

lonely planet

# Puerto Rico



# Puerto Rico



# How to Use This eBook

4 easy-to-use sections

1

## PLAN YOUR TRIP

Your planning tool kit  
Photos & suggestions  
to help you create the  
perfect trip.

2

## ON THE ROAD

Your complete guide  
Expert reviews,  
easy-to-use maps  
and insider tips.

3

## UNDERSTAND

Get more from your trip  
Learn about the big  
picture, to make sense  
of what you see.

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## SURVIVAL GUIDE

Your at-a-glance guide  
Vital practical  
information to help you  
have a smooth trip.

Look for these symbols to quickly identify listings:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Sights             |  Eating                  |
|  Activities         |  Drinking                |
|  Courses            |  Entertainment           |
|  Tours              |  Shopping                |
|  Festivals & Events |  Information & Transport |
|  Sleeping           |   |

**All reviews** are ordered in our authors' preference, starting with their most preferred option. Additionally:

**Sights** are arranged in the geographic order that we suggest you visit them, and within this order, by author preference.

**Eating and Sleeping reviews** are ordered by price range (budget, midrange, top end) and within these ranges, by author preference.

These symbols give vital information for each listing:

-  Must-visit recommendation
-  Sustainable or green recommendation

**FREE** No payment required

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Telephone number |  Vegetarian selection |
|  Opening hours    |  Family-friendly      |
|  Parking          |  Pet-friendly         |
|  Nonsmoking       |  Bus                  |
|  Air-conditioning |  Ferry                |
|  Internet access  |  Tram                 |
|  Wi-fi access     |  Train                |
|  Swimming pool    |  |

For symbols used on maps, see the Map Legend at the end of this eBook.



# The key to the perfect trip

Lonely Planet eBooks make trip planning and on-the-road travelling easier than ever

## 1. Discover amazing experiences

Gorgeous photos of top sights with links to author recommendations help you plan where to go.

### Montenegro's Top 16

#### Sveti Stefan



1 The postcard-perfect walled island village of Sveti Stefan is a wonder to behold. It's a tiny slice of Mediterranean heaven, with turquoise waters, pine and olive trees peering between the whitewash walls of one house dwelling. Content yourself with the view, or walk to the island's secret to gems at the exclusive hotel that owns it. Laze on the beach. Take a boat through the woods to Petrovo, and go on a hiking photography - it's hard to get a better shot.

#### Sveti Stefan

#### Sights

##### Sveti Stefan Beach

The main point of coming time horizontal as possible

## 2. Content when you need it

Downloading eBooks on the road is simple, and you can carry as many guides as you need.



## 3. Plan your perfect trip

Search for destinations, bookmark favourites and add notes to customise your guide.

## 4. Essential online travel info

Links to the best business and travel websites bring all the info you need into one place.

## Features you'll love while on the road...



Map links to reviews mean you can find info quickly.



Zoom-in maps make it easy to navigate in a new place.



Offline maps mean no data-roaming charges.

To get the most out of the maps in this guide, use the zoom function on your device, or visit <http://media.lonelyplanet.com/ebookmaps> to grab a PDF of the maps.



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Behind the Scenes

Our Writers

# Welcome to Puerto Rico

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*With endless sand, swashbuckling history and wildly diverse tropical terrain, locals fittingly call this sun-washed medley of Spanish and American influences the 'Island of Enchantment'*

## Tropical Beaches

Puerto Rico is the fodder of many a Caribbean daydream for good reason: it can satisfy both the lethargic beach bum or the budding big-wave surfer – all in a long weekend. Its coral reefs host a riot of tropical fish and the sands shimmer like crushed pearls. On some beaches you'll have plenty of company, but in other places like Vieques you might have some of the best stretches of sand in the world all to yourself.

## Cultural Vibrancy

Those curious enough to look beyond San Juan's condo towers and congested roads reap big rewards from the vibrant culture of this island. You'll get a whiff of it in the tempting smoke that rises from roadside *lechonerías* (eateries specializing in suckling pig). You'll hear it in the distorted thump of a rowdy, beer-soaked weekend in Boquerón or the intoxicating patter of a salsa beat. You'll see it down the quiet hallways of museums celebrating everything from failed revolution to classical European painting. Puerto Rican traditions have been shaped by generations of cultural synthesis, celebration and setback, and it emerges today as distinct, spirited and indomitable.

## History

Puerto Rico's history lessons – told through cannon fire and colonization, repression and revolt – offer a palpable sense of the island's dynamic past. There's a bit of legend in every direction: from the fortress walls pocked by cannon fire to the crumbling towers of the sugar refineries that once fired the island's economy. Free-trading colonialists built sparkling European plazas in the harbor cities, while political revolutionaries plotted revolt in tiny villages in the central mountains. Those with a passion for history can wander precolonial Taíno ball courts or steamy coffee plantations, and even if your interest is scant, it's hard not to get caught up in Puerto Rico's fascinating story in the stunning confines of Old San Juan. The most amazing thing about this island's past is the beguiling weave it creates with the present.

## Rainforest Playground

The limestone caves in the misty central mountains resound with the chirp of coquí frogs hidden among giant tree ferns. Hiking Puerto Rico's unique collection of forests – some of the wettest in the Caribbean – is an explorers dream, and few ever forget time spent on the dripping trails of El Yunque



## Why I Love Puerto Rico



El Yunque National Forest  
MARK LEWIS / GETTY IMAGES ©

By Ryan Ver Berkmoes, Author

It was a balmy January evening on a back street of Old San Juan and I noticed a tiny corner bar where a TV was showing a football game being played in a blizzard. How could I not walk right in, order a cold beer, and enjoy the incongruity? Later, as the night progressed, I was struck by the local families out strolling, giving authenticity to a place that could easily be just a tourist cliché. The next day it was luscious *lechonera* in Guavate, and then it was losing count of all the perfect untrod beaches in Vieques.



# Puerto Rico's Top 17

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## Evocative Old San Juan

Even those limited to a quick visit find it easy to fall under the beguiling spell of the cobblestone streets, pastel-painted colonial buildings and grand fortresses of [Old San Juan](#). From the ramparts of El Morro, the allure of this place is evident in every direction – from the labyrinth of crooked lanes to the endless sparkle of the Atlantic. By day, lose yourself in historical stories of blood and drama; by night, float along in crowds of giggling tourists and rowdy locals.



DANITA DELIMONT / GETTY IMAGES ©

### Glorious Beaches

The rub of sand between your toes, the brilliant sparkle of turquoise water and the rhythmic shush of cresting waves – Puerto Rico’s beaches have the qualities of a daydream. Take your pick from the golden, crescent-shaped heaven of [Playa Flamenco](#) (considered among the world’s best beaches); the embarrassment of riches on Vieques; the coconut-oil-scented crowds of Playa Isla Verde, San Juan’s little slice of Brazil; the secluded, mangrove-shaded hideaways in the south; or the roaring surf of the west.



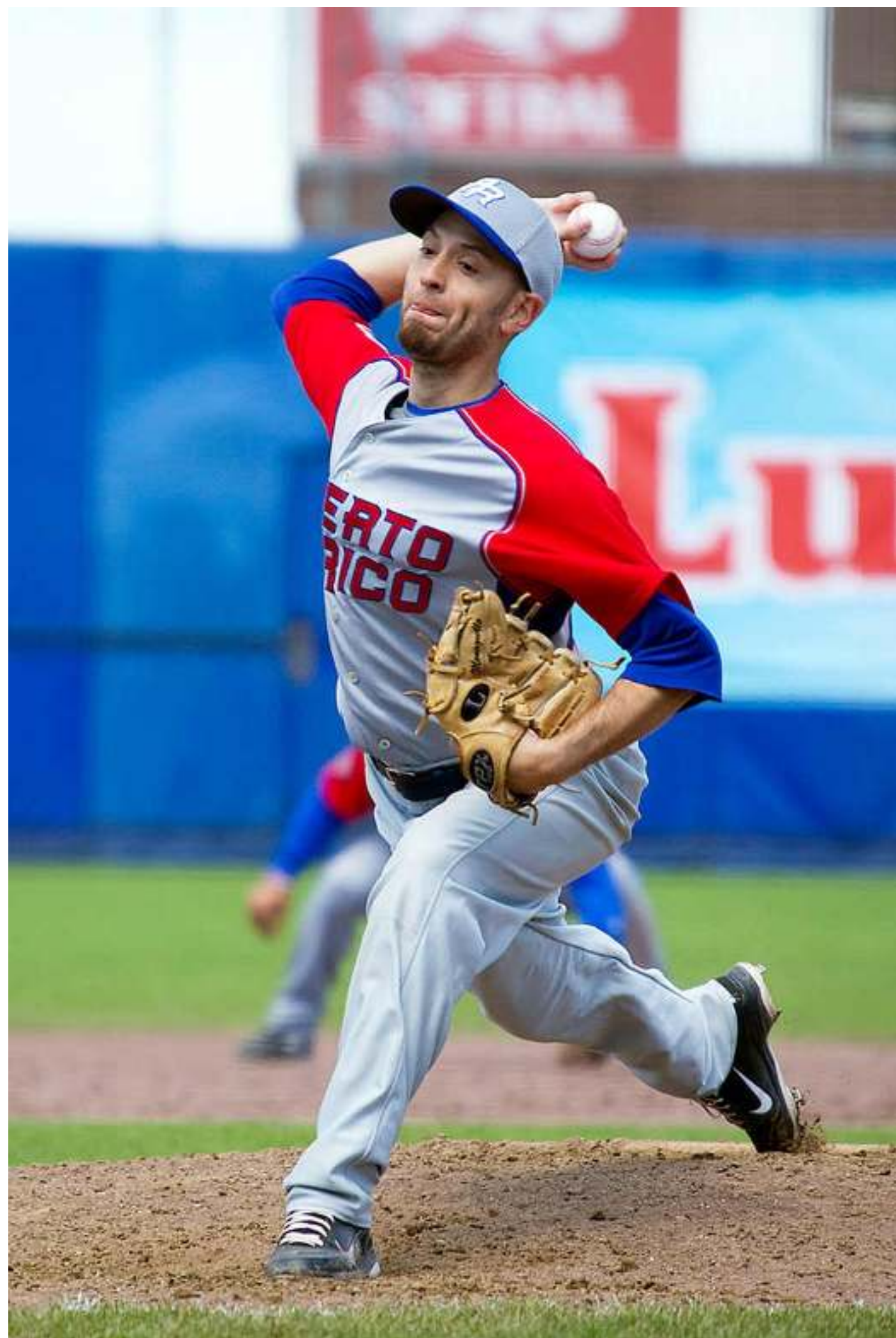






### Catch Some Baseball

The bleachers at island *béisbol* (baseball) stadiums reveal a lot more than nine innings of play – they offer a glimpse at the Caribbean love affair with this sport. Even if their numbers are sometimes small, Puerto Ricans love the low-key games and dirt-cheap tickets that get fans right up to the Winter League Baseball action. Witness upstart farm leaguers looking for their big shot facing off against fading stars of the Major League looking to go out in a blaze of glory in San Juan's [Hiram Bithorn Stadium](#).





### Bioluminescent Bays

Few experiences can inspire the awe of floating on inky waves under a canopy of stars and witnessing one of nature's most tactile magic tricks: the otherworldly sparkle of bioluminescent waters.

Kayaking into Puerto Rico's bioluminescent bays and seeing the jeweled flicker of water drip from your hands or illuminate a paddle stroke promises an experience of profound wonder. Or you can just glide along on an electric boat. Best bets: the bioluminescent bay at [Vieques](#) or at Laguna Grande near Fajardo.



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