



# Take Me to My Paradise

*Colleen Ballerino Cohen*

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The British Virgin Islands (BVI) markets itself to international visitors as a paradise. *But just whose paradise is it?* Colleen Ballerino Cohen looks at the many players in the BVI tourism culture, from the tourists who leave their graffiti at beach bars that are popularized in song, to the waiters who serve them and the singers who entertain them.

Interweaving more than twenty years of field notes, Cohen provides a firsthand analysis of how tourism transformed the BVI from a small neglected British colony to a modern nation that competes in a global economic market. With its close reading of everything from advertisements to political manifestos and constitutional reforms, *Take Me to My Paradise* deepens our understanding of how nationalism develops hand-in-hand with tourism, and documents the uneven impact of economic prosperity upon different populations. We hear multiple voices, including immigrants working in a tourism economy, nationalists struggling to maintain some control, and the anthropologist trying to make sense of it all. The result is a richly detailed and accessible ethnography on the impact of tourism on a country that came into being as a tourist destination.

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