

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ocean Surfari - Reef Surfari Snorkel Excursions
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Ocean Surfari expands to new location, offering snorkeling tours

With the success of a restructured store on St. Thomas island, retailer Marc Blackburn has opened a new store offering the sale items on [St. John island](#) and is now offering snorkeling tours.

Finding a location for the new store was the issue. Fortunately, he had an in.

"My wife Wendy and I have always loved St. John," Blackburn told the [Virgin Island Daily News](#). "We'd been looking at locations over here pre-COVID but didn't really find what we were looking for. The landlord who owns the building where our Red Hook store is located also owns the Cruz Bay building where we've opened our St. John location, so when the tenant here chose not to renew, we took a leap of faith. This is a great location and we couldn't pass up the opportunity."

So far, the store is meeting expectations.

"The prices at our St. John location are identical to St. Thomas — there's no St. John markup," Blackburn said in the *News*. "We're going to use our new boat, Reef Surfari, to deliver product when it pulls up on the beach to pick up passengers. Obviously rent is higher here than St. Thomas, but we hope the volume will make up for it. We're just excited to be here, and we want everyone to come visit."

The product switch on St Thomas was a success. Now, 90 percent of the stock in the stores is Ocean Surfari and most come with a buy one get one free offer. The SPF 50 shirts continue to be a top seller. The rest of the stores' offerings are items like sunscreen, jewelry, hats and shoes.

Blackburn bought the St Thomas store in late 2016 and with the help of friend Bob Kohuth, switched the store from high-end merchandise with big price tags to high-volume sales items with smaller profit margins.

"It's all about meeting the needs of the customers. About 2/3s of our customers are visitors and the other third are locals. We needed to stock items that appealed to everyone," he said. "The items on the shelves are the same quality as the high-end items, but they have a better price for the customers."

Buoyed by the success so far, Blackburn is expanding to offering snorkeling trips. The Reef Surfari is a 47-foot snorkel and sunset cruise boat based in Cruz Bay at the Loredon Boynes Sr. ferry dock. It joins two sport fishing boats Blackburn already runs.



"So many people come to the islands to snorkel. It's just a natural addition to what we are already doing," he said. "I have experience running fishing boats, so this is lateral move into snorkeling."

The snorkel boat will pull double duty, hauling products to the St. John store when it picks up passengers. Blackburn said it just makes sense to get the most use from the boat as possible. Snorkelers won't notice the products for the store because it will be moved on and off the boat before and after tour times.

For more information, visit <https://shop.oceansurfari.com/us/>.

About Ocean Surfari - Reef Surfari Snorkel Excursions

Ocean Surfari offers inshore and offshore snorkeling and sport fishing adventures. On our snorkeling adventure, guests exit from the breathtaking Red Hook Harbor on Saint Thomas or National Park Dock inside Cruz Bay in Saint John. Visitors will cruise over to St John's National Park and USVI's top snorkeling spots aboard the island's most recent snorkel boat, the 47' 'Reef Surfari'. More than 40 percent of Virgin Islands National Park is underwater and the best method of enjoying the amazing underwater National Park is through a boat. Our newest boat is safe, fast, and offers the ideal transport to the area's most exciting, clearest waters for snorkeling. The boat is comfortable and spacious, with an abundance of shade on board. While remaining in St. Thomas, a snorkeling visit with Ocean Surfari is going to prove to be highly exhilarating, but still relaxing, and the most memorable portion of the vacation. Our packages include: National Park Snorkeling Excursion - Two Locations (Adults Age 13 and up are \$75, Children Age 12 And Under are \$45) Book Now; Pizza Pi Sunset Cruise (Adults Age 13 and up are \$75, Children Age 12 And Under are \$45) – Book Now; Full Moon Party (Adult Age 13 and up are \$75) – Book Now; or Private Charter (\$1000 + Fuel for as many as 12 visitors each extra visitor over age 12 is \$80/ person for adults, \$40 for kids 12 And Under) – Book Now.

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