

VIEQUES INSIDER

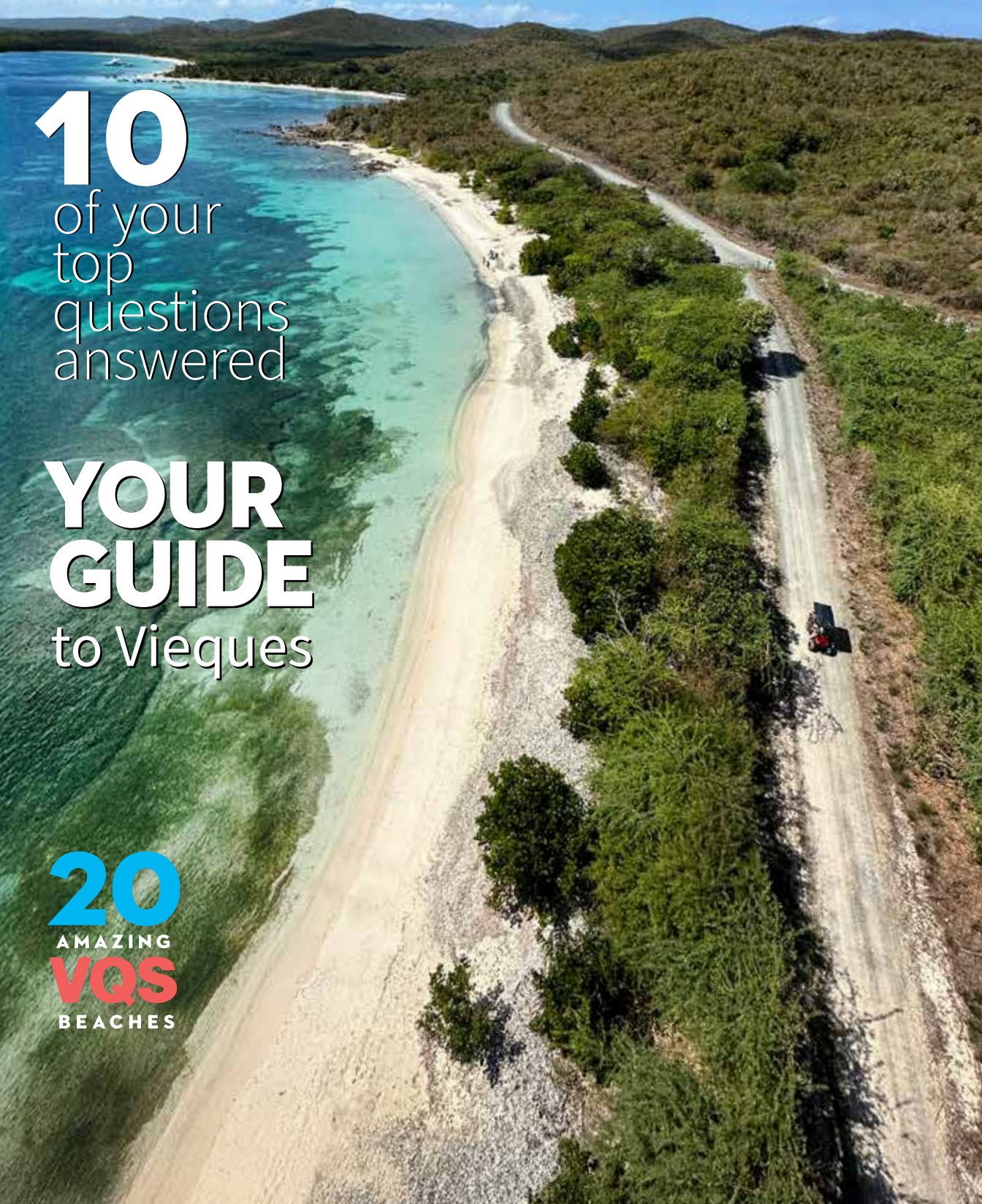
NOV/DEC • 2024
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Connecting Visitors to Vieques

10
of your
top
questions
answered

**YOUR
GUIDE**
to Vieques

20
AMAZING
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BEACHES



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LISTINGS

VISTA BELLA - NEW CONSTRUCTION!

Welcome to Vista Bella, a stunning, brand new, contemporary home featuring large plate glass windows offering breathtaking views. The focus of the interior of the home is a great room area encompassing a sizable kitchen, custom tile work with a 14-foot island, ideal for culinary enthusiasts, and a spacious living room divided into sitting and entertainment areas. An 18-foot-wide wall of glass provides uninterrupted views of the surrounding lush tropical island, and the ever-changing blue sea. The exterior living areas are equally magnificent with a lush swimming pool, a generously-sized outdoor covered patio area, and a sun deck surrounded by tropical gardens. **\$850,000**



CASA MARIPOSA - CALLING ALL INVESTORS:

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BRISAS DE JAZMIN - SECLUDED OASIS

Nestled within five glorious, tropical acres, this exceptional estate on Vieques Island offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience unparalleled luxury and tranquility. Beyond its gated entrance, a world of serenity awaits, where panoramic vistas and unparalleled privacy create an oasis unlike any other. The centerpiece of this remarkable property is the stunning main house boasting three bedrooms and over 3200 indoor square feet of meticulously designed living space. **\$2,500,000**





Siddhia Hutchinson, Magia de la Isla
Mixed media collage, 16" X 28"

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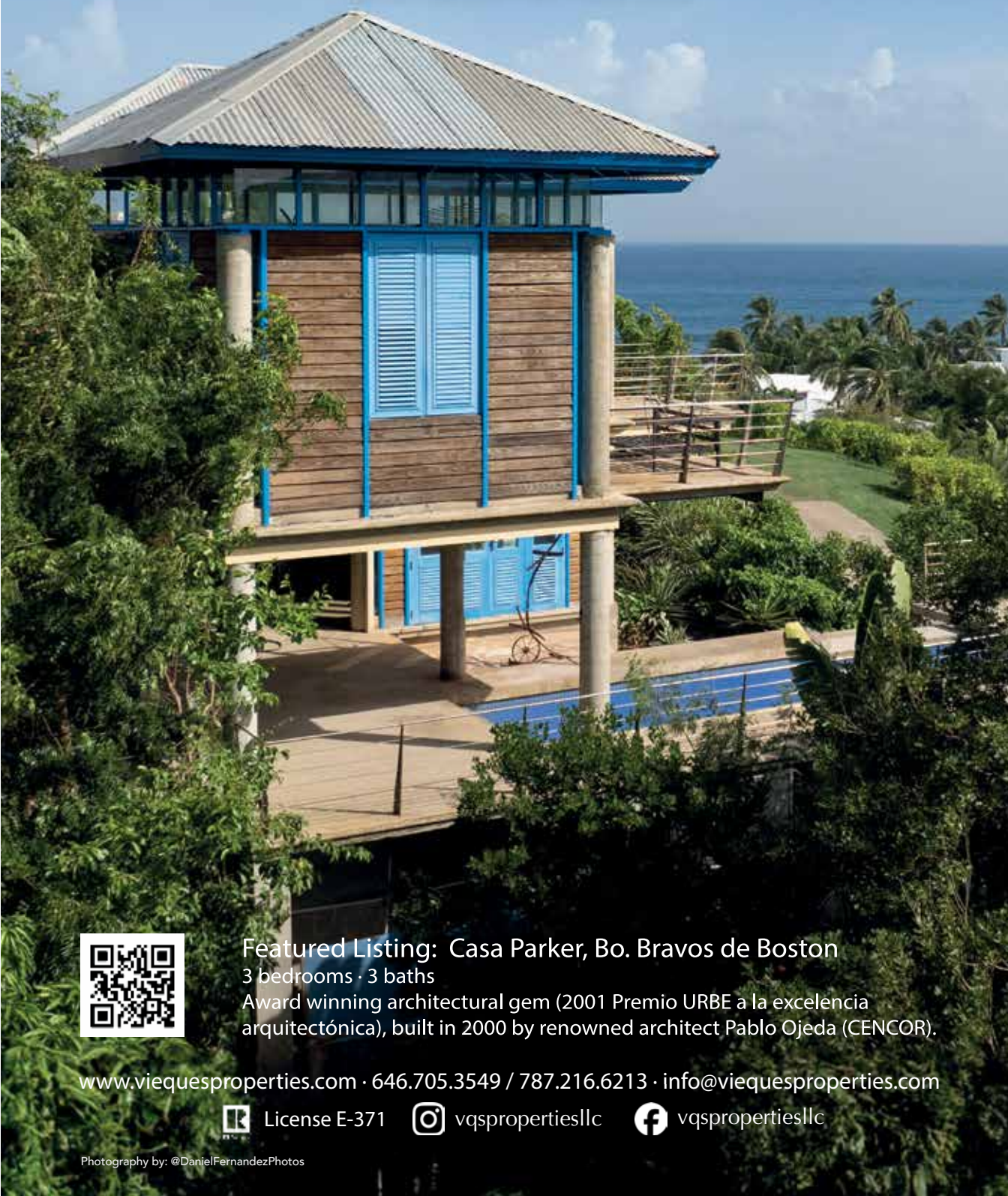
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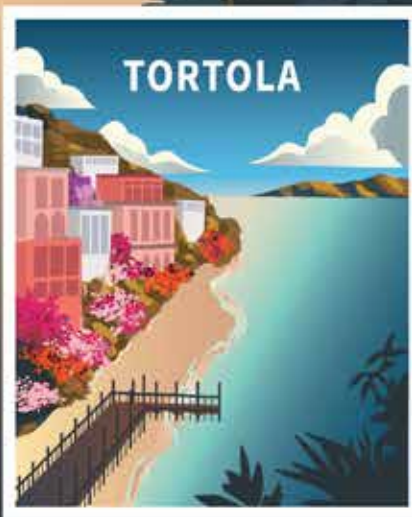


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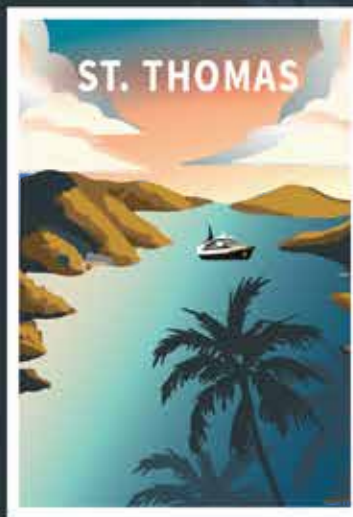
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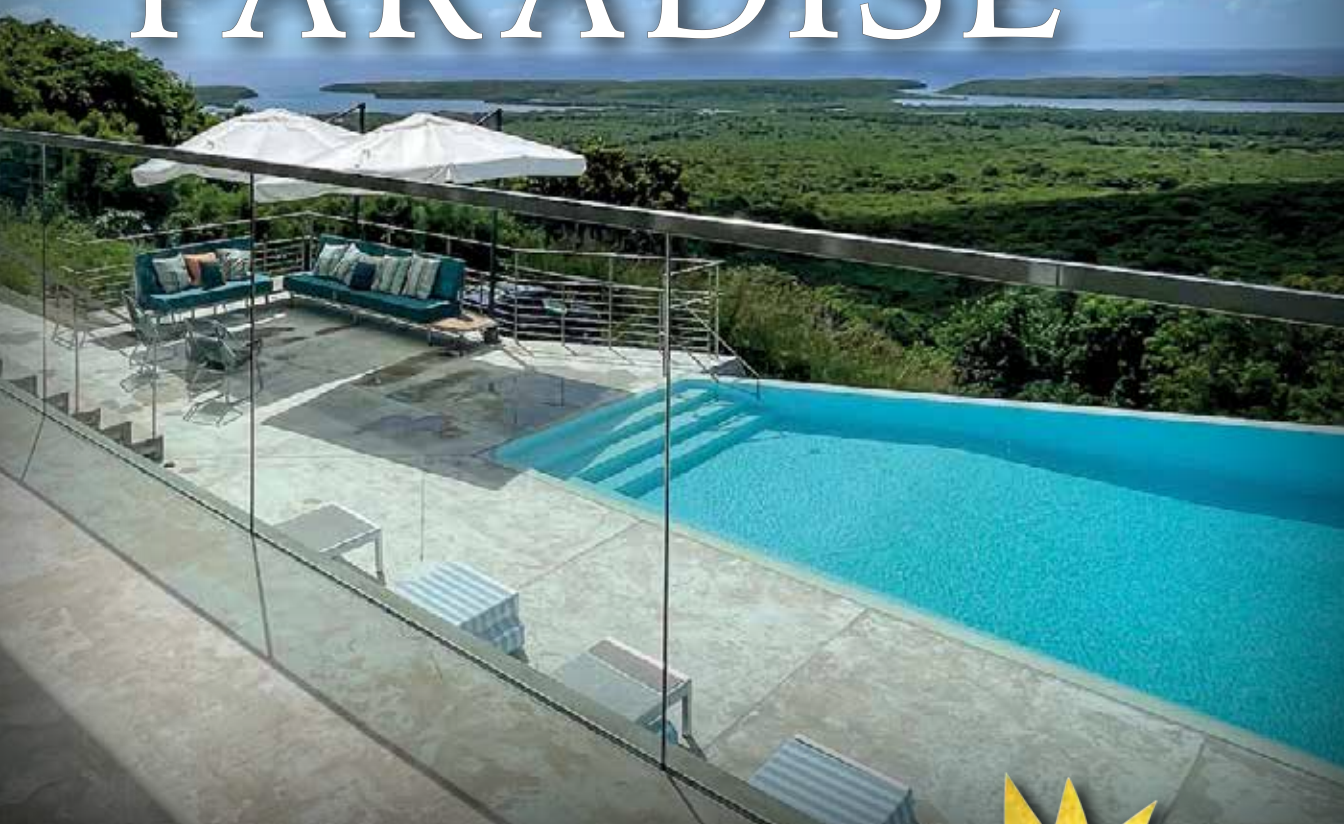
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VIEQUES INSIDER

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WWW.VIEQUESINSIDER.COM
info@viequesinsider.com

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN WORKING FOR VIEQUES INSIDER?

If you'd like to contribute stories or photos, we'd love to hear from you! You don't need to be a professional writer or photographer—just passionate about capturing the authentic spirit of Vieques. Submissions are welcome in both English and Spanish, so Spanish speakers are encouraged to reach out! Please send a brief paragraph about yourself and your interests to kelly@viequesinsider.com

¿TE INTERESA TRABAJAR CON LA REVISTA VIEQUES INSIDER?

Si quieres contribuir con historias o fotos, ¡ponte en contacto con nosotros! No es requisito ser escritor o fotógrafo profesional, solo tener pasión por captar el espíritu auténtico de Vieques. Las contribuciones pueden ser tanto en inglés como en español, por lo que animamos a los hispanohablantes a enviar colaboraciones en español. Envíanos una breve descripción sobre ti, tus habilidades e intereses a kelly@viequesinsider.com

CONTRIBUTORS



MARK MARTIN BRAS plays an important role in protecting and preserving the ecological environment of Vieques as well as educating the youth through his daily work and Manta programs at the Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust.

AMY GORDON is a freelance travel journalist and the author of *100 Things to Do in Puerto Rico*, which you can buy in shops around the island. Her work has also appeared in outlets including *AFAR*, *The Washington Post*, *Forbes*, and *AAA Traveler*. Follow her on Instagram at [@amygordon](https://www.instagram.com/amygordon) and [@100thingspuertorico](https://www.instagram.com/100thingspuertorico).



DANIEL FERNÁNDEZ is a Puerto Rican-born cinematographer and photographer based in Vieques. His work has taken him to many corners of the planet, including Antarctica, where he has captured films, documentaries, and music videos showcased at renowned festivals such as Sundance, South by Southwest, Cannes, and the Los Angeles Film Festival. Daniel's work on *At the Edge of the World* earned him the award for Best Documentary Cinematography from the late Haskell Wexler. In addition to his creative projects, he is the social media director of the nonprofit



Vieques Love and manages his own Puerto Rican history audio tour business. Connect with him on Facebook at [facebook.com/dannycameras](https://www.facebook.com/dannycameras) and on Instagram at [@dfernandezcine](https://www.instagram.com/dfernandezcine).



TALLEN PEREZ is a proud mother of five living in Vieques, Puerto Rico, and a dedicated community advocate who brings a personal and authentic voice to the magazine. Her writing is deeply connected to her experiences of island life, highlighting the resilience and creativity that thrive within the local community. Through her articles, she shares the beauty of her Caribbean heritage and family roots, the challenges of raising a family in a remote setting, and the importance of fostering sustainability and self-sufficiency in everyday life.

LINDA QUINN, a Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist from Syracuse, New York, set a goal to retire happy, wild, and free, seeking a life beyond the suburban lifestyle. When she discovered Vieques, she knew it was the perfect place to realize her dream. Linda is also a Pilates and TRX instructor and a passionate nature lover who captures the island's beauty through her photography. If you're up early enough, you just might catch a glimpse of her and her little dog, Lion, on one of their sunrise tours!



SARAH ELISE FIELD is the owner of Crystal Clear, an ecotourism snorkeling company in Vieques. She dedicates her time to ocean conservation work, coral restoration and partnering with local nonprofits. Her photography beautifully captures the underwater world she's fortunate to experience daily.



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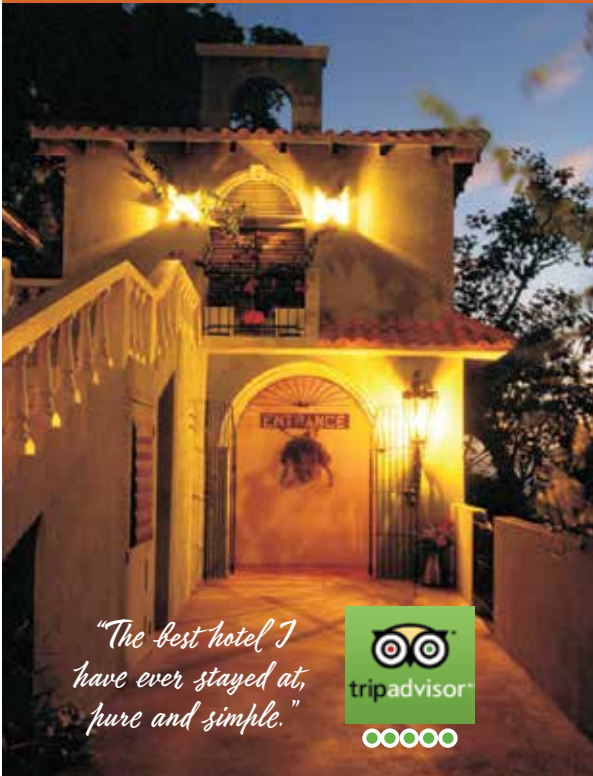


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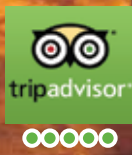


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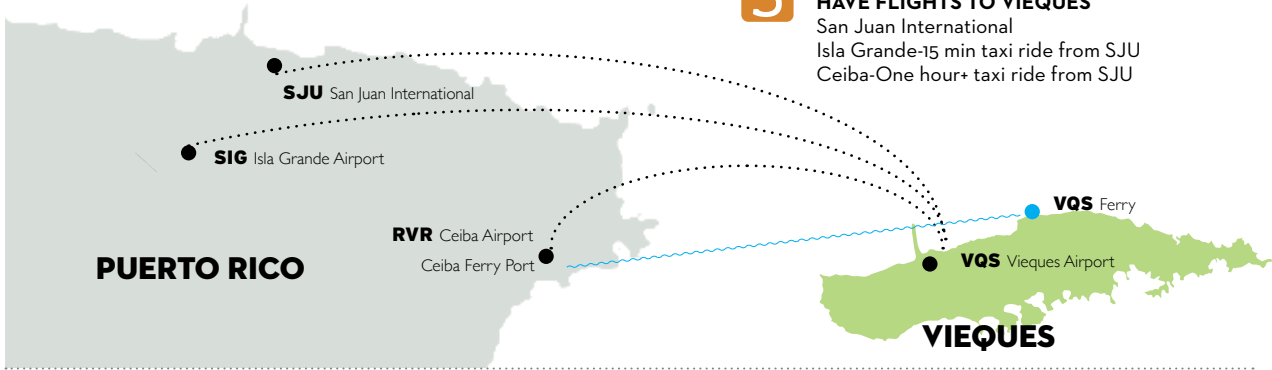
Winter? Oh, it's not so bad.

If you're escaping the chilly north, Vieques is ready to greet you with warmth, beauty, and adventure. Though small—just twenty miles east to west and four miles north to south—this island offers far more than we could fit in these pages. From stunning, unique beaches to the world's brightest BioBay, every corner of Vieques is packed with memorable experiences. Nature reigns here, with wild horses roaming free and roosters announcing the day.

Vieques may be off the beaten path, but it offers cozy cafés, exquisite dining, and hidden treasures waiting to be uncovered. In this issue of Vieques Insider, we answer some of the most frequently asked questions from visitors, helping you forge a deeper connection and sense of camaraderie with the island. Discover even more at www.viequesinsider.com.

GETTING HERE

FLIGHT OR FERRY



Did you know?
Cape Air offers weekly flights from Vieques to St. Croix on Monday and Thursday!
www.capeair.com.

3 AIRPORTS IN PUERTO RICO THAT HAVE FLIGHTS TO VIEQUES
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✈ Fly from Ceiba Airport (RVR) to VQS
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🚗 Ferry from Ceiba to Vieques
Requires 1 hour 15 min taxi ride from San Juan International (SJU) to Ceiba (approx. \$100) Ferry ticket \$2 or you can purchase ahead of time on www.puertoricoferry.com with additional fees for luggage. There are additional charges for carry on items such as coolers, surfboards, beach chairs, etc. Be prepared to wait or possibly be bumped if ferry is full! Vieques residents are seated first. It is not uncommon for the ferry to be late.

🚐 Publico Vans are located outside baggage claim at SJU and can seat up to 10-12 people. They are managed by Puerto Rico Tourism and you will be supplied an invoice for your trip before getting in the van. Tips are accepted.



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INSIDER TIPS

- Take warm clothes on the ferry! It's very cold when the AC is on.
- Car rentals on Vieques have closing hours! If you arrive after closing time make prior arrangements with the company to receive your car.
- See page 36 for a list of publicos on Vieques.

CITY EXPERIENCES APP BY HORNBLLOWER
USE THIS APP TO PURCHASE FERRY TICKETS AND ALSO SEE HOW MANY TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE WINDOW IF THE ONLINE TICKETS ARE SOLD OUT.

FERRY

TICKETING

Tickets are available online at <https://www.puertoricoferry.com/> for about half of the passenger seats. Once those are sold, one must buy the tickets at the terminal. The procedure is, as the inventory of available tickets reaches 35, only local residents are allowed to purchase them.

TIPS FOR TRAVELERS

- ★ Buy tickets ahead of time – online whenever possible.
- ★ There are restrictions on transporting vehicles for nonresidents. Generally, it is not permitted. Rented vehicles are not permitted on the cargo boats.
- ★ Parking in Ceiba is a quarter mile from the ticket office, so allow the extra time needed to enter the boarding area at least a half hour prior to departure – the tickets say one hour.
- ★ Bring a sweater on the ferry! It can be chilly with the AC.
- ★ The Ceiba terminal has a seating priority system, giving preference first to elderly and disabled individuals, followed by local residents, and then tourists. While this system might seem unwelcoming to travelers, it is essential to remember that many residents depend on the ferry for crucial trips related to health, education, or work, and rely on it to return to their families. To confirm priority boarding, residents of the Municipal Islands must show photo identification when boarding.



LUNES A VIERNES (MONDAY THRU FRIDAY)

CEIBA → VIEQUES		VIEQUES → CEIBA	
SALIDA / DEPART	SERVICIO / SERVICE	SALIDA / DEPART	SERVICIO / SERVICE
4:30 AM		6:00 AM	
4:45 AM		7:15 AM	
8:30 AM		10:00 AM	
1:00 PM		3:00 PM	
3:00 PM		4:30 PM	
4:45 PM		7:15 PM	
6:30 PM		8:30 PM	
8:00 PM		9:30 PM	

SÁBADOS & DOMINGOS (SATURDAY & SUNDAY)

CEIBA → VIEQUES		VIEQUES → CEIBA	
SALIDA / DEPART	SERVICIO / SERVICE	SALIDA / DEPART	SERVICIO / SERVICE
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5:30 AM		7:00 AM	
8:30 AM		9:30 AM	
10:00 AM		12:00 PM	
1:30 PM		3:30 PM	
4:00 PM		5:30 PM	
5:00 PM		7:00 PM	
8:00 PM		9:00 PM	

GETTING AROUND

Need to Know

RESERVE EARLY!



▶ PUBLICOS/PUBLICOS/ TAXIS:

Publicos are marked with the letters TC for transportacion colectiva (Collective Transportation) meaning that they can pick up other passengers along the route. Look for a van with wording on the side or windshield.

▶ CAR/SCOOTER/UTV/GOLF CART RENTAL:

There are many rental car companies all within the same price range. Most offer Jeeps or SUVs to get you to the most remote beaches, but just because it's 4wd doesn't mean you can't get stuck. Vieques has some world class potholes that are surprisingly deep. When parking at the beach don't leave valuables in the car and leave the car unlocked. At Sunbay do not park on the ocean side of the road, only in the grass on the opposite side.



When returning cars you will be charged for wet seats so think twice about leaving the top off the jeep. Make sure you rent from a licensed car rental company. Book early!

INSIDER TIP
GOLF CART TURN SIGNALS WON'T AUTOMATICALLY TURN OFF! MAKE A MENTAL NOTE-TURN IT OFF!

▶ **BIKE RENTAL:** Bikes can be rented by the hour or day. If you plan on using a bike as transportation make sure you research mileage on Google maps. Also, be aware that most beach roads are dirt, gravel or sand with some steep inclines. Hot, dusty roads; and be careful around stray dogs. Always have water!

Fix a Flat

Pick one of these up at any convenience store or gas station on the island and save yourself a lot of trouble. Just connect to your flat tire, inflate and go! It will only seal temporarily so call your rental company for directions on where to go to get it fixed.



A Twist or a Tap

If your car won't start when leaving the beach, before panicking, first check your battery cable connections. On rough roads they tend to bounce and loosen. Tighten them up, give them a tap and try again!



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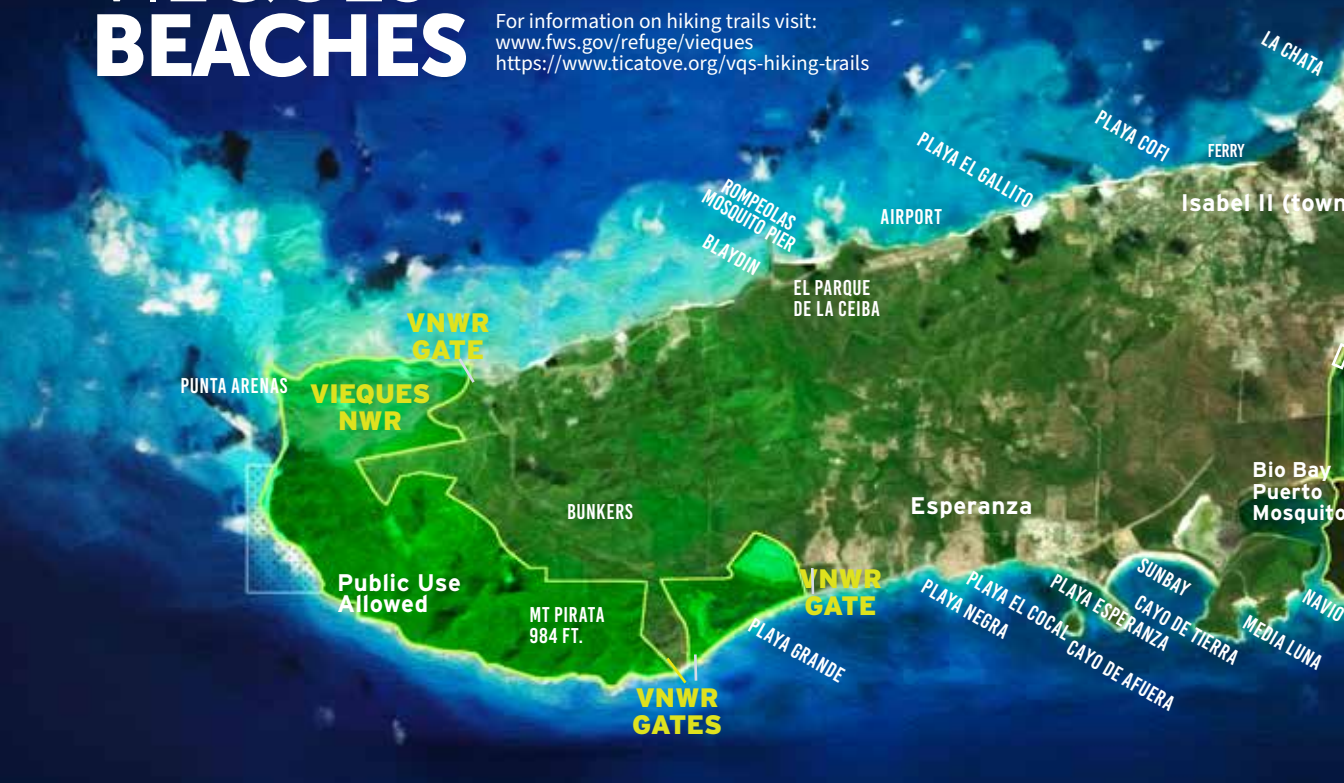
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VIEQUES BEACHES

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For information on hiking trails visit:
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<https://www.ticatove.org/vqs-hiking-trails>



SOUTH SHORE BEACHES

SUNBAY Accessible by the gated entrance off 997, Sunbay is a one mile stretch of beach. Sunbay has lifeguards and bathhouse. There is an entrance fee of \$2-\$4 depending on time of year.

MEDIA LUNA Enter the gated entrance off 997 at Sunbay. Follow the dirt road at the end of Sunbay and travel 0.6 more miles to Media Luna. Great for small children, Media Luna is shallow. You can walk 30 ft out into the water and still be in waist deep water.

NAVIO Follow directions to Media Luna but pass Media Luna and take a left at the sign - go another 0.3 miles. The road is extremely rough and 4wd is sometimes required. Go into the cave on the left side of the beach (if facing the water) for an excellent photo spot! There's good surf so bring your boogie board!

ESPERANZA BEACH To the east and west of the sugar pier in Esperanza. Local hangout where families gather and kids jump from the end of the sugar pier or snorkel underneath.

PLAYA EL COCAL Leave Esperanza on Route 996 heading west. After passing the Vieques Guesthouse on your right, look for a driveway just before the gate of Villa Encantada. Take this

dirt road, which curves to the right, to reach the grassy parking area. This beach often has horses roaming around, so be sure to bring your camera! Playa El Cocal is rocky with strong waves and currents. For a stunning view of Esperanza, take a short hike around the rocky outcrop. Wear shoes!

PLAYA NEGRA (BLACK SAND BEACH) Leave Esperanza on 996 going west. Come to T (201) and take left. Drive 0.1 mile and look for the Playa Negra sign at the trail head. Drive 100 feet more to the parking lot across from Gallery Oro. Walk down the path to the dried stream bed and follow to the right. It is about a 20 minute walk to the beach. If it has rained, stream bed will actually be a small stream. Bring bug spray and water.

VIEQUES NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE*

CARACAS* From 997, turn into the Vieques National Wildlife Refuge at Km Marker 3.2. Go 2.6 miles to a sign for Caracas. Turn right and go .7 more miles. Little shade except for picnic gazebos in the grass area. Watch out for the sandburs! Be very careful where you step when you are in the grassy area and kids should wear their shoes down to the sand (or water's edge). Note: Only park in the parking lot, and not in the entire cul-de-sac at the very end, to avoid fines. It is only for emergency vehicle turn around.



PLAYUELA* From 997, turn into the Wildlife Refuge at Km Marker 3.2. Go 2.6 miles to the brown sign for Caracas. Turn right and go .6 mile to brown sign for Playuela and Tres Palmitas. Turn right and drive .1 mile to parking area for the Playuela Trail. Walk 10 min on a shaded trail and you're there!

PATA PRIETA* From 997, turn into the Wildlife Refuge at Km Marker 3.2 and go aprox 2 miles. Pass turn to Caracas and continue straight on dirt road for aprox 1 mile and turn right at Pata Prieta sign. After 0.2 miles, follow the road to the right to a small parking area with sign. Walk down the (slippery) gravel path to the left of the sign to the beach. Bring a beach umbrella as there is little shade!

LA CHIVA* From 997, turn into the Wildlife Refuge at Km Marker 3.2 and go aprox 2 miles to the end of the paved road. Pass the sign for Caracas and continue straight on the dirt road. La Chiva has numbered spots #1-20. At marker #12 the road splits so stay right if you want to explore La Chiva spots #16-21. There are composting toilets at #3 & #12.

LA PLATA* Follow directions to La Chiva but when road splits take left and go 0.5 miles to reach La Plata. Parking lots/entrances are from #21-26. La Platita is the natural boat ramp at the end of the road.

PREVAILING WINDS:

WINTER - EAST TO NORTHEAST

SUMMER - SOUTHEAST



NOVILLO



NAVIO



PLAYA ESPERANZA



EL GALLITO

ON THE WEST SIDE

PLAYA GRANDE* Leave Esperanza on 996 going west and come to a T (rt. 201). Take a left. Go 1 mile to where the road dead ends and take a left. Follow road to the bottom of the hill, where you will be entering the southwest area of the Wildlife Refuge. Take a right onto dirt road to find a beach spot. Great beach for walking. Playa Grande is a turtle nesting beach so be sure to keep dogs on a leash and watch out for roped off nests. If you follow the dirt road west, you will run into the rugged Punta Vaca beach area. Good for hiking and nature exploration, but not safe for swimming.

PUNTA ARENAS* Follow directions to Rompeolas on the north shore but go past turn for pier and drive approximately 2 miles. You will come to a sign that says you are entering northwest area of the Wildlife Refuge. Drive 1 mile and come to a T / there are spots to the left and to the right with the best snorkeling to your left. Make sure to bring water and bug spray. No-see-ums come out in the late afternoon.

NORTH SHORE BEACHES

SEA GLASS BEACH Drive into Isabel II on 200 and make a left onto main street (Calle Muñoz Rivera). Almost at the end of the street you will see an intersection with a church on your right. Make a left here and at the next intersection make a right. Park on the street (not in the yellow!) and walk to the left of the gazebo down a path to the beach.

LA CHATA Drive by the ferry on your left and go up the steep hill to the right of El Yaté Bar. Go by the lighthouse on your left and take the next right down a steep little hill. Curve to your left and follow along this shoreline road. Pass La Lanchita on left and drive approximately 0.35 miles to a left turn onto a small dirt drive with two palms and large rocks at the end. La Chata! Keep your eyes open for sea glass. Don't be surprised if you are swimming with horses! Many people come here to exercise them.

EL GALLITO Go west on 200 toward the airport and look for a parking area and short peninsula on your right. The most accessible beach is on the right. Great place to be at sunset!

EL PARQUE CEIBA Go west on 201 approximately 1 mile past the airport and follow the sharp curve to the right. Go down a small hill and the Ceiba tree is on your right. Enjoy the Ceiba tree without climbing, marking or damaging the roots.

ROMPEOLAS Follow directions to the Ceiba tree but pass the Ceiba and continue on the main road to the left. Take the next right at the empty concrete structure with parking lot and this road will take you to the pier. Rompeolas pier is 1 mile long so it is great for beginning joggers or walkers! Great snorkeling on the left side of the pier but go with a guide. Twice a day the cargo barge docks at Rompeolas so you will find traffic in the early morning and late evening.

BLAYDIN BEACH OR MOSQUITO BEACH Follow directions to the pier but right before going out onto the pier there is a small sandy road to the left that leads to a shallow beach.

No-see-ums = sandflies that come out at sunset and they bite!



Watch out!

for the Coast Sandbur - *Cenchrus incertus* - very prevalent at Caracas and Pata Prieta and painful to step on.

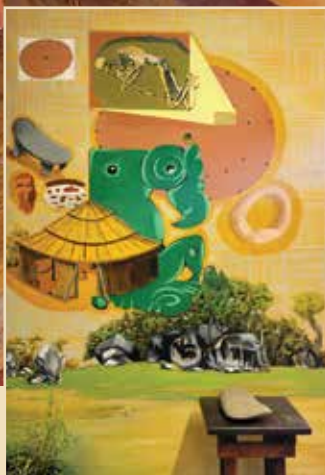


Cell Service at the Beach If you hire a publico to take you to the beaches remember to arrange a pick up time before they drive off because cell service may not be available.

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Finca Victoria's retreat season, running from July through November, offers a variety of immersive wellness retreats focused on yoga, meditation, and Ayurveda. Whether you wish to join an organized retreat or host your own, our space provides the perfect setting for transformative experiences. We are excited to work with retreat leaders from around the world to create meaningful wellness journeys.

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yum

Stop in any Puerto Rican restaurant on the island and you're sure to see mofongo on the menu. This savory dish is a concoction of local staples like plantains, garlic, chichirrones (fried pork rinds) and spices, with variations common in other Caribbean nations like Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Despite its association with Puerto Rico mofongo evolved from an African dish called fufu, which slaves introduced to this part of the world when they were brought to the Spanish colonies in the 16th century. Whereas fufu is made by boiling and mashing root vegetables, mofongo makers typically fry green plantains and then smash them using a pilon (mortar and pestle). Each chef makes the dish a bit differently, some mashing yucca or breadfruit, but most all feature chicken, beef, seafood or vegetables to top off the dish. After you've tried a few versions, you'll be ready to join the hotly contested debate over who makes the best mofongo on the island.

DID YOU KNOW...

Plantains and bananas don't grow on trees, or vines or bushes for that matter. They are considered to be giant herbs because they do not possess any persistent woody plant parts. (Papaya plants fall into this same category.) They do not require pollination to produce fruit: a botanical curiosity known as parthenocarp.

Do try this at home!

Coquito is the Caribbean's take on eggnog, mixing creamy coconut, rum, and holiday spices for a tropical twist on a classic festive drink.

COQUITO

- 1 can (12 oz) evaporated milk
- 1 can (14 oz) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 can (15 oz) coconut milk
- 1 can (15 oz) cream of coconut
- 1 cup white rum (adjust to taste)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon, plus more for garnish
- Optional: pinch of nutmeg or cloves for added spice

Crab Island Rum has taken coquito to a new level using it's coffee infused rum!

CAFEQUITO

- 1 oz Crab Island Coffee Rum
- 1 oz Crab Island Rum
- 2 oz pre-mixed Coquito



LECHON

Lechón is roast pig cooked on a spit long and slow, often overnight. It's to Christmas in Vieques what turkey is to Thanksgiving in the States. The slow cook keeps the meat moist and tender, while exposure to coals makes the skin brown and crackly, a treat as unique as the meat.



PASTELES

Pasteles are sometimes described as Puerto Rican tamales, but made with root vegetables instead of corn. Making them is labor intensive work, traditionally done during the holiday season. Fortunately, many restaurants here on Vieques serve pasteles around the holidays.



ARROZ CON GANDULES

Rice with pigeon peas, is a traditional side dish served alongside lechón during the holidays in Puerto Rico. Gandules take 4-8 months to mature, and many Viequenses carefully plan their harvesting season to ensure fresh pigeon peas are available for the holidays.



TEMBLEQUE

A holiday dairy free custard made from coconut milk, cornstarch, a pinch of salt and sugar. Whisked over the stove until thickened and garnished with cinnamon it is delicious. Find it on many restaurants dessert menus during the holidays.

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This year, Crab Island Rum proudly celebrates its fifth anniversary, marking a remarkable journey that has intertwined the spirit of the island with the bold vision of its founder, Ivan Torres Ortiz.

The road to creating Crab Island Rum was anything but smooth. What began in 2009 as a dream quickly became a

formidable challenge. Ivan faced hurdles in raising capital, securing specialized equipment, and rebuilding after Hurricane Maria struck the island.

After nearly a decade of hard work, the first batch of Crab Island Rum went into barrels in 2019. This milestone marked a turning point—not just for the company, but for the entire community of Vieques. The distillery has since become a source of pride, a testament to the island's spirit of perseverance and creativity.

To truly experience Vieques, visiting Crab Island Rum distillery is a must. The distillery offers live music, delicious food, tropical cocktails with fresh fruit from the island and, of course, expertly crafted rum. Visit the Crab Island Rum facebook page for operating hours, special events or to schedule a tour.

Crab Island Rum's story is one of turning challenges into triumphs, much like the island itself has done time and time again. Now, after 5 years, the island celebrates this original 2019 batch which is ready to be bottled and shared. Look for the anniversary bottle in stores around the island or experience it firsthand at the distillery—this is a taste of Vieques you won't want to miss! ■

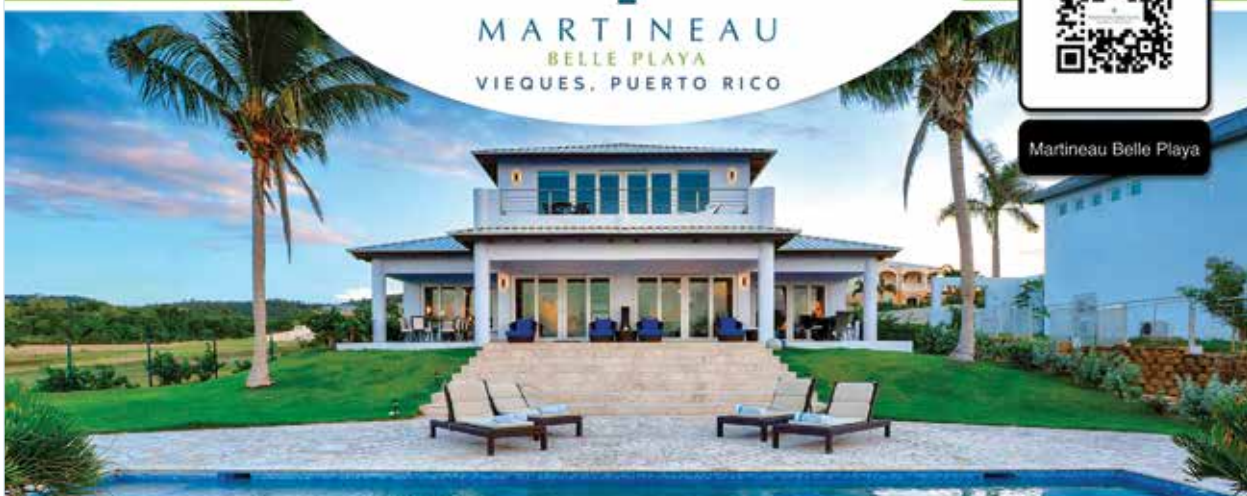




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Martineau Belle Playa



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BIEKES BISTRO	787-451-9061	11AM-11PM					11-4PM		ISABEL II
CARAMBOLA OCEANFRONT RESTAURANT @THE BLUE	787-741-3318	7AM-3PM AND 5-9:30					BRUNCH 7AM-2PM DINNER 5-9:30PM		ESPERANZA
COQUI FIRE CAFÉ	787-741-0401	5-9							ISABEL II
CRAB ISLAND RUM DISTILLERY					11-5		12-8	RT 201	
KRISTY'S ON THE CARIBE	717-226-6257	7AM-1PM			7AM-1PM			ESPERANZA	
LA HELADERÍA JOLIETTE			11AM-8PM					ISABEL II	
MAMA MIA	787-692-0742		11-9					3-9	ISABEL II
MANGO TAPHOUSE & GASTRO PUB	939-891-2764	12:30-8:30				12:30-8:30		RT 201	
MAR AZUL	939-402-9696	11AM-CLOSE				11AM-2AM	11AM-CL	ISABEL II	
PLACITA @ EL BLOK (DINNER)	787-741-6020	5-10			5-10			ESPERANZA	
PLACITA @ EL BLOK (BREAKFAST)	787-741-6020	COFFEE AND PASTRIES 7AM-NOON						ESPERANZA	
ROOFTOP @ EL BLOK (BAR ONLY)	787-741-6020				4-8 FRI LIVE MUSIC, SUN SOL SET DJ			ESPERANZA	
RISING ROOST (GUAKE'TE)	ON FACEBOOK				8AM-1PM			ISABEL II	
TAVERNA	787-438-1100				5:30-CLOSE			ISABEL II	
TRADEWINDS	787-710-7440		4-8:30		KITCHEN TAKEOVER 4-9	4-8:30	9-2PM	ESPERANZA	



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SUN 7:30AM -12PM
Holiday hours change
- ▶ **MORALES EMPREZAS (PORTELA) ISABEL II**
MON-FRI 7AM-8PM
SAT 7AM-7PM
SUN 7AM-3PM
- ▶ **MORALES ALMACENES ISABEL II**
MON-FRI 7AM-4PM
SAT 8AM-12PM
- ▶ **MOLINO ISABEL II**
MON-FRI 5AM-9:30
SAT-SUN 6AM-8:30
- ▶ **VIEQUES FRUIT MARKET (MUNDO)**
MON-SAT 8AM-6PM
- ▶ **MAMBOS (RT 997)**
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» A GOOD RULE OF THUMB

If you can't raise your head out of the water to adjust your mask without stepping down (and damaging the reef below), don't venture out on your own! Go with a guide.

Guided Snorkeling Adventures BY SARAH ELISE FIELD

Snorkeling on Vieques is an unforgettable experience, with vibrant coral reefs, abundant marine life, and the chance to encounter majestic sea turtles.

To make the most of your adventure and protect this fragile environment, exploring with an experienced guide is essential. Not only do guides know the best spots for encountering diverse marine species, but they also help you navigate safely around reefs, avoiding sharp corals and potential hazards. A knowledgeable guide ensures you follow responsible practices, like maintaining a respectful distance from sea turtles, avoiding contact with reefs, and using eco-friendly sunscreen. By choosing a guided tour, you deepen your appreciation of Vieques' underwater ecosystem while supporting sustainable tourism efforts that preserve these treasures for generations to come.



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A sharksucker is attached to the shell of a green turtle. It does no harm while getting a free ride and is known to eat the fecal matter of its host, even helping keep the turtle's shell clean—a true symbiotic relationship!



fun facts!

BY SARAH ELISE FIELD



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MAKE ROOM FOR TURTLES

Vieques is the top nesting site for green turtles in Puerto Rico, and it's not uncommon to spot one while snorkeling. In the excitement of the moment, it's easy to forget about personal space and feel the urge to swim after them. However, remember that green turtles are protected under the Endangered Species Act, making it illegal to touch or chase them. Rapid movements can disturb these turtles, causing them to abandon their feeding grounds or avoid surfacing to breathe due to fear of human presence. Help protect their natural behavior by practicing responsible snorkeling, booking a snorkeling tour with professional guides and keeping a respectful distance.

STARS OF THE SEA

Sea stars are iconic symbols of the ocean, and it's important to handle these delicate creatures with care. Never pry them from their resting positions—their tube feet, which they use to move and grip surfaces, are extremely sensitive and can be easily damaged. Also, taking a sea star out of water is like putting a human underwater—it can suffocate. When you encounter a sea star, avoid touching it, as the lotions, perfumes, and other substances on our skin can be harmful. The best way to appreciate these beautiful animals is to simply take photos and admire them from a distance.

Did you know? They're called "sea stars" rather than "starfish" because they aren't actually fish! Sea stars belong to a group of animals known as echinoderms, closely related to sea urchins and sand dollars. Even more amazing, sea stars have the remarkable ability to regenerate lost arms—some species can even regrow an entirely new sea star from a single limb!



MARK MARTIN BRAS

BEACHCOMBING

A popular activity, beachcombing, involves searching along the shore for items like shells and sea glass. While beaches are indeed filled with treasures from the ocean, not every island agrees on laws regarding taking those treasures home. In Grand Cayman, for example, local laws permit tourists to collect up to three conch shells per person. However, in Puerto Rico, the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DRNA) Law 147 states that no coral reef or part of a coral community, whether alive or dead, may be removed. This law, though not widely known, prohibits taking shells and even sand. DRNA officers are quick to point out the importance of these resources to the ecosystem. Remember, empty shells, skeletons, and sand all play crucial roles in the marine ecosystem, both on the beach and in the water. In fact, some seemingly "empty" shells may still have inhabitants! Avoid treating nature as a souvenir and opt for a Vieques t-shirt to take home instead.

Did you know? Even shells that look empty can have small creatures hiding inside, so if you're admiring a shell, take a photo with it and then leave it where you found it. Even empty shells play major roles in the ecosystem.



Feel free to collect all the sea glass you find.
It's nature's beautiful transformation of trash!



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 Old Crow Hotel & Suites 787-741-0001
 Orita 510-682-3064
 SeaGate Hotel 201-450-8238
 787-741-4661
 787-741-3318
 Tradewinds Guesthouse 787-710-7440
 The Vieques Guesthouse 787-435-1513
 Villa Dos Palmas 802-272-0704

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Victor Simmons 787-936-7496

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 Finca Consciencia 787-502-4088
 Isla Nena Composta 787-309-8408
 JaFlor 267-968-4197
 La Colmena Cimarrona 787-502-4088
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Taxi Aero Charters 787-718-8869
 Air Flamenco 787-724-1818
 Air Sunshine 954-434-8900
 Cape Air 800-227-3247
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 Sebastian Aero Services Inc. 787-630-5389
 Vieques Air Link 888-901-9247

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Hooves on the Ground 939-529-8848
 Juntos 787-436-6817
 Our Big Fat Caribbean Rescue 787-349-8480
 Vieques Humane Society
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Arquitecto Stanley Hutchinson 787-556-5537

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 Kadosh Art Gallery 787-371-8390
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 Sandra Reyes 787-435-1155
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 San Juan Office 787-725-5500

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JAK Water Sports 787-644-7112
 Fun Brothers 787-435-9372

BIOBAY TOURS

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 Black Beard Sports 939-283-6841
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 Fun Brothers 787-435-9372
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 Salty Spirit 787-477-8664
 Tropical Reef Water Sports 787-249-8914

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 Tree Tender 860-428-4386

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Isla Nena Laundromat 787-435-5615

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Ayurvedic Wellness at Finca Victoria 787-646-0011
 Ayurveda Yoga & Massage 970-729-0505
 Beatriz Beauty Boutique & Spa 787-556-8662
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 Finca Victoria 787-646-0011
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 Oro 510-682-3064
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 Vieques Island Tours & Transport. 787-397-2048
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 Vieques Boutique Spa 939-279-6920

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 Biggie 787-233-0879
 Chepo Towing 787-966-3985
 Freddy 787-608-9914
 Josaen Maldonado 939-247-9825

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Gofers 787-220-0943
 Island Services & Management 787-238-9108
 Tranka Transport 939-475-0687

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 Esperanza Yoga w/Valerie 508-945-7643
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 Vieques Pilates, Yoga & Wellness 231-383-1885

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 City Hall/Alcaldía 787-741-5000
 Sun Bay 787-741-8198
 US Fish and Wildlife Office 787-741-2138
 Recycling Office 787-741-5000
 Post Office 787-741-3891
 PR Tourism Office Vieques
 Airport 787-741-2300
 Isabel II 787-741-0800
 AAA Autoridad de Acueductos 787-620-2482
 FWS 787-741-2138
 Vieques Post Office 202-791-7632
 Vieques Gas 787-469-7734
 Vieques Covid Hotline 787-340-3837

EMERGENCY

Ambulance 787-741-8261/911
 Hospital 787-741-3282
 Emergency 787-741-8261 or 911
 Fire Dept 787-741-2111
 Police 787-741-2020
 Municipal Office 787-741-5000
 787-741-5051, 939-239-4164

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Discover the Magic of the The World's Brightest Bioluminescent Bay

Vieques is home to Puerto Mosquito Bay, the brightest bioluminescent bay in the world. This natural wonder attracts visitors from around the globe, offering them the chance to witness the enchanting phenomenon of the water glowing with every movement. Millions of single-celled organisms called dinoflagellates produce this radiant glow, believed to be a defense mechanism triggered when they are disturbed, creating a mesmerizing display.

[The following pages cover FAQs about the bay, tips for experiencing its wonders, and efforts to protect it. >>>](#)

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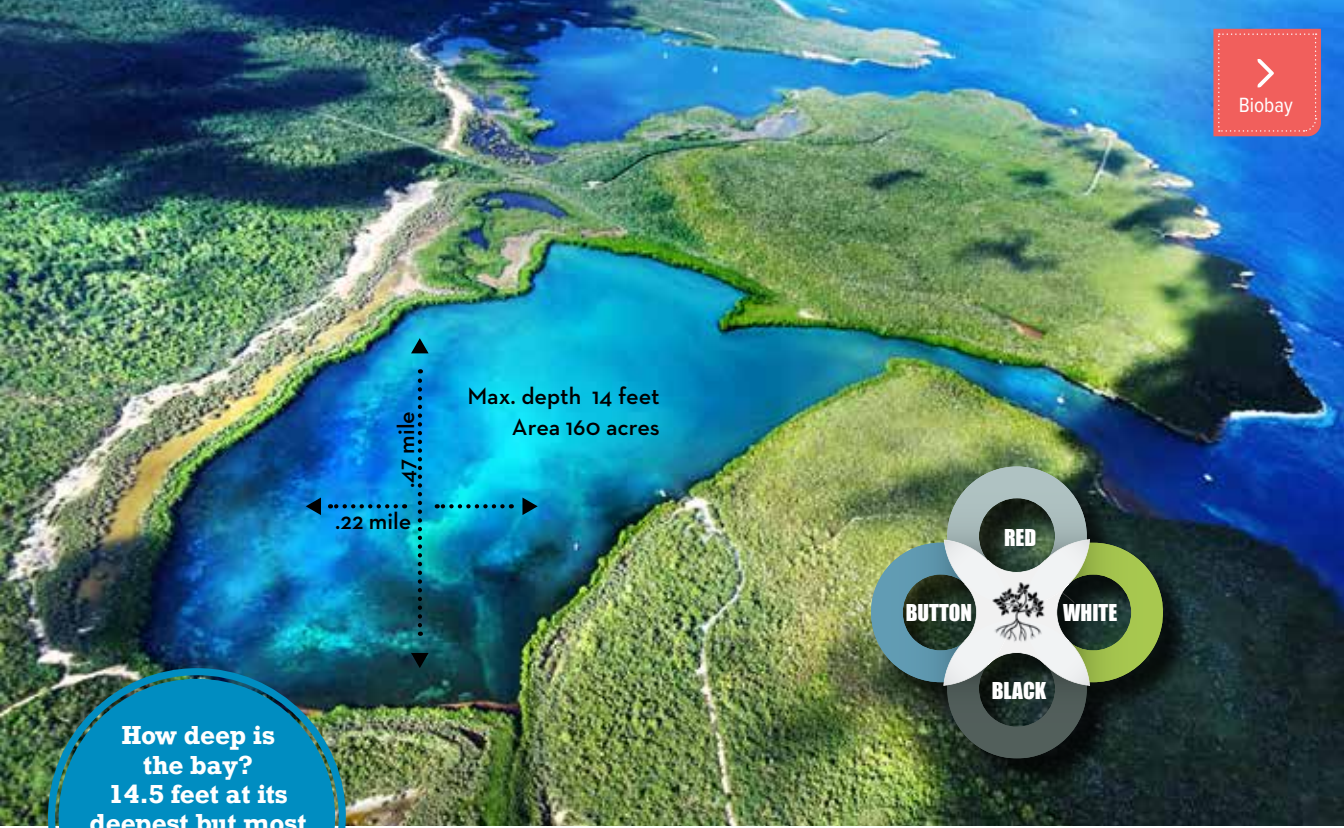
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How deep is the bay?
14.5 feet at its deepest but most of the bay is shallow.

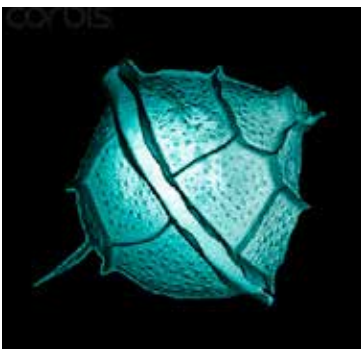
COMMON QUESTIONS

about the Bioluminescent Bay

And what you can do to help protect it.

▶ **What makes the water glow?**

The magic of the BioBay is created by single-cell organisms called *Pyrodinium bahamense* (whirling fire of the Bahamas), a species of luminescent dinoflagellate. These microscopic plankton convert chemical energy into light energy by synthesizing luciferin, which, when mixed with the enzyme luciferase and oxygen, produces a bluish-green light.



LUCIFERIN + OXYGEN LUCIFERASE

Luciferin & Luciferase + Oxygen = Bioluminescence

▶ **Why is Vieques' Bioluminescent Bay the brightest in the world?**

A myriad of factors have come together to create the perfect recipe for the highest concentration of dinoflagellates per liter of water in Puerto Mosquito bioluminescent bay. The narrow, shallow entrance and prevailing winds east to west across the mouth of the bay trap many of the organisms inside. Water depth, salinity, and temperature along with nutrients and the protection provided by mangroves allow dinoflagellates to thrive. In addition, conservation efforts by the VCHT have protected Puerto Mosquito for over 40 years.

▶ **Can I see the bioluminescence during the day?**

No, the glow is only visible at night under dark sky conditions. *Tidbit:* They don't glow during the day.

▶ **Is bioluminescence the same as phosphorescence?**

Phosphorescence occurs when absorbed light energy is slowly released, causing a delayed glow after the light source is gone. Unlike bioluminescence, which is a natural light produced by living organisms, and a biological process that happens within the cell.

THE RECIPE



RED / BLACK MANGROVES provide nutrients for the dinoflagellates.



NARROW, SHALLOW ENTRANCE TO THE BAY traps dinoflagellates inside.



WATER DEPTH, TEMPERATURE AND SALINITY allow dinoflagellates to thrive.



PREVAILING WINDS blow across the mouth of the bay from east to west and keep the high concentration of dinoflagellates from "flushing out."

▶ How can I visit the BioBay?

Book a kayak tour with a licensed operator or an electric tour boat. Guides will ensure a safe and environmentally responsible experience.

▶ Why should I go with a licensed guide?

Licensed tour operators comply with conservation protocols and have undergone the necessary training to provide a safe, educational tour. They must obtain permits, pay taxes, have a navigation license, maintain insurance, be certified in CPR and First Aid, contribute to conservation efforts, and adhere to regulations set in the management plan. Licensed guides offer invaluable expertise, ensuring a magical experience on the BioBay.

▶ Why can't I swim in the bay instead of taking a tour?

Swimming is prohibited to reduce human impact on the bay. Body lotions, oils, soap residue, and other chemicals can negatively affect the delicate ecosystem.

▶ What if I've never kayaked before?

When making a reservation, inform the guide of your experience level. While it helps to have a basic understanding of kayaking, guides can assist you. The bay is typically calm, making the activity suitable for beginners.

▶ When is the best time to visit Puerto Mosquito Bioluminescent Bay?

The best time to visit is on a moonless night when the darkness enhances the bioluminescence. Check the lunar calendar and plan your visit during the new moon for the optimal experience. Talk to the guides for specific dates because it's not only the moon phase that's important; it's also the time that the moon is up in the sky.

▶ Is the bay's glow visible year-round?

Yes, the bay glows year-round, though its intensity may vary depending on weather, water temperature, and moonlight. Warmer months and calm waters usually offer the best displays.

The bay is a fragile ecosystem in need of protection.

Here's how you can help:

Go with a tour guide to minimize environmental impact.

Swimming is prohibited to protect the dinoflagellates and their habitat.

Avoid using chemicals on your skin that can pollute the water when you go on your tour.

If you own a house on Vieques, minimize light pollution by using exterior lights that are hooded to shine down, not up into the night sky.

Visit the VCHT, learn more about BioBay, and become a member! Or visit www.vcht.org.

THE VIEQUES
CONSERVATION
HISTORICAL
TRUST



FIDEICOMISO
DE CONSERVACION
E HISTORIA
DE VIEQUES

Dec 18 Wed.

Bird Walk*
7:30-11:10am meet at the
Trust in Esperanza

Jan. 8 Wed.

Bird Walk*
7:30-11:10am meet at the
Trust in Esperanza

Jan. 11 Sat.

Bird's of Vieques gallery show opening/
Open House 5pm-7pm

Jan 15 Wed.

VCHT Speaker's Series 5pm featuring
Daphne Gemmill Esperanza Vieques:
An Important Shorebird Area. Based
on her 41 years of island bird surveys,
Daphne Gemmill will enlighten us on
the 26 shorebirds that spend all or part
of the year on Vieques, why Vieques is
important for their well-being, and
how recently deployed state-of-the-art
technology is shedding new light.

VCHT 2024-2025 Events

Please check www.vcht.org for
additional calendar events

Jan 22 Wed.

Bird Walk*
7:30-11:10am meet at the
Trust in Esperanza

Feb 5 Wed.

Bird Walk*
7:30-11:10am meet at the
Trust in Esperanza

Feb 6 (and Mar 6)

VCHT Garden Tour
Get an inside look at some of Vieques'
finest gardens, with talks, refreshments
and time to enjoy the lush landscapes.
Tickets will be available at www.vcht.org.

Feb 19 Wed.

Bird Walk*
7:30-11:10am meet at the
Trust in Esperanza

Feb 27 Thurs.

VCHT Annual membership
meeting time and place TBA

March 22 Sat.

Let's Glow Together!
Community celebration of VCHT
at Crab Island Rum Distillery



* Our Bird Team volunteers love taking folks on Bird Walks, and there is no cost, but we ask that you consider making a donation or becoming a member of The Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust. If you are not a birder, consider downloading eBird, Merlin Bird ID, Bird Net, or the Audubon or All Birds PR Antigua apps on your mobile device before your Bird Walk. If possible, please bring binoculars and wear sturdy shoes. Regardless of your skill level, you are welcome to join us. Please email vcht.birding.team@gmail.com for additional information. If you have questions before, during, or after, or are a member of a large group, please email vcht.birding.team@gmail.com for additional information.



40 Years of Conservation Success

For over 40 years, the Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust (VCHT) has worked tirelessly to protect and preserve the radiant glow of Puerto Mosquito Bay, the world's brightest bioluminescent bay. As a nonprofit organization dedicated to safeguarding the island's natural and cultural heritage, the VCHT's efforts ensure that this unique ecosystem thrives for future generations to experience.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE:

- ▶ A key partner in the process of designating the area as The Vieques Bioluminescent Bay Natural Reserve.
- ▶ Hosting of the first-ever bioluminescent symposium in Puerto Rico, held in Vieques in 2009.
- ▶ Weekly monitoring of the plankton populations and water quality in the bay.
- ▶ The installation of a permanent solar-powered monitoring station by the USGS to measure real-time parameters.
- ▶ The VCHT became the co-manager of the Vieques Bioluminescent Bay Natural Reserve, allowing it to have a crucial role in the conservation of Puerto Mosquito, and its surrounding ecosystems.
- ▶ Reduction of sediment, pesticide runoff, and nutrient loading in the bay.
- ▶ Implementation of erosion and sedimentation green infrastructure on roads, parking areas, and walkways.
- ▶ Collaboration with a number of Universities, Scripps Oceanographic Institute, diverse conservation agencies, and Puerto Rican and US non-profits to conserve the bay and develop science-based action plans.
- ▶ Fostering investment and involvement of collaborating foundations to provide solutions and develop jobs for conserving and restoring Puerto Mosquito.
- ▶ Advocacy to establish Puerto Mosquito's carrying capacity



- ▶ Skills training programs and increased training for bay tour guides, including first aid, CPR, and environmental interpretation.
- ▶ The creation of the MANTA program, which teaches students about their bioluminescent bay and conservation through citizen science, community service and award winning educational programs.
- ▶ The creation of the Barbara Bernache Baker BioBay Room, a permanent exhibit on the bioluminescent bay located in the VCHT in Esperanza.
- ▶ Establishment of the Elizabeth C. Langhorne laboratory, where weekly plankton counts are carried out, where community members and visitors of any age can learn about the microscopic world, and where research support has been conducted on sea turtles, bioluminescence, lionfish, sharks, cetaceans and more.
- ▶ Collaboration between operators, guides, VCHT, and DNER to protect the bay's future.

- ▶ Enforcing a three-day moratorium on tours before, during, and after a full moon.
- ▶ Strict adherence to the no-swimming policy to reduce pollution.
- ▶ Evaluation of the bay's hydrology and land clearing or plant removal restrictions.
- ▶ Founding members of the Puerto Rico Light Pollution Taskforce and participation in drafting Puerto Rico Light Pollution law (law 218 of 2008)
- ▶ Educational outreach on light pollution laws (Law 218) for surrounding areas.
- ▶ GIS mapping with Para la Naturaleza to develop a light pollution inventory.
- ▶ Implementation of the The Mangrove Project, aimed at growing and restoring Puerto Mosquito's mangrove forest, seagrass beds, and corals from the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria in 2017.



To learn more about these and other VCHT projects, visit WWW.VCHT.ORG. To support protecting the biobay scan this code.





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www.jurutungofarm.com

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787) 502-4088

www.lacolmenacimarrona.org

Our Big Fat Caribbean Rescue

787-349-8480

www.ourbigfatcaribbeanrescue.org

Parque La Ceiba

787-467-4352

facebook.com/Parque-La-Ceiba-De-Vieques

Rotary Club Of Vieques

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www.rotaryvieques.com

Sail Relief Team

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www.communitythroughcolors.org

Navy League Vieques

703-528-1775

facebook/navyleaguevieques/

Ticatove

787-428-8288

www.ticatove.org

Vieques Concert Society

787-225-5604

www.viequesconcertsociety.org

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787-435-2187

facebook/vieques.tennis.1

Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust

787-741-8850

www.vcht.org

Vieques Emergency Response Inc

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787-408-7161

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Vieques Humane Society & Animal Rescue

787.741.0209

www.viequeshumanesociety.org

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www.viequesanimalsanctuary.org/

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- Pet Escort. If you don't mind an extra carry-on, VHS animals often need to hitch a ride to folks waiting for them stateside (no cost to you).
- It's a Keeper. You've decided to adopt your new best friend. VHS can help with all the travel details, including what to do if you are travelling before your pet can see the vet (a travel requirement). See viequeshumanesociety.org/travel

Vieques Humane Society & Animal Rescue, Inc.

787.741.0209

hello@viequeshumanesociety.org

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OWN A PIECE OF HISTORY! A unique opportunity to restore or reinvent a 16-room hotel with two renovated retail spaces and a restaurant next door. This three-story hotel building, located on a corner of the main street, is just a stone's throw from the ocean and offers wonderful views from the upper floors and roof deck.

The Hotel Carmen was once frequented by "Gonzo" journalist Hunter S. Thompson while he wrote The Rum Diary. Though the building has fallen into disrepair, its solid structure provides countless possibilities. Restore it as a hotel, condos, or apartments in a prime location with great views.

The ground floor features two retail spaces ready for rent. The current owners are also including two additional lots with the original hotel property. The restaurant is a new build with a spacious kitchen and large bar, while the empty lot behind offers a convenient delivery area and employee parking. **Titled. \$1.5 million**



Shop local

GIFT GUIDE

Vieques offers a variety of unique gift shops, galleries, and boutiques, perfect for finding that special gift or souvenir. Bring home a piece of the island from one of our local stores as a lasting reminder of your time here. By shopping locally, you'll support Vieques' talented artists, crafters, and shop owners.

Scallywags • Clothing, accessories, souvenirs. Isabel II



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Últimas Noticias del Municipio

ALCALDE: JOSÉ A. CORCINO ACEVEDO

VICE ALCALDE: ADOLFO ROSA MIRANDA

HOPE ON THE HORIZON:

VIEQUES HOSPITAL SET TO REACH MAJOR MILESTONES

BY: TALLEN PEREZ

In an interview with Adolfo Rosa Miranda, Vice Mayor of Vieques, it was confirmed that the hospital construction in Vieques is progressing steadily, bringing renewed hope and excitement to the community. The first phase, which includes a dialysis center, is expected to be completed by mid to late December 2024. Despite recent setbacks from storms, workers have managed to keep the project on track.

While the dialysis clinic won't be ready to accept patients immediately, its near-completion marks a significant step forward. Soon, patients will no longer need to endure exhausting trips to the mainland for treatment.

The Department of Health is expected to manage the hospital, though private organizations have also shown interest. Planning for necessary equipment purchases and staffing is already underway to ensure smooth operations once the facility opens. Additionally, a 28-room facility is being planned to accommodate visiting doctors, aiming to attract specialists to the island. When fully operational, the hospital will provide services like prenatal care, endocrinology, and other essential specialties. Although major surgeries will still require referrals to larger hospitals, having access to key medical services locally represents a monumental improvement. The community's anticipation and relief are palpable as Vieques approaches this important milestone.

VIEQUES HOSPITAL AT A GLANCE

BUDGET: \$86,000,000 (funded by FEMA and Department of Health)

CONTRACTED DESIGN/BUILD:
Caribe Techno

CONSTRUCTION PHASES:

PHASE I: Dialysis center
Expected Completion: Late December 2024

PHASE II: Emergency room and X-ray services
Expected Completion: Mid-2025

PHASE III: All offices and additional services
Proposed Start: January 2025

ADMINISTRATION: Likely Department of Health (to be confirmed)

SERVICES PROVIDED: Emergency Room, Dialysis Center, Pharmacy, Laboratory, Imaging Area, Neonatal and Birthing Center, Small Surgery Center, Dental Services, Social Services, and External Clinics

FACILITIES: Includes helipad, cistern, generator, elevator, new parking area, Green Building certification and solar power. Will also include off-site residential units for visiting physicians and specialists

OFF-SITE HOUSING
FOR VISITING PHYSICIANS:

LOCATION: Adjacent to Kike's Hardware
Proposed Completion: Mid-2026

RESUMEN DEL PROYECTO HOSPITAL DE VIEQUES

PRESUPUESTO: \$86,000,000 (financiado por FEMA y el Departamento de Salud)

CONTRATISTA DISEÑO/CONSTRUCCIÓN:
Caribe Techno

FASES DE CONSTRUCCIÓN:

FASE I: Centro de diálisis
Fecha de Finalización Prevista: Finales de diciembre de 2024

FASE II: Sala de emergencias y servicios de rayos X
Fecha de Finalización Prevista: Medios de 2025

FASE III: Todas las oficinas y servicios adicionales
Inicio Propuesto: enero de 2025

ADMINISTRACIÓN: Probablemente el Departamento de Salud (por confirmar)

SERVICIOS PROPORCIONADOS: Sala de emergencias, Centro de diálisis, Farmacia, Laboratorio, Área de imágenes, Centro neonatal y de partos, Centro de cirugías menores, Servicios dentales, Servicios sociales y Clínicas externas.

INSTALACIONES: Helipuerto, cisterna, generador, ascensor, nueva área de estacionamiento
Certificación de edificio verde y energía solar, Unidades residenciales externas para médicos y especialistas visitantes,

ALOJAMIENTO EXTERNO
PARA MÉDICOS VISITANTES:

UBICACIÓN: Junto a la Ferretería Kike
Fecha de Finalización Propuesta: Medios de 2026



HAY ESPERANZA EN EL HORIZONTE:

EL HOSPITAL DE VIEQUES ALCANZARÁ IMPORTANTES METAS

BY: TALLEN PEREZ • TRANSLATION: LINGUASOL

En una entrevista con el Vicecalde de Vieques, Adolfo Rosa Miranda, se confirmó que la construcción del hospital en Vieques avanza de manera constante, lo que ha traído renovada esperanza y entusiasmo a la comunidad. Se espera que la primera fase, que incluye un centro de diálisis, esté terminada a mediados o finales de diciembre de 2024. A pesar de los contratiempos recientes debido a las tormentas, los trabajadores han mantenido el proyecto en marcha utilizando los materiales disponibles.

Aunque la clínica de diálisis no estará lista para recibir pacientes de inmediato, su casi finalización representa un paso importante hacia delante y en breve, los pacientes ya no tendrán que hacer agotadores viajes a la isla grande para recibir tratamiento.

Se espera que el Departamento de Salud administre el hospital, aunque también han mostrado interés algunas organizaciones privadas. Ya se está planificando la compra de equipos necesarios y la contratación de personal para asegurar su buen funcionamiento una vez que la instalación abra.

También se está planeando una instalación de 28 habitaciones para acomodar a médicos visitantes, con el objetivo de atraer especialistas a la isla. Cuando esté completamente en funcionamiento, el hospital brindará servicios de atención prenatal, endocrinología y otras especialidades esenciales. Aunque las intervenciones quirúrgicas importantes seguirán requiriendo referidos a hospitales más grandes, tener acceso a servicios médicos clave a nivel local representa una mejora monumental. La anticipación y el alivio de la comunidad son palpables mientras Vieques nos acercamos a lograr esta importante meta.





Últimas Noticias del Municipio

ALCALDE: JOSÉ A. CORCINO ACEVEDO
VICE ALCALDE: ADOLFO ROSA MIRANDA
BY: TALLEN PEREZ
TRANSLATION: LINGUASOL



OUT OF THE PARK:

NEW SPORTS COMPLEX TAKES SHAPE

The sports complex in Vieques is undergoing significant upgrades, with construction already in progress on the main building. The facility will include a basketball court, a dedicated space for judo and martial arts, and an area initially planned to house a pool. However, due to high maintenance costs, the pool will instead be converted into a sand court for beach volleyball.

At the rear of the complex, there are two fields, one of which will be renovated to host AA baseball games. The goal is to attract more visiting teams to Vieques, as the current facility in Esperanza is often in use and requires expansion. Plans for the complex include fields for baseball, softball, little league and even tennis. The parks are designed for daytime use only, as nighttime artificial lighting could impact the nearby bioluminescent bay.

Funding for the complex has been secured through various channels, including the Department of Housing. While additional funding has been requested for an Olympic-level track, the current focus is on completing the main building and sports areas.

The project is being carried out in phases, with roofing work completed and interior electrical, plumbing, and demolition work underway.



SUN BAY CAMPGROUND

COMPLETED AND PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

Recently, the municipality of Vieques took over the administration of the Sun Bay camping area. While the Department of Natural Resources and the National Park Service remain the property owners, the municipality now manages day-to-day operations. Initial improvements, such as road paving and essential building maintenance, have already been completed. A larger rehabilitation of the area, including the camping grounds, will be funded by FEMA due to damages from Hurricane María. This project is currently in the design and bidding stage, with major renovations expected to begin in early 2025.

In the meantime, the municipality has made necessary repairs to the shower facilities and bathrooms, which are now fully operational. Although camping is allowed, no fees are being charged at the moment, as the area is not yet fenced or secured. Once renovations are complete, fees will be introduced in accordance with National Park guidelines, likely around \$10 per night per tent, though this cost is subject to change. Campers must register in person with Lilian Sanchez at the Sun Bay administration office between 8AM -4PM. Basic rules, such as noise restrictions, apply, and detailed regulations are available in the camping contract signed upon registration.



REBUILDING VIEQUES

OTHER NEW DEVELOPMENTS

In addition to the sports complex and the camping site, several other key projects are underway on Vieques. One of the most significant is the planned reconstruction of the Nelson Diepa Coliseum, with proposals for the project currently being accepted.

Additional efforts include a signage project, which has already resulted in new signs installed at Sun Bay and along the Malecón in Esperanza. There are also plans to add more road signage around the island.

Road repairs and paving projects are also ongoing, with new funding allocated for areas that have not yet been addressed, such as Los Chivos, Monte Santo, and Villa Borinquen.

Another exciting initiative is the restoration of the lighthouse area, where an adjacent building that once served as a community center will be renovated. This building is slated to host meetings and events for the local community, with the bidding process for the renovation expected to open soon.



EXCELENTE PROGRESO:

EL NUEVO COMPLEJO DEPORTIVO ESTÁ TOMANDO FORMA

Se están haciendo importantes progresos en el complejo deportivo en Vieques y ya está en construcción el edificio principal. La instalación incluirá una cancha de baloncesto, un espacio dedicado al judo y las artes marciales, y un área inicialmente prevista para albergar una piscina. Sin embargo, debido a los altos costos de mantenimiento, en lugar de la piscina se construirá una cancha de arena para voleibol de playa.

En la parte trasera del complejo, hay dos terrenos, uno de los cuales se renovará para recibir equipos de béisbol AA. El objetivo es atraer a más equipos visitantes a Vieques, ya que las actuales instalaciones de Esperanza se utilizan a menudo, pero necesitan una ampliación. Los planes incluyen canchas de béisbol, softbol, ligas menores e incluso tenis. Estos espacios están destinados principalmente para uso diurno y no estarán disponibles para eventos nocturnos, ya que la iluminación artificial podría afectar negativamente a la cercana bahía bioluminiscente.

El financiamiento para el complejo se ha asegurado a través de varios canales, incluido el Departamento de Vivienda, y aunque se ha solicitado financiamiento adicional para hacer una pista olímpica, el enfoque actual es terminar el edificio principal y las áreas deportivas. El proyecto se está llevando a cabo en fases, con el trabajo de techado ya finalizado y el trabajo de electricidad, plomería y demolición en progreso.



ÁREA DE ACAMPAR EN SUN BAY

MEJORAS COMPLETADAS Y PLANIFICADAS”

Recientemente, el municipio de Vieques asumió la administración del área de acampar en Sun Bay. Aunque el Departamento de Recursos Naturales y el Servicio de Parques Nacionales siguen siendo los propietarios, el municipio ahora gestiona las operaciones diarias. Ya se han hecho algunas mejoras iniciales, como el pavimento de carreteras y el mantenimiento esencial de edificios. FEMA financiará una rehabilitación más amplia de la zona, incluidos los terrenos de acampada, debido a los daños causados por el huracán María. Este proyecto está actualmente en la etapa de diseño y subasta, y se espera que las renovaciones principales comiencen a principios de 2025.

Mientras tanto, el municipio ha realizado las reparaciones necesarias en las duchas y baños, que ya están en funcionamiento. Aunque se permite acampar, actualmente no se están cobrando tarifas, ya que el área aún no está cercada o asegurada. Una vez estén terminadas las renovaciones, se cobrará una tarifa de acuerdo con las pautas del Parque Nacional, que probablemente será alrededor de \$10 por noche y por carpa, aunque esto está todavía sujeto a cambios.



Los campistas deben registrarse en persona con Lilian Sánchez en la oficina de administración de Sun Bay entre las 8:00 AM y la 1:00 PM. Se aplicarán reglas básicas, como, por ejemplo, restricciones de ruido. El contrato de acampada que se firma al registrarse contiene el detalle de todas las reglas que se deben cumplir.



RECONSTRUCCIÓN DE VIEQUES:

NUEVOS AVANCES

Además del complejo deportivo y el área de acampar, se están llevando a cabo en Vieques otros proyectos clave. Uno de los más importantes es la reconstrucción prevista del Coliseo Nelson Diepa, proyecto que en la actualidad está aceptando propuestas.

Otros esfuerzos incluyen un proyecto de señalización, que ya ha dado lugar a nuevas señales en Sun Bay y en el Malecón de Esperanza. También hay planes en marcha para añadir más señalización en las carreteras de la isla.

Asimismo, se están llevando a cabo proyectos de reparación y pavimentación de carreteras, con nuevos fondos asignados para áreas que aún no se han abordado, como Los Chivos, Monte Santo y Villa Borinquen.

Otra interesante iniciativa es la restauración del área del faro, donde se renovará un antiguo edificio que en su día sirvió como centro comunitario y que ahora estará destinado a albergar reuniones y eventos para la comunidad local. En breve comenzará el proceso de subasta para la renovación.

Por último, y con el fin de mejorar la transportación a la isla, el municipio está trabajando para financiar una nueva ruta para los ferris que permita viajes más frecuentes y rápidos.

Gypsy Córdoba Consulting, Inc.



Gypsy Córdoba
Consultant & Manager

- Business & Local Government Consultant
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- info@gypsyncordova.com
- 1-787-439-5017



Whenever that nagging guilt wraps around your heart—when late nights at work make you feel like you’re letting your dog down, or when thoughts of surrendering your beloved

pet creep in because you fear you can’t provide the life they truly deserve—take a deep breath and pause for a moment. Picture this: Shelter animals. Dedicated animal shelter staff bustling about, preparing dinner for the dogs in their care. In the midst of it all, one hopeful pup stretches out his paw, eagerly waiting for his meal—a simple yet profound gesture that speaks volumes about longing and hope. For shelter dogs, moments like dinner time, play time, or interactions with the staff bring them joy as they wait in their temporary sanctuary for a forever home. They face the stark possibility of life without the warmth of a loving family, the laughter of a friend or the simple pleasure of curling up on a soft couch. Think about the dedicated team amazing work being done at the Vieques Humane Society, fueled by the remarkable vision and love of Penny Miller. Her extraordinary ideas and passion for animal welfare, supported by the incredible community in Vieques, create a sanctuary of love, safety and hope for these animals.

Now, reflect on your own furry friend. They would choose the familiar comfort of your sofa, the sound of your laughter, and the warmth of your companionship over any notion of a perfect life. They treasure every moment spent with you, no matter how ordinary. So, remind yourself: you are doing just fine. Your love is the greatest gift you can give, and it makes all the difference in the world. Embrace that truth, and let it be your guiding light through the challenging times.

Mike Giulio Bianco (Ericksonian Hypnotherapist)
giulio@hypnosis-usa.com



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LINDA QUINN



LINDA QUINN



10 QUESTIONS

ASKED AND ANSWERED

Welcome to Vieques Insider’s Q&A, where we tackle some of the tougher questions about an island paradise that has a complex side. We’ve gathered some of the most frequently asked questions about Vieques and aimed to answer them as accurately as possible. Before your visit—and while you’re here—we encourage you to dive deeper into the island’s history, ecology, and culture. Vieques is a place of stunning natural beauty, but, just like anywhere, it also has challenges. We hope these answers offer valuable insights into the island’s unique issues and help make your trip more meaningful.

► Why are some beaches and areas of Vieques off limits to the public?

The U.S. Navy used parts of Vieques as a bombing range and military training site until 2003. After years of military exercises, certain areas still contain unexploded ordnance. Cleanup efforts continue, but some regions remain off limits to ensure public safety.

► Is Vieques safe for tourists?

Yes, as long as you use common sense and stay aware of your surroundings. Misconceptions about safety in Vieques are common, even among Puerto Ricans, with some concerned about encountering unexploded ordnance. However, areas that contain ordnance are clearly marked and off limits to the public. If you follow the laws and stay on designated trails or roads, you won’t encounter danger. If you do see something that could be a munition, follow the rules of the 3R’s; Recognize, Retreat, Report.

Like other tourist destinations, Vieques occasionally experiences minor theft, but this can generally be avoided by taking simple precautions—securing valuables, being mindful of your surroundings, and

not leaving belongings in plain sight unattended. While at the beach, don’t leave anything in your car, and leave it unlocked. Locked vehicles indicate that there is something valuable inside and could result in a broken window. While the island faces socioeconomic challenges such as poverty, a lack of affordable housing, and drug-related activity, as are typical of small Caribbean islands, visitors are rarely affected beyond isolated cases of petty theft.

► Should I take the ferry or fly?

The best choice depends on the time of year. During holidays, school breaks, the Christmas shopping season, and peak tourism periods, the ferry may not be ideal. Residents have priority boarding, as many rely on the ferry for essential trips related to health, education, and work, or simply to return home to their families. In the past, we have had ferries break down, need maintenance or inspection, or just not have the capacity to carry all of the passengers waiting to board. Non-residents risk being bumped if the ferry is full and may need to wait for the next one or even find overnight accommodations. Thankfully, recent improvements have added more trips

and larger ferries to the schedule. Buy tickets online ahead of time at www.puertoricoferry.com.



Vieques Insider Opinion: *If your budget allows it, fly! Especially if you have limited time on Vieques and want to avoid spending hours at the ferry terminal and an additional hour on the boat.*

► Why are there so many stray dogs?

Addressing the stray dog situation in Vieques requires a combination of community education, increased spaying/neutering efforts, and enhanced animal control services. In some cases, there may be a cultural perception of dogs as outdoor animals rather than household pets,



AJ STETSON



LINDA QUINN

resulting in less emphasis on responsible pet ownership. This can lead to dogs being left to roam (and reproduce!) freely. Enormous strides are being made by community nonprofits like the Vieques Humane Society and Animal Rescue and Our Big Fat Caribbean Rescue. These organizations are the backbone of animal care and should be applauded. Also, some residents in our community dedicate a lot of time feeding, trapping, fostering, and transporting animals, but the need often exceeds available resources. You can offer support! Visit these nonprofits web pages to see how you can help. Donations are most needed, but you can also be a flight angel and fly animals to their forever homes in the states, foster, or volunteer.

www.viequeshumansociety.org
www.ourbigfatcaribbeanrescue.org

► **Are the horses on Vieques wild?**

This is a common question posed daily by visitors. The answer is not a simple yes or no and will strike up an age-old debate regarding their status. For the most part, the horses are not wild, but many of their owners do not keep them on their own land. When the horse is needed, the owner will go and find it. Generally, horses will return to their grazing land time after time, and families and herds stick together, following the same routes to their spots. Many of the horses are branded, and on a small island like Vieques, everyone knows everyone — and their horses. Allowing the horses to roam freely offers idyllic



scenes of a time when cars were less prevalent on Vieques. On the other hand, seeing a horse injured and without proper medical care or suffering from malnutrition during droughts, evokes sadness and frustration. **Hooves**

On the Ground is an organization run by two women, who provide humane care that the horses need. Of course, the needs greatly exceed their capacity. You can help! Visit their website

www.vqshooves.org.
 If you see a horse that needs attention, call 939.529.8848 or message Hooves on the Ground/Pezunas en el Suelo on Facebook.

► **Where are the best beaches on Vieques?**

Vieques Insider Opinion: That is impossible to answer! Each beach has its own personality and unique beauty, and you could explore a new beach every day for two weeks and still not see them all. However, here are some

Insider Fave Picks to get you started. For swimming and sunbathing we recommend Sunbay, La Chiva, Pata Prieta, and Playa Caracas. For snorkeling, check out La Chiva and Punta Arenas. For kids check out Media Luna which is shallow and calm. Or explore the beach across from Tradewinds on the Malecon to find baby hermit crabs and tidepools of marine life! If you're looking for adventure, don't miss Playa Negra, Playa Novillo, Navio, and Playa Cocal. These are just a few of our favorites, but don't let us limit your imagination and beach hopping!

► **Why are some of the streetlights red?**

Sea turtle hatchlings are instinctively drawn to the brightest light nearby, ideally the moon, to guide them safely to the ocean. Unfortunately, artificial streetlights can disorient them, causing them to head inland, where they face dangerous conditions. To protect these vulnerable creatures the red lights have been implemented as they emit the least energy in the visible light spectrum, minimizing the risk to hatchlings. On Vieques, the red lights serve an additional purpose unique to the island: reducing light pollution that impacts the bioluminescent bay. By using red lighting, the visibility of the bay's natural glow from bioluminescent organisms is preserved. This is why red lights can also be seen on hillsides and in areas far from turtle nesting sites, helping ensure both the safety of marine life and the protection of the island's natural wonders.





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► **Can I bring a rental car on the ferry?**

No. Rental agencies restrict their vehicles from traveling to Vieques or Culebra. Additionally, ferry services prioritize residents and local vehicles, making it difficult to secure return space for non-local cars.

► **Is the water safe to drink?**

Yes. Our drinking water comes from rivers of El Yunque, the Rainforest of Puerto Rico. In compliance with state and federal regulations, the Aqueduct and Sewer Authority analyze more than 90 possible contaminants that may be in drinking water. Vieques drinking water is 100% compliant and verified by the EPA. It is safe to drink, so save your money and the environment. Skip the plastic water bottles, and bring your own thermoflask to take with you to the beach instead. And always hydrate — your body will thank you!

► **What if I need health services on Vieques?**

Travelers should have a health plan in place before visiting Vieques. With limited healthcare options and only one pharmacy on the island, it's essential to bring all necessary prescriptions and ensure you have enough for the duration of your stay.

For the ambulance, call 911 or 787-741-8261. Over 200 streets on Vieques are unnamed, so it is a good idea to know the name, barrio, and address of your Airbnb or guesthouse in case of emergencies. The CDT (Center for Diagnosis and Treatment) offers a 24-hour emergency room with basic services and experienced doctors. **For emergencies, you can go to the CDT at 787-765-2929** or locate it via Google Maps by searching **Centro de Salud de Vieques**.

For health issues that require treatment unavailable on the island, patients are typically flown to a hospital on the main

island of Puerto Rico. It's also recommended to keep a written list of your medications in your wallet. For minor ailments or concerns, you can visit **HealthPro Med** on Calle Regimiento 65 de Infantería in Isabel II or call them at **787-468-2000**.

We hope this information both answers some of your questions and gives you more insight about visiting our beautiful island. We're thrilled that you have decided to make Vieques your vacation destination and hope you enjoy all the island has to offer! ■

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a Bit of History

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT VIEQUES?

HERE'S A BRIEF TIMELINE TO WHET THE APPETITE OF THE HISTORY BUFF IN YOU.

✦ **2145 BCE** Archeological findings in Puerto Ferro date back to Pre-Arawak period.

✦ **1100 CE** Taino culture abounds in Esperanza.

✦ **1493** Columbus lands on the south side of Borinquen (now Puerto Rico) and claims it for Spain.



✦ **1508** Ponce de León initiates colonization of Puerto Rico.

✦ **1514** Taíno Chiefs Yaureibo and Cacimar from Bieke fight Spanish forces on the east side of Puerto Rico.

✦ **1683** British settlers from Anguilla invade Vieques. Danish forces from St. Thomas drive invaders away.

✦ **1698** Scottish settlers from Nevis, Anguilla and Tortola invade Vieques. Spanish forces drive invaders away.

✦ **1718** British settlers from Anguilla come to Vieques to establish a colony on two different occasions. Both times Spanish forces drive invaders away.

✦ **1811** The Spanish colonization of Vieques begins.

✦ **1815** Royal Decree of Graces allows other Europeans who swear loyalty to the Spanish Crown to remain in Puerto Rico. French settlers develop Vieques' agrarian economy.

✦ **1816** Simón Bolívar, Latin America's Great Liberator, comes to Vieques.



✦ **1822** The Spanish commence construction of a town, eventually called Punta Mulas (Isabel II today), on the north side of the island.

✦ **1832** Teófilo José Jaime María Le Guillou, a French emigre, is appointed military governor of Vieques.

✦ **1844** The municipality of Vieques is formally established; construction of original Catholic Church gets underway.

✦ **1845** Construction of Fortín Conde de Mirasol (the Fort) begins.

✦ **1863** Britain formally renounces all claims to Vieques.

✦ **1873** Abolition of slavery in Puerto Rico (March 22, 1873); Manuel E. Benitez is elected Vieques' first mayor when municipalities are extended the right to vote.

✦ **1893** All Saints Church is officially consecrated. Vieques and Ponce were the first places in Puerto Rico under Spanish Monarchy allowed to set up non-Catholic churches.

✦ **1896** Punta Mulas lighthouse (north side) is completed.

✦ **1898** Spanish-American War. Treaty of Paris gives United States temporary control of Cuba and ownership of Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippine islands.

✦ **1899** Puerto Ferro lighthouse (south side) is completed.



✦ **1917** Jones Act grants United States Citizenship to all Puerto Ricans.

✦ **1925** On March 19, a powerful earthquake causes major structural damages to the Puerto Ferro lighthouse. The lighthouse is closed.

✦ **1941-49** The United States Navy expropriates nearly two thirds of Vieques for military maneuvers.



✦ **1948** Luis Muñoz Marín becomes 1st democratically elected governor of Puerto Rico.

✦ **1952** Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is established on July 25.

✦ **1961** The film Lord of the Flies is shot in Vieques.

✦ **1965** Osvaldo "Val" González-Duriex provides air transportation to Vieques and registers his enterprise as Vieques Air Link.

✦ **1976** Water from El Yunque (Puerto Rico's rain forest) via underwater pipeline becomes the main water supply for Vieques.

✦ **1977 - 1988** "Vieques Pony Express"— Ventura Camacho Dávila is hired by

the post office to initiate island-wide delivery of mail. For the next 11 years, Ventura Camacho does his job on horseback.



✦ **1978** "Fishermen's War": An international NATO backed training military exercise on Vieques is stopped by fishermen who position themselves in the direct line of fire.

✦ **1989** Hugo, since upgraded to a category 5 hurricane, devastates Vieques.

✦ **1991** Restoration of Fortín Conde de Mirasol is completed.

✦ **1999** David Sanes is killed by a bomb from U.S. Navy military exercises. The tragic death serves as the catalyst for a peace protest that galvanizes all of Puerto Rico. The 'Paz Para Vieques' movement garners international support and becomes instrumental in pressuring the United States Navy to end military exercises on the island.



✦ **2001** Vieques National Wildlife Refuge is established (3,100 acres on the western end of Vieques).

✦ **2003** U.S. Navy leaves Vieques; 14,573 acres of land on the east end are added to the Vieques National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge is operated under the U.S.



Department of Interior and becomes the largest wildlife refuge in the Caribbean.

✦ **2005** U.S. Congress designates parts of Vieques as a Superfund.

✦ **2006** Montessori Education arrives in Vieques; Guinness World Records names Mosquito Bay the brightest Bio-bay in the world; MANTA, the educational outreach program of the Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust (VCHT) wins EPA's highest award two years in a row.

✦ **2007** Comunidad Verde Vieques is established. This is the first re-settlement inside former NAVY land.

✦ **2009** First Bio-luminescent Symposium in Puerto Rico is held in Vieques and hosted by the VCHT.

✦ **2011** White House report issued by the Vieques Task Force recommends military clean-up, a solid waste strategy, health care, renewable energy, protection of the BioBay and "green" tourism.

✦ **2016** VCHT signs an agreement with the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources to co-manage the Mosquito nature reserve.



✦ **2017** Hurricane Maria devastates Puerto Rico and Vieques with Category 5-force winds. Communication to the outside world is severed, and it takes 7 months to restore power. Numerous on- and off-island organizations form to provide help.

✦ **2019** The death of 13-year old Jai Ventura sparks island-wide grief and a peaceful protest (justiceparajai) about the Vieques hospital. Destroyed in Hurricane Maria,



the hospital or CDT (Center for Diagnoses and Treatment) is in the process of being rebuilt.

✦ **2019** The Covid-19 pandemic magnifies the island's humanitarian crisis after the devastation of Hurricane Maria and several earthquakes. Fortunately, response to the virus is rapid and thorough and controls the spread.

✦ **2019-20** Puerto Rico experiences an unprecedented series of shock swarms. Over 9,000 earthquakes and aftershocks damage thousands of homes and buildings and closes schools.

TODAY

Construction of the new hospital facility is well underway and expected completion date is late December 2024.

Junito Corcino has been re-elected as mayor of Vieques.

Jennifer Gonzalez has been elected as Governor of Puerto Rico.

Tropical storm Ernesto causes a power outage due to the fragility of the power grid.

Vieques, like many areas of the world, is experiencing the adverse effects of gentrification, leading to rising property prices and a displacement of long-time residents, threatening the unique cultural fabric of the island.



OPERATION PORTREX In 1950 a simulated attack on Blue Beach (La Chiva) was staged by a joint effort of Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine forces. The "D-Day"-like maneuvers took two months of preparation by land forces charged with protecting the beach and inland areas from the "assault". As a result, the topography of La Chiva was substantially altered. Bulldozers scraped the land, digging deep anti-tank trenches and felling palm trees and bushes. Much of the thorny growth, mixed with barbed wire, was wrapped around the palm trunks as defensive barriers. A camouflaged, deeply-dug shelter for 50 caliber machine guns was also placed on the cayo off Blue Beach to disrupt the beach landing from behind.

Like many territories and cultures, Vieques has struggled to maintain its way of life. The many recorded histories of that struggle are, like the people of Vieques and Puerto Rico, filled with passion and persistence, and no shortage of perspectives. Vieques Insider endeavors to provide as accurate a timeline of that history as is available through our research, while taking into consideration the discrepancies that exist among historians. Our timeline is in no way a comprehensive account, only a brief outline. We encourage our readers seeking a greater knowledge of Vieques to access all accounts of its history. To discover more about Vieques locally, please visit El Fortín Conde Mirasol and the Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust.

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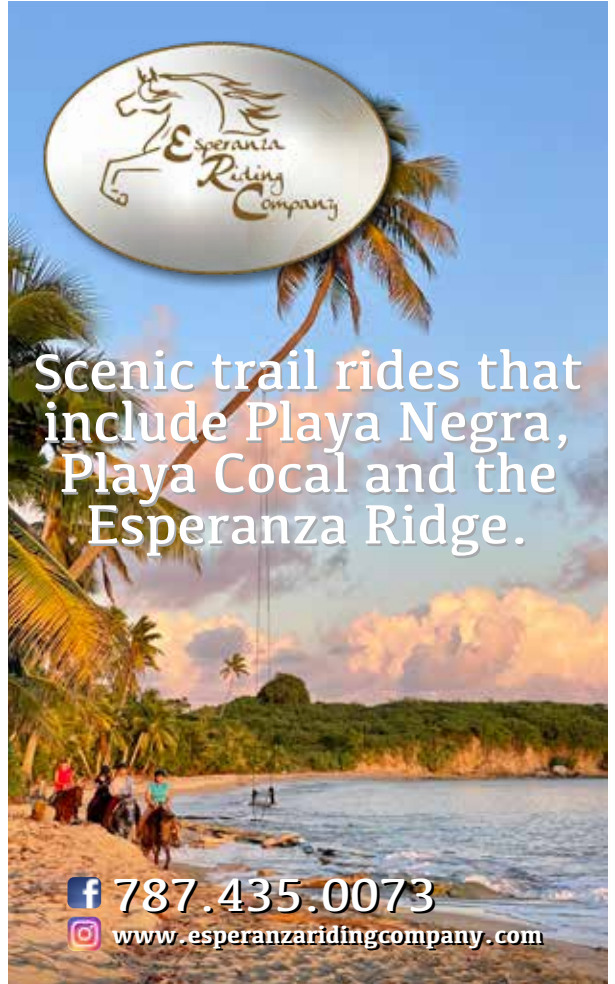
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VIEQUES HUMANE SOCIETY

viequeshumanesociety.org

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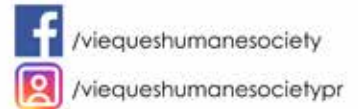
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► **FRESH FISH, LOBSTER AND CONCH** >> Head to Pescaderia Angeliz near the ferry dock in Isabel II Mon-Fri 10:30 - 2pm to purchase fresh fish, lobster or conch when it is in season.

► **LIMBERS** >> Watch for the signs that say "Hay Limbers" at households around the island to purchase this frozen treat. Or stop by the Vieques En Rescate thrift store on the corner of Antonio G. Mellado and Muñoz Rivera in Isabel II where there is usually a freezer full of island flavors!

► **FARMERS MARKETS** >> Placita Reyes on the corner of 201 and 200 has fresh fruit and veggies on Tuesdays and Fridays 8am-5pm. Mercado Agroecológico Sambumbia is held the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month 11-2pm in the Isabel II Plaza. Watch for events at La Colmena Cimarrona, the farm on 997 where you can sometimes find pop up agriculture markets.

► **SEAGLASS** >> Most beaches have some amount of seaglass but La Chata, Playa Cofi, and Playa Voltio are popular sites to find it. Check the Insider beach map on pages 20-21 for locations or visit www.viequesbeach-map.com for more information.

► **CHAMPAGNE AND WINE** >> Diverse selections can be found at the Family Market in Isabel II, Morales grocery store on 201, El Tienda Verde in Esperanza or El Sombrero Viejo in Isabel II.

► **PUERTO RICAN COFFEE** >> Rising Roost, Family Market and Morales are places where you can find Puerto Rican coffee beans, whole or ground. Vieques Coffee Roasters roasts beans right here on Vieques!

► **VIEQUES ROASTED COFFEE** Beans -artisanal roasted coffee beans roasted right here on Vieques. Buy yours at Kristy's in Esperanza, Family Market or Sombrero Viejo in Isabel II. Or call 413-531-0602.



► **LOCAL RUM** >> Handcrafted right here on Vieques, CRAB ISLAND RUM is not to be missed. Find it in local restaurants or stores. Take a tour,

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► **VEGAN FARE** >> Our talented restaurant chefs and diverse menus usually accommodate all diets, but for a vegan "experience" make reservations at Tradewinds Thursday and Friday to experience guest chefs from Cocina Verde.

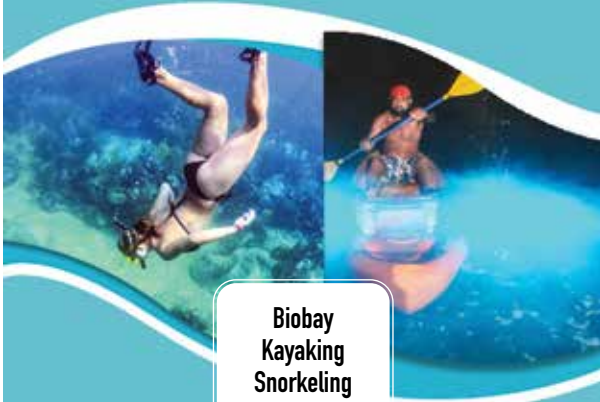
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▶ SCHEDULE OF EVENTS >> Find out what's happening this week at www.viequesinsider.com.

▶ DANCING >> El Blok rooftop-Sundays 4-8. Blue Horizon Ladies Night-Thursdays and special events. Crab Island Distillery has live music Thurs-Sat 12-8. La Nasa in Esperanza is the place to see talented locals dancing salsa, bachata and calypso on the weekends and especially Sunday nights.

▶ BINGO >> Try your luck at Isla Nena Cafe at the airport. Saturdays at 3PM.

▶ LECHÓN >> Don Tito's Lechonera on Calle Patricio. Tito Maldonado is roasts pigs on Friday night to fill orders for Saturdays and holidays. Order by the pound before Thursday to pick up on the following Saturday 787-617-2748. Sabor Unico across from Morales roasts pigs Tues-Sat. Call or stop by to order 787-435-5243.

▶ SNORKEL SPOTS >> Check out the article 3 Snorkel Spots

Accessible by land in the April-Aug 2023 issue of Vieques Insider @ www.viequesinsider.com

▶ ROTISERRI CHICKEN >> Auroras Chicken on RT 201 has roast and fried chicken every day 11AM-4:45PM • Sabor Unico across from Morales on 200 roasts Tues.-Thurs. 8am-5pm and Fri-Sat 8AM-9PM

▶ KARAOKE >> Don't miss your chance at fame. Saturday nights at Mar Azul starting at 8PM island time!

▶ HELADO >> Find this delicious frozen treat at La Heladeria Joliette along with other sweet desserts. In Isabel II across from Casa Nativo. Open Tues. - Sun 11AM - 7PM • Sat-Sun 1-9PM

▶ CRAFTS AND PRINT SHOP >> Find fun crafts, art supplies and festive decorations at JO-Chanel Crafts and Print Shop. Print photos, copies or marketing materials. Open Mon -Fri 9AM-5PM. Calle Regimiento 65 de Infanteria. jochanelshop@gmail.com

▶ EDUCATIONAL BOOKS >> Find books on the history, flora, fauna and marine life of Vieques at the Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust Gift Shop.



▶ DISC GOLF >> Play an 18 (sometimes 9 as it is volunteer run) hole course on Rt. 200 close to the Crab Island Rum Distillery. Find more information at www.Almendrosdiscgolf.com You can buy the disks at Ola Loca in Isabel II.

▶ WORKOUT GYM >> Flex Gym in Isabel II offers daily and weekly passes. Call or text for more information. 404-358-7831.

▶ FISHING EQUIPMENT >> El Pescador Fishing and Marine Supply in Barrio Santa Maria sells everything you need for fishing including rods, yo-yo's, spear fishing equipment, lures and tackle. The owner Denise lives on-site but call to make sure it is open. 787-231-2624 Denise is also a wealth of information about fishing on Vieques!

▶ SELFIE WINGS! >> Painted by artist Carlos Gil, these wings featuring the Vieques flag can be found on the El Yate bar/restaurant building near the ferry.





Open for
Dinner
@ 5:30

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Isabel Segunda

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Check Facebook for days open [f/TavernaVieques](https://www.facebook.com/TavernaVieques)



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► **FISHING BAIT** >> Find frozen calamari in the fish/freezer section at Morales Grocery store.

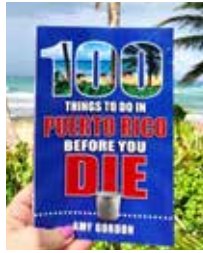
► **FISHING SPOTS** >> Kiani Lagoon, Rompeolas Pier, Punta Arenas or in front of Mar Azul are just a few of the favorite places to throw in a line!

► **ATMS** >> Find them on the North side at Banco Popular and the gas stations. On the South side there are machines at EL Blok, Duffy's, Colmado Lydia and in Guayacan Plaza next to Vieques Gifts.

► **CHARGERS/ELECTRONICS**>> Forget something that you can't live without? Find chargers, phones and other electronics at Quiñones Electronics next to Banco Popular in Isabel II.

► **PIZZA DELIVERY** >> Tu Punto Dulce y Sabroso, 787-689-2854, Mama Mia 939-489-9990, Taverna (pick up) 787-438-1100

► **GUIDE FOR PUERTO RICO** >> The must-have guidebook for first-time visitors and long-time locals. Find it on Amazon, shops on Vieques and Puerto Rico or order a signed copy at www.100thingspuertorico.com



WHERE TO

RECYCLE ON VIEQUES

Currently dry cardboard, washed plastic and aluminum cans are recycled (aluminum and plastic does not need to be separated).

DROP OFF LOCATIONS

► **At the end of Calle Regimiento 65 de Infanteria at Public Works Office.** Drive down Calle Muñoz Rivera (main street of Isabel II) toward the ocean. Take the last possible left onto Calle Plinio Peterson. At the next intersection make a right onto dead end and the recycling is at the Public Works building on the left.

► **Bunker 403** on the West Side of Vieques on 994 serves as the recycling center. Past the airport, Parque La Ceiba and Crab Island Rum Distillery, the left turn to the recycling center is aprox 1 mi. past distillery. Look for painted, pallet signs. The recycling center is the third bunker on the right. Leave your bagged recycables on the loading dock or in bins located at the entrance. Make a day of it by visiting the Ceiba tree, Rompeolas pier, Crab Island Rum Distillery and then visit the bunkers stopping at Bunker 403 to recycle!

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Lunes-Viernes
7am-12pm, 1pm-3pm
Inside FWS Refuge

>
The Good
Stuff

► VIEQUES AUDIO TOURS

>> **SAN FELIPE DEL MORRO**
Before your journey to Vieques, don't miss the chance to explore the historic San Felipe del Morro (known as "El Morro") in Old San Juan with a self-guided audio tour. Delve into the history of the 16th-century fortress, built with 6 levels to enable massive artillery fire over enemy ships. Immerse yourself in history, guiding you through El Morro's iconic stone walls, vivid accounts of epic battles, the soldiers' daily struggles, and the gripping tale of a murderous priest sentenced to life within



El Morro's stone walls. This experience offers a deeper connection to Puerto Rico's past, adding to the vibrant cultural journey awaiting you on Vieques.

>> **VIEQUES HISTORY**
A look back at Vieques' history of military presence, sugarcane industry, archeological findings, black sand beach, and the beautiful light house.





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DINNER
 THURS. - MON.
 5PM-10PM
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Para determinar la elegibilidad y aplicar,
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An aerial photograph of a modern, white, curved building with a rooftop terrace. The building features decorative perforated metal panels on its facade. The rooftop terrace is furnished with lounge chairs, a hot tub, and several tall, white, perforated cylindrical pillars. People are seen relaxing on the terrace. In the background, a tropical coastline is visible at sunset, with palm trees, a beach, and a bay filled with sailboats. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue.

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