



[History of the USVI](#)

The history of the U.S. Virgin Islands is as rich as its people. Columbus was given credit for discovering the United States Virgin Islands on his second voyage to the New World in 1493. In the centuries that followed, the islands were ruled by the English, Dutch, French, Spanish, Knights of Malta, and Danes. During World War One, the United States bought the islands from Denmark for \$25 million in gold.

Our unique culture and history reflect the West African, Danish, Spanish, Irish, Polish, and German heritage of those who have made the U.S. Virgin Islands their home since the late 1400s. The rhythms and lyrics of Virgin Islands' music -- including calypso, cariso, soca, reggae, and steel pan melodies -- are colorful reminders of our past. Virgin Islanders also express themselves through painting, drawing, sculpture, and photography. The great Impressionist Camille Pissarro is just one of the Virgin Islands' distinguished artists.

Island traditions come alive during celebrations throughout the year. The Three Kings' Day festival on St. Croix, St. John's Fourth of July celebration, and St. Thomas' annual Carnival are just three examples of the dozens of special events that take place each year. However, on any given day, visitors can catch a glimpse of the unique culture of the islands.

To read more about the U.S. Virgin Islands, our culture or history, you may visit www.visitusvi.com or www.visitusvi.com/culture_history.

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