)