

EASTERN PUERTO RICO & ST. CROIX TRAVEL PACKET

Come with us on our St. Croix itinerary and see what the Caribbean has to offer, all without leaving American waters. You will join the Nekton vessel as it departs from Fajardo, PR and make the 65 mile journey south east to St. Croix. At approximately 80 square miles in size, St. Croix is the largest of the four U.S. Virgin islands. It is also an incredibly diverse area for diving, including rich, unspoiled reefs, a plethora of sunken wrecks and artificial reefs, as well as a vibrant wall in exemplary condition.

The trip begins on the calm leeward West side of the island. Here, surface intervals can be enjoyed on the sundeck, taking in the scenic view of Sprat Hall Plantation which includes plush, green hills, a French Great House from the 1600's as well as guest cottages and equestrian areas. These dive areas are characterized by vast areas of mixed coral reef and abundant amounts of marine life. Wreck dives in Butler Bay will offer opportunities to swim-through and visit sponge and coral encrusted artificial reefs. While still on the West side, you will dock at the Fredriksted pier for an opportunity to do an exceptional pier dive as well as stretch your legs while exploring the island. In addition to the great diving on the West side, the boat will move to the North side of the island, home to "The Wall" which runs parallel along the island for about 7 miles. This area is center stage to a forest of massive sea fans, giant sea whip plumes, and a plethora of dense soft corals. The North Shore has an especially diverse underwater environment including classic spur and groove reefs that are rich in brain, star, elkhorn and gorgonian corals. It also homes colorful sponge colonies on the spectacular wall that can plummet to depths of 3,200 feet.

- The natives of St. Croix are called Cruicians, sometimes spelled "Cruzan." Cruzans are very friendly but are reserved people.
- Local currency in both Puerto Rico and the USVI is US Currency.
- St. Croix is the largest of the USVI at 28 miles long and 7 miles wide.
- The temperature generally stays within the range of 77F - 80F, but can reach well into 90's in the summer. The months with the least humidity and lowest temperatures are December through April, with March being the most temperate month of the year.
- There is very little change in the water temperature during the year, the average water temperature being between 78F - 85F. The majority of the year the temperature stays in the 80's.

YOUR TRAVEL PACKET INCLUDES:

- Liability Release Form Sample
- Cancellation/Insurance Policy Form
- Invoice/Statement with Cruise Details
- Credit card authorization from
- Guest Profile sheet
- DAN - Divers Alert Network membership/benefits brochure
- Some things You should Know sheet
- DAN Travel Insurance Brochure
- Self Addressed Return Envelope
- Contact Card

Fajardo

St. Croix

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Citizens of the United States may enter Puerto Rico without a passport or visa, but carrying proof of U.S. citizenship and identity is advised. Proof of U.S. citizenship includes an expired U.S. passport, a certified (original) birth certificate, Certificate of Naturalization, Certificate of Citizenship, or Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States. A valid driver's license or government identification card containing a physical description or photograph is needed to prove identity.

If you are a non-US citizen, you should have a valid passport which contains the necessary visas for travel to and from the Puerto Rico and the USVI. In if doubt, double-check with your respective government agency, embassy or consulate to determine what required documentation you'll need to enter Puerto and the USVI as well as re-enter into your home country.

PLEASE REMIT TO NEKTON IN THE SELF ADDRESSED ENVELOPE PROVIDED:

- Cancellation/ Insurance Policy Form
- Check/Money Order for cruise balance - made payable to Nekton Diving Cruises
- Credit Card authorization form
- Guest profile sheet

** If you have booked your cruise through a dive shop or travel agent, please remit payment to them.*

** PLEASE NOTE: If you do not have your full airline or transportation details yet, please mail your guest profile sheet and call us with your update arrival details as soon as they've been made.*

AIRPORT TRANSFERS AND PICKUPS

SHARED shuttle transportation from the San Juan airport to the boat is available to you on the Saturday beginning your cruise. If you wish to use a private taxi to get the marina (Puerta del Rey) in Fajardo, you may do so. Please advise the office if that is what you intend. If you take a private taxi, please drop your luggage at the boat sometime during the day.

If you arrive before 12:00 in the afternoon on Saturday, you will want to make arrangements to spend the day taking in some of the local sights. There are numerous adventures that you may experience right from your disembarking city of Fajardo.

Boarding for the guests is between 7 and 8 PM. We ask for your understanding that Saturday is a turn around day for the boat and we spend the day getting ready for your cruise. Therefore, we are unable to let you board before that time. The boat is usually located in Puerta del Rey at the concrete docks. A Captain's briefing will begin shortly after boarding.

PLEASE NOTE: The shuttle is ONLY available to take you from the Post Office at the airport to the Fajardo Marina. If you are staying at a hotel in San Juan, you will need to get yourself to the Post Office. On your departure Saturday, the shared shuttle will be available to take you from the boat back the San Juan airport ONLY. It is your responsibility to get from the airport to your hotel if you are staying extra days in San Juan.

COMMUNICATIONS

SATELLITE PHONE SERVICE is available aboard your Nekton vessel. Each Nekton vessel is billed \$6 per minute for Satellite use. You will be expected to pay your phone bill prior to leaving the vessel at the end of the week. Credit cards are accepted.

Persons wishing to reach you aboard your Nekton vessel should contact our Ft. Lauderdale office at (954) 463-9324 between the hours of 9AM and 7 PM EST Monday through Saturday first, in order to save satellite costs.

INSURANCE

Because unexpected events can occur at any time and cause delays or even cancellation of your vacation, we recommend that you protect yourself by purchasing trip insurance. In the event that it is necessary to cancel or interrupt a cruise due to weather or any matter beyond the control of Nekton Diving Cruises, there will be no refund or credit issued. Information about DAN Trip Insurance is included for your reference. For further information, please visit: www.nektoncruises.com/Reservations/FAQ.aspx

We also highly recommend Divers Alert Network (DAN) insurance which will cover expenses related to a dive accident or injury. Information on joining DAN, a non-profit research organization, and on their insurance is also included in this packet.

BEVERAGE POLICY

The Nekton Rorqual is provisioned with a wide assortment of complimentary, nonalcoholic and noncarbonated beverages which include fruit juices such as orange, cranberry and apple, as well as ice tea, lemonade, Gatorade and fruit punch. Hot coffee, tea and herbal teas are also available. Over the past few years, we have carefully considered the feedback of our guest regarding our alcoholic and carbonated beverage policy. Based on their feedback, we have developed the following policy:

The Nekton vessels do not impose a corking fee for those who wish to bring along a favorite beverage, whether it be alcoholic or carbonated, etc. We will make arrangements for you to purchase these beverages before boarding the Nekton Rorqual on the Saturday evening of departure. Your beverages may be stored in your cabin - we have a guest cooler on board where you are able to keep your liquor and sodas chilled.

SMOKING

No cigarette, cigar or smoking of any kind is permitted on Nekton vessels except in the designated outdoor smoking area at the rear of the sun deck.

WHAT SHOULD I PACK?

Your vacation is designed to be fun, relaxing and very casual. You will be most comfortable in lightweight, casual clothes and beach wear. You will most likely spend most of your days in swim wear, shorts and T-shirts. Light cover-up clothing, sunglasses and wide brimmed hat will protect you from tropical sun. Since the evenings can get cool, we also recommend a wind breaker or sweatshirts and light pair of long pants. A visit to your local dive shop for annual equipment overhaul and inspection is a good idea.

Clothing:

Shorts	Casual shirts or T-shirts
Bathing Suits	Casual outfit
Comfortable walking shoes	"Wet" shoes

If you are sensitive to the sun:

Long-sleeve shirt	Cap / hats
Long pants	Sweatshirt / lightweight jacket

Dive Checklist:

Scuba certification card	Fins
Mask & Snorkel	BCD
Booties	Wetsuit or dive skin
Regulator / depth gauge	Dive Light / cylume sticks
Dive computer	Underwater camera & video

Personal Items:

Toiletries (shampoo)	Sunscreen
Sunglasses	Hat
A good book	Camera, film, accessories
Batteries	Bug spray
Hair dryer	

Medication:

Please bring any prescription medications in original pharmacy containers to smooth your way through U.S. customs.

Identification:

Valid Passport (proper visa if required - see page 1)

Luggage:

Packing in soft luggage or a collapsible duffel bag will maximize your space aboard the Nekton Rorqual.

NOTE: Nekton supplies the following on-board:

Separate dive and cabin towels and soap in each cabin
Tanks and soft lead-shot weights/weight belts

NOTE: Don't forget your Passport and C-card

WAIVER

Nekton Diving Cruises requires that each guest sign a complete liability release prior to the vessel's departure and diving. For your convenience, a copy of Nekton Diving Cruises Liability Release is enclosed in this packet for your review. You will be asked to sign this release upon boarding your Nekton vessel.

MONEY MATTERS

Although your charter is all-inclusive, you may make onboard purchases, whether from the boutique or for gear rentals. Visa and Mastercard are accepted, as are travelers checks. Small currency and credit cards are recommended for local purchases such as your Wednesday Shore Excursion and Saturday night dinner ashore. U.S. dollars are accepted in both the USVI and Puerto Rico.



Puerto Rico and St. Croix

While each Puerto Rico and St. Croix cruise may vary due to weather and sea conditions, the outline below will give you a good feel for the adventure you will experience!

Saturday: You will fly into San Juan Airport in San Juan, Puerto Rico (airport code SJU). From San Juan, you'll need to make your way to Puerto Del Rey Marina near Fajardo, about 35 miles from San Juan. One may rent a car, arrange for a private transfer, or ride in a shared van with other Nekton guests. (Please note that the shared shuttle may require a wait as other Nekton guests arrive.)

Once at the marina, you may enjoy dinner ashore on your own at the marina's pizzeria, delicatessen or international cuisine restaurant specializing in lobster. Embarkation begins at 7:30 pm with the Captain's briefing about 8:00. The boat will depart in time to get you diving early Sunday morning.

Sunday: Wake up at the first dive site of the trip. Immediately after breakfast, there will be a general dive briefing and a dive site briefing, followed by the dive deck being open until lunch. This will be your first of many chances to see the beautiful reefs in the tropical waters off the West coast of St. Croix. This area has a nice sandy bottom surrounded by lobed star corals, with goatfish and southern stingrays living in the sand. The dive deck closes during lunch, as the boat repositions to a different dive site. Following a site briefing after lunch, the dive deck will re-open and will be open for a full afternoon of diving. During dinner, the boat stays on the afternoon dive site, making it possible to get in one last dive after dinner and experience watching the nocturnal critters on the site you got to know and enjoy during the day.

Monday: Today you will continue your fun-filled dive vacation by visiting the North shore of St. Croix. Diving great sites such as North Star, Pavillions and Cane Bay, you will get to explore "The Wall" at your own pace and get your fill of bottom time. The wall starts around 30 ft and reaches depths of 130+. The great variety of reef fish, nurse sharks, eagle rays, an occasional manta ray and turtles make these dramatic and memorable dives.

Tuesday: Wake up to some more gorgeous St. Croix diving—now in Butler Bay! Here you will have a chance to do some wreck diving on the many artificial reefs that have been created in this area. There are over half a dozen different wrecks to see in the bay, including a 177' Venezuelan freighter, which large barracuda like to call home, an 83' oil tug encrusted in corals and sponges, and a 300' oil barge with deck furniture welded onto its top deck!

Wednesday: Colorful coral gardens are up for grabs as you wake to another fabulous day in paradise. Excitement is in the air, however, you are going to Fredricksted! The boat docks in Fredriksted allowing for many options. A shuttle is available for passengers, for about \$15 per person. If sightseeing is something you enjoy, Frederiksted has a tropical Rain Forest and the Whim Greathouse, a plantation restored to the way it was in the 1700s, which can be visited during your optional time off the boat. There are also a fair amount of shops to peruse at your leisure. However, many guests have mentioned that diving under the Fredriksted pier has been one of their most unique dive experiences to date. During this 25' dive, you are very likely to find creatures that you have never seen before, such as seahorses, spotted scorpionfish, frogfish, batfish and octopus galore. You won't want to miss the night dive at the pier!

Thursday: Another chance to dive St. Croix's North Wall! Some of the best diving the island has to offer is here, so you'll want another glimpse. Today may be the day you see a 6' free swimming green moray, so keep your eyes peeled—they're down there!

Friday: Today's the last day to enjoy the calm waters of the West side. Dive sites such as Armageddon and King's Cross are great ways to finish the already wonderful trip. Overnight, the boat makes the passage back to Fajardo, Puerto Rico.

Saturday: The boat has arrived back at the dock. Disembarkation is at 8:00 am. We will transport you and your gear back to the airport in San Juan.

Please schedule flights AFTER 12:00 PM to allow time for arrival back to the San Juan airport and REMEMBER DAN's recommended waiting period between repetitive diving and flying.

SAMPLE TRAVEL LOG

SATURDAY

- 12 PM - 6 PM** Fly into San Juan Airport in San Juan, Puerto Rico (airport code SJU). You will need to make your way to Fajardo, via the Shared Shuttle or by private taxi. Spend the afternoon taking in some of the local sights in Fajardo.
- 7 PM - 8 PM** We will begin boarding the boat. (Please plan to eat dinner in Fajardo or at the marina prior to boarding).
- 8 PM - 9 PM** Captain's briefing begins. Afterwards, the Nekton vessel departs for St. Croix.

SUNDAY MORNING THROUGH FRIDAY NIGHT

- 6:30 AM** Continental breakfast is served.
- 7 AM** Hot breakfast is served.
- 12 PM** Lunch is served
- 1 PM** During lunch, the Nekton vessel moves to a new site where you'll have an updated briefing and get to enjoy at least another two afternoon dives while you're in the water until 5:45pm.
- 6 PM** Dinner is served followed by a slide presentation by one of our crew members. The dive deck opens for your night dive after dinner.

SATURDAY

- 8 AM** The boat has arrived back at the dock. Disembarkation is at 8:00 am. We will transport you and your gear back to the airport in San Juan.

SCUBA EQUIPMENT

Tanks, air-fills, weights, weight belt and professional assistance on the dive deck are all provided at no additional charge.

Equipment Available for Rental

Item for Rental	Daily Rate	Weekly Rate
Regulator with octopus/computer	\$30	\$125
BCD	\$30	\$125
Personal Dive Computer	\$25	\$100

Item for Rental	Daily Rate	Weekly Rate
Regulator w/oct, BCD & computer	\$55	\$250

Cylume Sticks available for purchase	\$3
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To ensure availability, please reserve equipment in advance (this may be done by calling our office)

CERTIFICATION COURSES

Your dive vacation is an excellent time to learn to dive or enhance your knowledge and skill.

Resort Course\$150

An introduction to diving. This course includes personal instructions, inwater training and two dives with an instructor.

Open-Water Check-Out DivesFREE*

When you participate in our Learn to Dive program, we place you with a local dive shop for a Referral Course. Upon arrival onboard our vessel, you will complete the final open-water training dives with one of our instructors. You'll earn a PADI Open-Water Certification upon completion. *Does not include \$20 for PIC Card.

All necessary medical Statements must be completed by your local physician and Official Referral forms must be completed by prior instructor.

Open-Water Certification\$500

If you decide upon arrival that you would like to learn to dive, it may be possible to complete the entire Open Water Certification course during your cruise (depending upon sea conditions for the "pool" sessions). The Course includes academic instruction, in-water training and all scuba equipment.

Advanced Open-Water Diver\$225

This course introduces you to four popular specialty-diving activities including underwater navigation, night diving, deep diving and two specialty dives.

Underwater Photographer (with your own camera) \$175

Learn the basics of underwater photography and take home underwater memories to last a lifetime! The Photo Course includes three days of individual instruction.

Rescue Diving Course\$250

Dive Master Course\$400

Nitrox\$200

Specialties\$175

Courses available include Environmental, Night Diver, Deep Diver, Wreck Diver, Navigation, Search/Recovery and more! Please ask your crew for more specialties information.

THE DIVING & OUR DIVING POLICIES

Puerto Rico and the USVI are well known for their beautiful reefs and walls. The diving is truly spectacular and the following guidelines will give you an idea of our diving procedures and policies:

- Unlimited diving available based on individual profiles. This means you are basically free to dive as you like during the times the dive deck is open as long as you stay within the bounds of recreational diving and use our sign-in / out board
- In keeping with the teachings of the major training agencies, the 130' maximum diving depth limit is observed.
- Expected water temperature will average 77F - 85F degrees.
- Conservation laws do not permit spear fishing or collection of any marine life while on scuba. Please do not bring spear guns or Hawaiian slings onboard.
- Nekton support DAN's position that alcohol consumption prior to and after a dive encourages physiological changes that increase the risk of decompression sickness. We enforce the policy that "your first drink of the day marks your last dive of the day." Ultimately, final responsibility for alcohol consumption belongs to each passenger.
- We also advocate the buddy system.
- If you plan to take a certification course including Open Water, Advanced, Nitrox or any specialty, you will need to complete a medical release signed by your doctor. Please request the Medical Statement form from our booking office.
- Fun is Mandatory!

In general, Nekton Diving Cruises follows and enforces the accepted diving standards and guidelines of the major U.S. dive agencies like PADI, NAUI and Divers Alert Network. If there is any question or problem on your cruise, please let a crew member know immediately so we can resolve it to your complete satisfaction.



ONE LAST TIP...

In addition to safely navigating your vessel, the crew will be serving you as waiters, dive masters and stewards during your week-long vacation. Consistent with cruise industry practice, Nekton Diving Cruises does not include gratuities in our cruise fares. The crew depends on tips as do others who work in the service industry. To thank those who have made your cruise vacation better than you could have imagined, we suggest the following tipping guideline for each guest. Please remember that gratuities are shared equally by each of the crew members.

\$ 35 per person per day

We believe that Nekton Diving Cruises has the best crew in the industry and we strive to exceed your expectations in every way. If for any reason you are not satisfied with the service you receive, we encourage you to contact the Captain while onboard. This will allow us to address your concerns in a timely and appropriate fashion. At your discretion, you may adjust the gratuities at any time.