



We are booking a trip on the Nekton Rorqual for the week of October 30 to November 6th. 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.

FACTS: * 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.

Never done a live aboard before? Nekton uses "Swath" technology to maintain superb stability. Even non-sailors find these to be extremely comfortable with almost no motion. This is a great trip to find out how much you would enjoy live aboard diving.

This trip regularly costs \$1895 but for this trip it is \$1375. Book with us by June 1st and get \$50.00 off. Pay with check or cash and get \$30.00 off. (Note: Nekton is charging a \$50.00 surcharge for payment by credit card on direct bookings) Final price \$1295.00 (plus taxes and fees, see below)

Book by May 1st and get the Underwater Digital Photography course at 1/2 off! If you don't have a camera we have a special discount on SeaLife Digital cameras for this trip.

Nekton cruises do not include taxes, government fees, airfare, fuel surcharges, ground transfer fess, port fees, nitrox, onboard purchases or gratuity. Currently the estimated taxes and fees are \$190.00. This amount is determined by Nekton and subject to change. They also require proof of purchase of travel insurance and dive accident insurance. We have travel insurance available through the store. Estimated taxes are \$190.00 as of the date of posting.

The cost includes round trip transfer to the boat but you need to arrive by 4:30.

Right now flights from Roanoke are \$596 with taxes and fees; From Greensboro \$426; or Charlotte \$423. Flight 1568 from Charlotte, which you can connect to from Roanoke on flight 4567 or Greensboro flight 3060 will connect. I personally am going to drive to Greensboro! Cathy and I are not coming back until Wednesday the 10th so we can do some more diving in Puerto Rico and do some sight seeing.

Hope you can join us on this trip, make sure to see the above discounts and get your deposit in soon so we can firm up the numbers with the Nekton. Booking directly with them will cost you more!

SYUW

Mickey and Cathy

PS Go to <http://www.nektioncruises.com/Destinations/EasternPuertoRicoandStCroix/tabid/61/Default.aspx> for more info on the Nekton or to www.h2owens.com for more info on trip leaders