

Where is Puerto Rico?

Puerto Rico is between the Dominican Republic and the Virgin Islands in the Caribbean Sea. Puerto Rico is the smallest and most eastern of the Greater Antilles.

Is Puerto Rico part of the United States?

Yes. The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is a territory of the United States. Puerto Ricans are American citizens, federal and local laws apply, and services such as the U.S. Postal Service are here.

Do I need a passport to visit Puerto Rico?

United States citizens and permanent residents don't need a passport to travel to Puerto Rico or the US Virgin Islands. However, the Real ID Act will be in effect as of May 2025, so verify if your state complies with these laws; otherwise, you may need a passport to travel. Travelers from other countries visiting Puerto Rico have the same visa and passport requirements that would apply if visiting the mainland United States.

What language is spoken in Puerto Rico?

The official languages of Puerto Rico are Spanish and English. Only about 20% of Puerto Ricans speak English fluently, although many people working in the service and tourism industries are bilingual, particularly in San Juan.

What time zone is Puerto Rico in?

Puerto Rico is in the Atlantic Standard Time Zone, an hour ahead of Eastern Standard Time. Since Puerto Rico does not observe Daylight Savings Time, from March through September, the time on the island is the same as Eastern Standard Time.

What currency is used in Puerto Rico?

Puerto Rico uses the **U.S. dollar** (USD) as its official currency.

What is the capital of Puerto Rico?

The capital of Puerto Rico is San Juan, located on the island's northeastern coast. The population of San Juan is just over 355,000 people. San Juan has several main neighborhoods: Old San Juan, Puerta de Tierra, Condado, Ocean Park, Punta Las Marías, Miramar, Santurce, Hato Rey, and Río Piedras. While adjacent to San Juan, Isla Verde is actually part of the town of Carolina.

What is the drinking age in Puerto Rico?

The drinking age in Puerto Rico is 18, but to enter some bars and clubs, you must be 21 or up.

Is Puerto Rico safe?

Puerto Rico is generally a safe destination for tourism. Use common sense: leave valuables in the hotel in a safe, be wary of isolated streets or wandering alone at night, lock your rental car and don't leave any belongings in plain sight, and be aware of your surroundings. Consider contacting a tour operator to simplify your trips to various parts of the Island. Limit the cash you carry and take only what you need. After all, most places accept credit cards. Finally, be respectful of residents.

When is hurricane season in Puerto Rico?

Hurricane season is officially in effect from June 1 to November 30.

How is the weather in May?

Temperatures are warm during May, ranging from 75°F to 84°F. From May to October tends to be rainier than during the winter.

Should I rent a car?

If you want to explore sites and towns outside of the San Juan metro area, or if you'll be staying in more than one town during your visit (for example, a few days in San Juan and then a few days in Rincón), then renting a car is a good idea. All major US car rental companies have a presence on the island, plus local taxi and Uber drivers are widely available (although Uber is more readily available in San Juan and the metro area than in other parts of the island).

If you don't want to rent a car, most tour operators offer transportation to popular sites such as El Yunque or Fajardo's marina for catamaran excursions. If your visit is short or you mostly want to stay in San Juan, then you can rely on taxis and Uber to get around.

If you're visiting one of the island municipalities, Culebra or Vieques, renting a Jeep or a car on the island will make getting around much more convenient. In Culebra, you can also rent golf carts since it's a very small island. Taxis are available to the main beaches and towns.

Can I stay connected?

US travelers don't need an international or special cellphone plan when traveling to Puerto Rico because the 5G LTE network works with most mainland service providers. You'll also find Wi-Fi available at many hotels around the island.

Is the water safe to drink?

The food and drink standards in Puerto Rico are comparable to those of the mainland United States. The tap water is safe to drink as it is filtered and treated at the source.

Where can I stay to attend the conference?

You will arrive at the Luis Munoz Marin International Airport, in Carolina, PR. There are plenty of hotels and Airbnb near the Isla Verde airport. This area is approximately a 10-minute drive to the Conference venue. Other lodging areas include Distrito de Convenciones (Miramar), Old San Juan, and Santurce.

What are some typical Puerto Rican dishes I should try?

Puerto Rico offers a rich culinary tradition. While in Puerto Rico, be sure to try some of the following traditional dishes:

- **Mofongo:** A mashed plantain dish, often served with shrimp, pork, or chicken, flavored with garlic and olive oil.
- **Lechón:** A slow-roasted, marinated pork that is a popular dish, especially in the towns of Guavate.
- **Pasteles:** Similar to tamales, these are made of green plantain dough filled with meat and wrapped in banana leaves.
- **Arroz con gandules:** A classic Puerto Rican rice dish with pigeon peas, often served as a side at festive gatherings.
- **Tostones:** Fried green plantains that are a popular snack or side dish.

What are some activities you can do outside the conference in Puerto Rico?

Puerto Rico offers a wide range of activities to explore in your free time. Here are a few must-see attractions:

- **El Yunque National Forest:** This lush rainforest is a UNESCO World Heritage site and a great place for hiking, exploring waterfalls, and enjoying the tropical environment.
- **Beaches:** Puerto Rico has stunning beaches. For surfing, visit **Rincón**, or for relaxation, try **Flamenco Beach** in Culebra, which is consistently ranked among the most beautiful beaches in the world.

- **Old San Juan:** Wander through the colorful streets of Old San Juan, visit historic forts like **Castillo San Felipe del Morro** and **Castillo San Cristóbal**, and explore the many shops and restaurants.
- **Bioluminescent Bays:** Puerto Rico is home to some of the world's brightest bioluminescent bays, including **Mosquito Bay** in Vieques and **Laguna Grande** in Fajardo, where you can kayak and experience glowing waters at night.