



Welcome to
PUERTO RICO

Beaches



Adjuntas	AD/4	Canóvanas	AB/9	Florida	AB/5	La Parguera	AE/2	Naguabo	AC/11	San Lorenzo	AD/9
Aguada	AB/1	Carolina	AB/9	Guánica	AE/3	Lajas	AE/2	Naranjito	AC/7	San Sebastián	AC/2
Aguadilla	AB/1	Cataño	AB/8	Guayama	AE/8	Las Marías	AC/3	Ocean Park	BC/11	Santa Isabel	AE/6
Aguas Buenas	AC/8	Cayey	AD/8	Guayama	AE/4	Las Piedras	AC/2	Orocovis	AC/6	Santurce	BE/9
Aibonito	AD/7	Ceiba	AC/11	Guaynabo	AB/8	Loiza	AD/10	Patillas	AE/9	Toa Alta	AB/7
Añasco	AC/1	Cidra	AC/6	Guarabo	AC/9	Luquillo	AB/10	Peñuelas	AE/4	Toa Baja	AB/7
Arecibo	AB/4	Coamo	AD/8	Hatillo	AB/3	Manatí	AB/11	Ponce	AE/5	Trujillo Alto	AB/9
Arroyo	AE/8	Comerio	AD/7	Hormigueros	AD/1	Maricao	AB/6	Quebradillas	AE/3	Utuado	AC/4
Barceloneta	AB/5	Humacao	AD/10	Humacao	AD/10	Maricao	AD/2	Rincón	AC/1	Vega Alta	AB/7
Barranquitas	AD/7	Condado	AA/2	Isabela	BC/14	Maunabo	AE/10	Rio Grande	AB/10	Vega Baja	AB/6
Bayamón	AB/8	Corozal	BA/7	Isla Verde	AC/5	Mayagüez	AD/1	Sabana Grande	AD/3	Viejo San Juan	CA/1
Boquerón	AE/1	Culebra	AC/13	Jayuya	AC/5	Miramar	BC/6	Salinas	AE/7	Vieques	AD/13
Cabo Rojo	AD/1	Dorado	AB/7	Joyuda	AD/1	Moca	AB/2	San Germán	AD/2	Villaalba	AD/6
Caguas	AC/9	El Combate	AE/1	Juana Díaz	AE/6	Mona	AD/1	San Juan	AB/8	Yabucoa	AE/10
Camuy	AB/3	Fajardo	AC/11	Juncos	AC/9	Morovis	AC/6	San Juan Metro	AB/8	Yauco	AE/3

QUICK FACTS

Information

Banking and Currency

Puerto Rico is a Commonwealth of the US and uses the US dollar. Most major US banks have branches here. Banking hours are 8:30-2:30 (though some have extended hours). Credit cards & travelers checks are widely accepted. Automatic teller machines are easy to find.

Electricity

A modern electrical grid following US standards: 110 volt AC.

Emergencies: Dial 911

Events

Puerto Rico has a long history of cultural events built around the Patron Saint Festival in each municipality. In addition, a number of world-class events as well as local celebrations are held throughout the year.

Ferry Service

Ferries run between Old San Juan and Cataño, Cataño and Hato Rey, Fajardo and Culebra, Fajardo and Vieques, Vieques and Culebra. Check the area directories for the schedules.

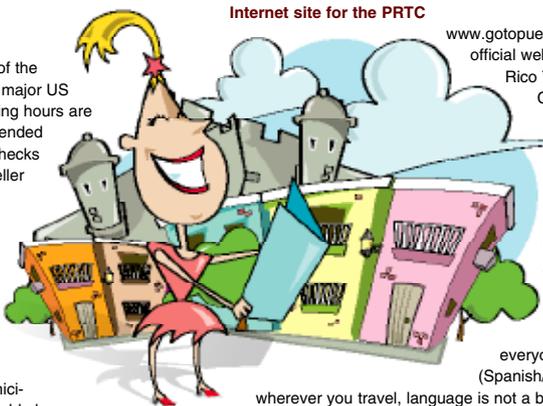
Immigration

There are no passports or visas required for US citizens. For citizens of other countries, call your local US Embassy to determine entry requirements.

Information Centers & Brochures

800-866-7827

Call toll free for bilingual information and free brochures. Check this planner or the website for the list of the PRTC offices world-wide. Daily 8am-midnight.



Internet site for the PRTC

www.gotopuertorico.com is the official website of the Puerto Rico Tourism Company.

Check for special offers and more information on Puerto Rico.

Languages: Spanish & English

Puerto Rico is a Spanish-speaking country. In the major tourist areas most everyone is bilingual (Spanish/English). However, wherever you travel, language is not a barrier.

Population

The population of Puerto Rico is 3.5 million with 1.4 million living in the San Juan Metropolitan Area.

Puerto Rico Tourism Company

787-721-2400

The Puerto Rico Tourism Company (PRTC) is the official government agency responsible for promoting travel and tourism to Puerto Rico.

Special-Needs Travelers

All the hotels have facilities for travelers with special needs. Some operators, such as tour operators, offer unique services for the special-needs traveler (which are part of their description). The Sea Without Barriers area of Luquillo Beach is designed for use by those with special needs and seniors.

Taxes and Tipping

A hotel tax is added to your bill. The tax for hotels with casinos: 11%. Paradores: 7%, all other accommodations: 9%. The standard tip is 15%. Sales Tax purchases 7%.

Telephone Service (Area 787 & 939)

A modern, reliable US-style telephone service. Numbers with area code 800, 888, 877 or 866 are toll free from Puerto Rico or the US. Most hotel systems are compatible with dial-up modems. Some properties have high-speed Internet connections. Puerto Rico has area codes: 787 and 939. To call outside San Juan Metro from the metro area, dial 1, the area code and then the number.

Time of Day

787-728-9595

Atlantic Standard Time (AST): the same as Eastern Standard Time (EST) +1 hour. Daylight savings time is not observed. May to October: AST = EST, November to April: AST = EST+1.

Tours and Trolleys

Quite often, you will be able to arrange a free tour of local attractions and sights through the mayor's office or tourism office of the local municipality. This is particularly true of the smaller communities on the Island. You will also find that a number of the municipalities offer a trolley service (either scheduled or by appointment) that will take you by all the local attractions and sights. If you want to get the inside story from locals, this is a good place to start.

Weather

787-253-4586

Puerto Rico enjoys an average temperature of 82°F (28°C) from November to May. The average beach temperatures are 80°F in summer and 76°F in the winter. The mountains tend to be 20° colder in the winter. Call this number for current weather report.

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TOMMY

When it comes to beaches, Puerto Ricans are experts. After all, we can use them every day of the year, so we have lots of experience. We can tell you about beaches shaded by rows of coconut palms, remnants of former plantations. Or back-to-back beaches on treasured islets. We can direct you to long strips of beaches that follow the coastline for miles. Or, if you prefer, small curves of sand wrapped around half-moon coves. Puerto Rico has hundreds of beaches, off-the-beaten-path beaches and beaches that host a festive crowd every weekend. And they are all ready for your visit.

If it's off-the-beaten-path beaches you want, explore the eastern off-shore islands of Culebra and Vieques. Both are important nature islands known for their reserves and their stunning coastlines. Dozens of beaches with bone-white sand lead into shallow coral-fringed waters. During the week most are semi-deserted and on weekends the crowds remain sparse. One of the most spectacular, Flamenco Beach on Culebra, forms vast bands of turquoise sea, white sand, green hills and blue sky. Back-to-back beaches are found on the islets of Culebrita and Luis Peña. On Vieques, numerous beaches within the 16,000-acre wildlife refuge rival any in the Caribbean with their crystal-clear waters.

If you prefer festive crowds, you'll find them in metropolitan San Juan on virtually any weekend, although there do remain a few adherents to the old Island adage that one should only swim during the months that have no "r" – May through August. San Juan's beaches form long curves facing the Atlantic Ocean and fronting hotel resorts and residential districts. You'll find rentals for just about every watersport your heart desires, from surfing to kite boarding. Two of the best-known beaches, Escambrón west of Condado and Carolina in Isla Verde, are balnearios, public bathing beaches with parking,

Beach aficionados could spend a year exploring Puerto Rico and its offshore islands, visiting a different beach every day. They'd find long strips of sand, cliff-bordered shorelines and half-hidden coves. But all Puerto Rico's beaches have several characteristics in common. Sand in most areas is shaded a pale beige, and coconut palms, trees that weren't even found on the Island half a millennium ago, sway to the trade winds virtually everywhere along the coast. Here is a sampling of the beaches Island-wide.



FRAZIER NIVENS

Boquerón's balneario, a large and deeply recessed bay bordered by bird-rich lagoons, tops the list of fabulous "sunset" beaches along the west coast. A popular Island resort for decades, Boquerón manages to retain the rural charm prevalent in western Puerto Rico. At the Island's southwestern corner, a dirt road leads to the neoclassical Cabo Rojo Lighthouse, set at the edge of 200-foot cliffs. To the left is a beautiful but undeveloped (take everything you need) half-moon beach known as La Playuela. Cabo Rojo's lighthouse is one of a dozen that surround Puerto Rico and its offshore islands. Built in the latter half of the 19th century, they guide landlubbers to lovely off-the-beaten-path coastal settings.

Another lighthouse is found in the west-coast town of Rincón. Rincón marks the division between the calm Caribbean to the south and the rougher Atlantic to the north. Most beaches in this region extend for miles and offer virtually every kind of water adventure, from low-keyed beachcombing to world-class surfing. Along the northwest coast, many beachgoers head to Aguadilla's Crash Boat Beach, set at the foot of limestone cliffs. Colorful fishing boats line the shore and tropical fish sashay around an old Air Force pier. Neighboring Isabela hosts a long series of beaches with sand dunes and protective offshore rocks. Like most of Puerto Rico's beaches, they offer attractions for just about every taste.

lifeguards, changing rooms and snack bars. They are also members of the European-based Blue Flag program for environmentally sound beaches. Yet even the metro area has out-of-the-way gems such as Piñones, an undeveloped track of coastline set amid mangroves, coconuts, kiosks and a six-mile-long bicycle boardwalk/path. West of San Juan the lovely peninsula known as Punta Salinas is also a balneario and Blue Flag beach.

Elegant describes many beaches along the northeast and eastern coasts. Waters are shallow, and sands are bordered by stately coconut palms. Small cays dot the horizon from Fajardo to Humacao and deep-green forests rise in the background. Resort hotels here pamper beachgoers with lounge chairs and cooling drinks. The best-known northeast beach is Luquillo's Monserrate, a balneario and a Blue Flag beach, ideal for families (with facilities for specialneeds travelers). Rustic kiosks along Highway 2 here serve up traditional Puerto Rican snacks and home-style meals.

Southern Puerto Rico faces the Caribbean Sea. The sea is calmer, particularly in winter. Mangrove

forests, once found in abundance Island-wide, remain common. They protect the coastline and harbor large numbers of wildlife. For a remote treasure-island sort of adventure, take a charter to Caja de Muertos off Ponce's coast. Back-to-back beaches, a little-used snorkeling trail and a hilltop lighthouse distinguish the islet. A popular land beach is the Caña Gorda balneario in Guánica. Also in Guánica, small boats take visitors to nearby Gilligan's Island, topped by scrub and bisected by a swiftly moving channel, a south-coast favorite.

Beaches

Balneario de Carolina 787-791-8084
Carolina (AB/9) Between Isla Verde and Piñones. Rt 187, behind the LMM Int'l. Airport

Balneario de Luquillo 787-889-5871
Luquillo (AB/11) www.parquesnacionalespr.com
One of the major beaches in Puerto Rico. Camping available. Part of this beach, the Sea Without Barriers, is a facility for those with special needs and for seniors. Rt 3, east of San Juan

Balneario Sun Bay 787-741-8198
Vieques (AD/13) www.parquesnacionalespr.com
This is the best-known beach in Vieques. Easy to reach. Rt 997, East of Esperanza

Cays: Icacos, Diablo, Palominos, Palominitos
787-863-1400
Fajardo (AC/11) www.fajardopr.org Located just north and east of Fajardo, these cays are great for beach combing, snorkeling and diving. Arrange your tour through the sailing, snorkeling and dive operators or the local fishermen.

Escambrón Beach, Pta. de Tierra (Blue Flag beach)
787-449-5672
San Juan: Puerta de Tierra (BB/6) This public (Blue Flag) beach is located just west of the Parque del Tercer Milenio. There are also kiosks, restaurants and playgrounds for the kids. Lifeguards on duty until 5pm. Rt 25 at Pda. 8

Flamenco Beach 787-742-0700
Culebra (AC/13) A great beach in Flamenco Bay on the north side of Culebra. Bathrooms available as well as camping (by reservation) with water. The only camping area in Culebra that is open to the public. End of Rt 251

Gilligan's Island 787-821-4941
Guánica (AE/3) www.gobierno.pr/drna Part of the Dry Forest Reserve, a few hundred meters offshore. Very popular, especially on the weekends. \$6 per person fee for transportation. Rt 333, access by ferry just east of Copamarina

Playa Crash Boat 787-891-1005
Aguadilla (AB/1) www.aguadilla.gobierno.pr A popular sports beach and dive spot located just north of Aguadilla on the west coast. End of Rt 458, off Rt 107

Playa de Jobs 787-872-6400
Isabela (AA/2) www.isabelapr.com (coming soon)
A beautiful surfing beach. A great learner's spot, but get professional instruction as the waves and currents require local knowledge for beginners. Rt 466, just east of Rt 4466, Bo. Bajura

Playa El Combate 787-255-1560
Cabo Rojo: El Combate (AE/1) www.ciudadcaborojo.net/ A great weekend and sunset beach. End of Rt 3301

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Route 165 km 6.2 Cataño, Puerto Rico. About a 20-minute drive from San Juan.
Follow the adjacent road signs to the distillery.



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