



## **Puerto Rico Reflects on 2022 as Strongest Year in Tourism History, this National Plan for Vacation Day**

*U.S. territory saw records in travelers, revenue, and local tourism employment, coupled by innovative destination marketing strategies and a rise in traveler likelihood to visit*

**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – January 31, 2023** – On National Plan for Vacation Day, [Discover Puerto Rico](#), the Island’s official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), shares the 2022 record-breaking, success story of the Island’s travel and tourism sector. On the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic, Puerto Rico reported peaks in incoming travelers, record revenues and more local tourism employees than ever before in its history.

Puerto Rico's unique appeal as a U.S. territory with an unparalleled cultural flair, natural wonders and warm “Boricua” spirit continues to allure travelers, contributing to the Island’s tourism successes in 2022, which include:

- More than 5.1 million passengers arrived at the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport, a 6.5% increase from 2021. (Aerostar Airport Holdings, LLC)
- Approximately \$8.9 billion in revenue was generated by travel and tourism, a 39% increase over the previous high in 2019. (Tourism Economics)
- The Island now employs more than 91,500 individuals in travel and tourism related jobs, also the highest ever. Employment in the leisure and hospitality sector in Puerto Rico has increased by 12.8% compared to pre-pandemic levels, while employment numbers in the U.S. remain 4% below when considering the same period. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- Booked group room nights in 2022 doubled those from 2021, and the number of events currently booked for 2023 are 81% higher versus the same time last year, speaking to the efforts that inspire planners to “Make Your Meeting Boricua.” Even more encouraging, the number of prospective room nights for 2023 and beyond topped 1 million nights for a 35% increase over 2021. (Simpleview)
- A record-breaking fourth quarter, despite Hurricane Fiona’s passing through Puerto Rico in September 2022, the industry saw lodging demand for the last three months of the year 7% higher than the previous highs in 2021 and 31% higher than pre-pandemic levels. Post-hurricane perception studies showed that 76% of respondents indicated that the storm had no impact on their travel plans. (STR & AirDNA)
- Likelihood to visit Puerto Rico in the next 12 months has grown to 22%, as of late 2022. (SMARInsights)

This growth has been propelled by the creative global marketing efforts of Discover Puerto Rico to spotlight the destination, its unique attributes and ease of travel. Since the DMO was founded in 2018, and despite various natural weather events and the COVID-19 crisis, the Island’s DMO has generated programming that drove travel and tourism metrics to unprecedented levels despite challenges including economic headwinds.



“Amidst one of the most extreme challenges the global tourism industry has ever faced, Puerto Rico’s travel sector went from surviving to thriving, breaking the previous record set in 2021 yet again in 2022” said Brad Dean, CEO of Discover Puerto Rico. “I’m very proud of the work our team has achieved, often under trying circumstances beyond our control, applying data-centric and strategic practices in collaboration with stakeholders throughout the Island and industry.”

Since its inception, Discover Puerto Rico has created and implemented effective multi-channel marketing tactics and campaigns designed for longevity of the destination brand and to advance its mission, which is to bring prosperity to Puerto Rico by positioning the Island as a premier destination for leisure, business and event travel.

“As a best-in-class Destination Marketing Organization, we strive for innovation with each new campaign and tactic,” said Leah Chandler, CMO of Discover Puerto Rico. “We’re beyond solidifying our brand position which we focused on during our inception, and now, we’re going back to the Island’s roots with a values-based marketing approach that dives deep into what mean it to be ‘Boricua.’”

Among the most successful Discover Puerto Rico-led marketing tactics and campaigns in 2022:

- **“Live Boricua”** - Launched in May 2022, this innovative brand campaign is the manifestation of Discover Puerto Rico’s focus on elevating local culture while underscoring values-based marketing. Live Boricua emphasizes its diverse people and culture, with a distinction no other destination can claim: the word “Boricua,” or a person born in Puerto Rico or of Puerto Rican descent. The campaign’s insights, creative and assets – including the “stars” of its ads and videos that showcase the Puerto Rican way of life – center on or were developed by Boricuas. The campaign encourages travelers to embrace the spirit, passion and cultural uniqueness of the Island’s people.

Live Boricua has been successful in all aspects of its marketing workstreams, generating more than 515 million in media impressions from earned media tactics. From a traditional media standpoint, Live Boricua reached nearly 300 million impressions, increasing familiarity and consideration of visiting the Island. Digital media efforts complimented the traditional, with nearly 1.5 million pageviews driven by paid media, with over 483,000 of those visitors engaging with multiple pages on the site. Likewise, 75.3 million consumers watched the Live Boricua digital video ads 100%, which equates to a completed view rate of 73.46% (Google Campaign Manager or GCM). When surveyed by the DMO, more than half – 58% – of consumers find that Puerto Rico is more appealing to them when they see Boricua in a travel ad and 71% of consumers would research Puerto Rico after seeing an ad with Boricua. (SMARInsights)

- **“Sunshine to Spare”** - Discover Puerto Rico partnered with the Pantone Color Institute to create a first-of-its-kind color inspired by the hue of Puerto Rican sunlight, based on findings by Puerto Rican physicist, Hector J. Jimenez. The new color – Puerto Rico Sunshine – has taken on a life of its own, with collaborations alongside notable entities like ECOS Paint and designer Christian Cowan. It has also sparked an unprecedented pride in the local Boricua community, with a multitude of small businesses creating unique products – from jewelry to popsicles – inspired by the color sold, now through the [Sunshine Shop](#) on the Discover Puerto Rico website.



Travelers can also partake in the new [Sunshine Route](#) – a curated map that showcases how visitors can experience Puerto Rico Sunshine via a road trip to destinations across the Island, exploring both activities and products as part of the program. To date, this multifaceted campaign has garnered 1 billion impressions.

With no passport, currency exchange, or international phone plan required for U.S. citizens, Puerto Rico is the perfect place for those looking for a combination of unparalleled cultural experiences, breathtaking beaches, world-class culinary delights, natural wonders, and thrilling adventures – all under the remarkable Puerto Rico sunshine.

For more details on the performance of Puerto Rico’s travel and tourism industry, visit: [www.discoverpuertorico.com/industry](http://www.discoverpuertorico.com/industry).

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**About Discover Puerto Rico:**

Discover Puerto Rico is a private, not-for-profit Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) whose mission is to make Puerto Rico visible to the world as a premier travel destination. The DMO brings prosperity to the people of Puerto Rico by collaboratively promoting the Island's diversity and uniqueness for leisure and business travel, and events. It is responsible for all global marketing, sales, and promotion of the destination and works collaboratively with key local governmental and non-governmental players throughout Puerto Rico's visitor economy and the community at large, to empower economic growth. To discover all the beauty the Island has to offer, visit [DiscoverPuertoRico.com](http://DiscoverPuertoRico.com).