



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Christiansted National  
Historic Site  
[www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

2100 Church Street, # 100  
Christiansted, VI 00820  
340-773-1460 phone  
340-719-1791 fax



## Christiansted National Historic Site News Release

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Contact: Daniel Ritter, Chief of Facilities Division

### Replace Fort Christiansvaern Main Entry Gate- Sally Port

**CHRISTIANSTED** – The landscape and historic structures of the Christiansted National Historic Site are one of the most complete and best-preserved assemblages of 18th and 19th century Danish Colonial buildings found in the New World. Fort Christiansvaern is a French style Danish Colonial fortification that commands the Christiansted harbor entrance to the north. The fort protected shipping from potential attacks by foreign invaders, privateers, and possibly pirates, enforced customs duties, housed prisoners, and quartered Danish troops responsible for internal security on the island of St. Croix. The fort is also the oldest structure in Christiansted. Built by enslaved Africans and conscripted Danish soldiers its construction started in 1738 with the last major additions dating 1835–1841. The original fabric of the fort remains largely unaltered.

April 2019 the National Park Service, Historic Preservation Training Center (HPTC) team began a project to replace Fort Christiansvaern's Sally Port, the fort main entrance gate. The gate is the first feature every visitor to the park sees entering the Fort. The gate is a massive solid wooden gate, comprised of two separate doors, which protect the fortification. The gate was badly damaged in hurricane Irma/Maria and has been off island being reconstructed in Frederick, MD with funding from DOI Hurricane Recovery Program. The rebuilt gate used traditional materials and refurbished hardware that was salvageable. The replacement gate was built and pre-installation assembly testing was conducted before shipping it back to St. Croix for installation.

NPS HPTC is ready to begin installation of the new gate this week. The project will take approximately 3 weeks from start to finish. During the installation process, access to Fort Christiansvaern will be closed for approximately 5 days from January 27th through 31st. The installation process will require a combination of creating a bracing system, heavy equipment and careful adjustments for hanging the gate pieces into place. The Fort will be closed to prevent any risk to the public in the work area. Fort access will return as soon as the install has been safely completed. Remaining work can be accomplished without restricting visitor access, such as painting, fine adjustments and metal components to be re-attached to the gate. HPTC will have a crew of three people designated to this project. Final project completion is anticipated or February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

During the installation, temporary fencing will close off Fort Entry area. We request that visitors avoid the construction fencing area. We appreciate your patience with the hurricane repairs throughout the park. For further information, please contact Park HQ at 340-773-1460 or Mr. Daniel Ritter, Facilities Chief, 340-773-1460 x 221 [www.nps.gov/CHRI](http://www.nps.gov/CHRI)

