

QUICK FACTS ABOUT JOST VAN DYKE

(and its surrounding Cays)

Overview of Jost van Dyke and Surrounding Islands Summarised from the draft Environmental Profile for Jost van Dyke

1. Jost van Dyke is approximately 8 square kilometers (3 square miles) in size and lies about 8 kilometers (5 miles) north-west of Tortola.
2. The population of Jost van Dyke is less than 300 persons.
3. From the 1960s, Sandy Cay was owned by the late Laurance S. Rockefeller. Sandy Cay is now a National Park managed by the BVI National Parks Trust
4. Diamond Cay is a National Park and is approximately one-half hectare in size.
5. There is a fisheries protected area in the waters to the east of Green Cay and Sandy Spit.
6. Jost van Dyke and its surrounding islands are relic mountaintops that lie on a geological structure known as the Puerto Rican Plateau. During the last Ice Age, when sea level was well below the current level, the island of Puerto Rico formed a huge land mass that included all of the British Virgin Islands and all of the U.S. Virgin Islands, with the exception of St. Croix.
7. The highest Peak on Jost van Dyke is Majohnny Hill, which reaches an elevation of 321 meters (1,054 feet)
8. The name Jost van Dyke is likely to have originated during the Dutch occupation of the BVI. Jost is a misspelling of the Dutch first name Joost. Van Dyke is both Dutch and Flemish and is a common surname in Holland today.
9. In 1815, 140 acres of Jost van Dyke were under cotton cultivation, producing 21,000 pounds annually. There was a population of 428 represented by 25 whites, 32 free coloureds and 371 slaves.
10. The Wesleyan missionaries had a profound influence on the population of JVD. In 1857, Samuel Simmons, the resident BVI missionary, reported that the Wesleyan Methodists had a day school and Sunday School. At that time they were twenty nine children in the day school and fifty in the Sunday School.