

St. Croix Destination Planning Checklist

After Engagement/9-12 Months Out

- Announce your Engagement**
- Get organized.**

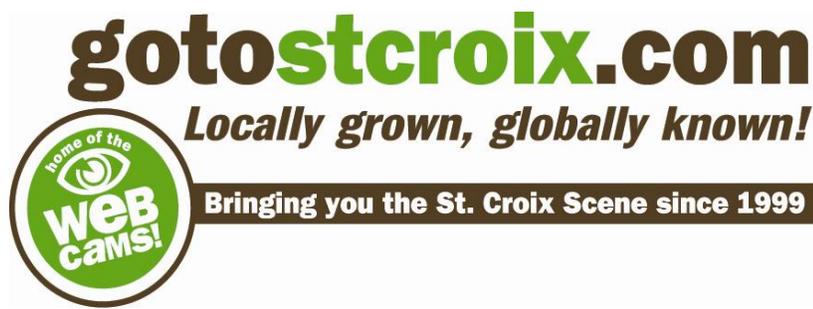
Put together a binder, a Pinterest board, or use an online planning site to organize your thoughts and ideas, but more importantly, your paperwork and contracts. Having everything in one place will help to keep you sane. Find inspiration from bridal magazines or online (decor, flowers, cake, venues, colors, attire, favors, formal or informal, big wedding or small)
- Start your guest list.**

Brainstorm with your fiancé about who you'd like to be at your wedding. Just immediate family, family and close friends, or extended family, friends and more. How many people do you want there (this will greatly impact your budget). Be sure to ask both sets of parents who they expect to be invited. Start collecting mailing and email addresses. (A spreadsheet will help you keep your guest list addresses, RSVP's, gifts and thank you's organized. Start this early.)
- Discuss your budget.**

Who is contributing how much and to what? How much do you have to spend total? Is a particular person hosting the rehearsal or welcome dinner? Discuss ways you can cut back on budget and what you'd like to splurge on. (Ask yourself what you remember most - good & bad - from the last three weddings you went to.) Decide what the top three most important things are at your wedding and allocate your splurge money on those.
- Book & take a scouting trip to St. Croix.**

Visit as many ceremony sites, reception venues, hotels/resorts/villas, beaches as possible. Meet with planners; see bands and DJ's in action. Get a feel for the island and where you want to hold your ceremony and reception. Although it isn't always feasible to take a planning trip, it is highly advisable. You'll get the lay of the land and see the venues in person to make sure they are exactly what you are dreaming of. Schedule an engagement photo shoot with your wedding photographer.
- Start wedding dress shopping.**

Don't forget to take into consideration the climate of St. Croix and the ceremony site. A long train may get messy on the beach; a full skirt will probably be too hot. When you are not used to the tropical climate, and you may even be a bit nervous, you may start to sweat. Consider the weight of the dress fabric. If you are looking into churches, check if they have a dress code.



- **Choose your wedding party** and let them know ASAP.
They will need to make arrangements accordingly as well.
- **Choose your wedding date and reserve your venue(s)**
- **Hire your wedding planner.**
We highly recommend a local wedding planner when planning a destination wedding on St. Croix from afar. Having a professional with local connections and resources can only help ensure the day goes smoothly.
- **Create a wedding website.**
Add links to GoToStCroix.com and the webcam so guests can get excited about the upcoming nuptials. It will also take pressure off of you as they can do their own research and planning. Many guests tend to use a destination wedding as their family vacation as well. Give them destination information so they can plan accordingly.

6-9 Months Out

- **Send our save-the-dates** with your wedding website address.
(Note: the earlier you send, the more time guests will have to plan) Acceptance rates for destination weddings are typically 50% of invitees. The longer you give them to plan, the more likely your friends and relatives are to come. A trip to St. Croix for your destination wedding may require saving money and budgeting. Your guests will appreciate the opportunity to book in advance for the best rates.
- **Book your wedding trip** accommodations and airfare.
- **Begin planning honeymoon.** (if separate from wedding.)
- **Research vendors**
(Caterer, photographer/videographer, florist, ceremony and reception music, special performers, rentals, etc.)
- **Choose an officiant** and start planning the ceremony.
Ask your officiant if they have a typical script they use and if you can customize it.)
- **Order invitations,** thank you cards, envelopes and any special stationary.
(Welcome letters, wedding week itineraries, menus, maps, custom signs, etc.)
- **Research activities** and tours available for guests
Plan at least one group option per day. [See our Group Activity Ideas for Wedding Guests.](#)
- **Select attendants' dresses.**
- **Register for gifts** or create a honeymoon registry.
- **Set up room blocks for guests.**
If you are planning on having a lot of guests, set up room blocks at a few different hotels. Make sure to have options in different price ranges for your guests to choose.
- **Book photographer and videographer.**

- Choose your flowers** for bouquets, boutonnières, centerpieces and other decor.
Speak with florist about availability and pricing.
- Choose your menu and cake.**
- Book DJ or band.**
Start a list of must play and do not play songs.

4-6 Months Out

- Order your rings.**
- Arrange for any rentals** or shipments of supplies.
Ask your hotel or venue if they will accept shipments on your behalf and store your items until you arrive.
- Choose groom and groomsmen attire.**
Again, keep in mind the climate and time of day of your wedding. Choose light weight fabrics like linen and cotton so the men can stay cool. Unless you are having a formal wedding, it may not be necessary for the tux, or suit and tie. Insiders tip: you may want to buy a spare shirt for the groom if he tends to sweat a lot.
- Buy gifts** for attendants and family members.
Keep in mind they are probably spending a lot of money to be a part of your wedding day, make sure they know they are appreciated. (You'll find something for your budget - from a vintage style poster of St. Croix, to a beautiful piece of custom St. Croix jewelry, find a special gift that is memorable and meaningful for your St. Croix connection).
- Make appointments for hair, make-up and spa** for bride and her attendants.
Don't forget to ask Mother of the Bride and Mother of the Groom if they'd like appointments too.
- Shop for wedding accessories**
(Shoes, jewelry, headpiece, vacation wear) ceremony and reception decor (cake topper, guest book, ring pillow, centerpieces, etc.)
- Research and book wedding insurance** if desired.

2-4 Months Out

- Contact the VI Superior Court** to make sure you have the most up to date forms, procedures and fees. [Download your Marriage License Application forms.](#)
- Arrange and confirm all group activities.**

- Finalize details with vendors.**
 (Menus, music playlists and special songs, photo poses and locations, floral arrangements, etc.) *Save all correspondence for your records. Ask for contracts or get the details in writing. Many St. Croix vendors don't typically use contracts on a regular basis. Hiring a wedding planner may make this easier as they may provide written contracts for your vendor to sign.*
- Make or order the guest favors and welcome bag items.**
- Send invitations** with included schedule of events, dress code and RSVP instructions.
- Book wedding day transportation** (if necessary)

1-2 Months Out

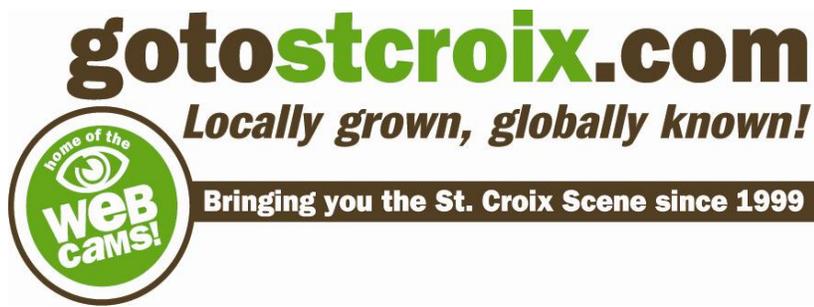
- Arrange for delivery of welcome bags and decor to your hotel.**
- Have final gown fitting.**
- Assign wedding week tasks** to family and trusted friends.
- Write your vows.**
- Mail in marriage license application.** *Review Guidelines.*

2 Weeks

- Review all details** with planner, caterer, photo/video, florist (arrange delivery) musicians, rentals (arrange delivery) etc.
- Confirm travel reservations.**
- Finalize seating chart**, provide final head count to caterer, baker, and venues.
- Make escort and place setting cards.**
- PACK!**
The best way to get your dress to St. Croix is to carry it onto the plane. Ask the flight crew to hang it for you. Having it with you means it will not be at risk for a potential loss of luggage. If you have a lot of decor or other items that you need to bring, ask your family members and wedding party if they have any room in their luggage for extra items. Consider checking a second bag if there is a lot.

Upon Arrival

- Make sure payments or arrangements have been made to vendors.**
- Visit the VI Superior Court** for examination under oath and pick up marriage license.



- Meet with planner and officiant** to confirm details and go over last minute questions.
- Visit ceremony and reception sites.**
 - Make sure they meet your standards - will the beach be raked? Is the landscaping tended to?*
 - You may want to make sure your wedding planner and host venue are aware of your requests.*
- Assemble or approve welcome bags** and have them delivered to guest rooms before arrival.
- Print copies of your wedding timeline** and distribute to wedding party and family members.
(Or have your planner do this!)

The Big Day

- Turn your timeline, your contracts and any final payments that need to be distributed over to your planner.**
- ENJOY YOUR DAY!**