



MAY - OCT • 2016

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horas 8am - 11am

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horas 11am - 5.30pm

DINNER

horas 6pm - 10pm
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sample menu

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House dry aged beef Carpaccio, mixed greens, pickled red onion, capers, grain mustard Caesar, Parmigiano Reggiano

Pan seared catch of the day, herb whip potato, caramelized onion and spinach puree, grape tomato salad

Dry aged beef cut of the day, twice baked potato croquets, tomato confit, herb butter

Double cut bone in pork chop. 3 days in a brine, 3 hours on the smoker, grilled to perfection, butternut squash puree, pancetta roasted brussel sprouts, maple Dijon glaze.

Butter poached Caribbean lobster, white truffle scented crab risotto, prosciutto bound asparagus, caramelized fennel cream.

Dark Chocolate, pretzel crusted cheesecake with toasted Marshmallow merengue

787-741-1028

Reservations Appreciated

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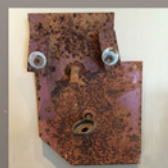
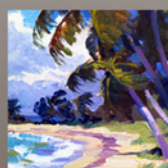


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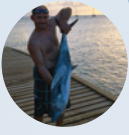


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2 NEW SHOWS AIRING ON HGTV CARIBBEAN LIFE NOW!
Shooting 3 NEW Shows For Next Season Soon! 



ESPERANZA Two large bedrooms with AC, and 1 bath, all concrete, well maintained home on West end of Calle Magnolia. Front porch, off street parking, fully fenced with some outdoor space but very low maintenance. Turnkey with appliances and furnishings...ready to move in or rent! **Titled \$179,900**

MONTE CARMELO "Bill's Peak" is a charming 2 unit home(2/1 up and studio down) with spectacular views, sitting on a well groomed lot with off street parking area. Just right ...for the Snow Bird... full time resident...or use for vacation rentals! PLUS a caretakers, or income, downstairs unit. \$187,000



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Lin Wetherby, Owner Broker 787.380 4990 (Lic 7941)



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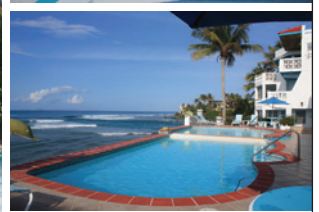
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Island Real Estate

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La Cuerda Verde. Great price for a small solid house on a huge lot with mature fruit trees in Monte Santo. One bedroom, one bath, and a bonus room that could easily become a master suite. All the

plumbing, light fixtures, flooring and most of the wiring have been replaced since 2007. Appliances included. Subdividable, with ocean views from the upper part of the lot. Titled. MOTIVATED SELLER! Price Greatly Reduced!!!! **\$118,000**



3 bedroom 1 bath concrete & cinder block home in Florida w/ a 2 bedroom 1 bath wood apartment w/ separate entrance above. Family oriented neighborhood. Close to one of the best equipped colmados on the island, & a mile from a beach. Ocean

views from second floor. Lots of closets, mature fruit trees & flowers, 4 balconies, marquesina & shared laundry/storage room. Fenced 385 square meter lot. Titled. **\$149,000**



Truly amazing and rare views of both sides of the island from this 3-story 3-unit fixer upper with a 4th story observation deck on a peaceful one acre lot on a hill in Monte Santo. Two bedrooms one bath on the first floor, the same

on the second floor, and a studio apartment with an entertainment area on the third floor. Large carport & 2 balconies. Needs complete renovation, but your efforts will be rewarded. Mature fruit trees, gandules, manioc, sweet potato, flowering trees and more. Could be finished as a large home, or as a guesthouse or vacation rental. Plenty of room for a pool, serious gardening, farming, or to keep horses. Let your imagination run wild! Titled. PRICE REDUCED!!! **\$200,000**



Big views of Culebra from this 808 square meter lot high on a hill in Villa Borinquen. Build up for truly spectacular Atlantic views. This lot is a steal because the local refuse site is located about 3/4 of

a mile down a steep slope at the rear of the property -- but it will not impede your view! Utilities at the street. Untitled. Only **\$27,500**



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LETTERS **TO** THE EDITOR
Kelly Thompson

Kelly,
I'm on the island this week and just wanted to say I'm blown away by the quality of writing, photography and design in your publication. It's very well thought through. I've been coming to Vieques for 15 years and you've definitely captured the spirit of the place. I judged the national Addys last year (*world's largest advertising competition*) so I set a pretty high bar for such things. I keep coming back to the island year after year, and Vieques remains close to my heart.

Best wishes,
Stephen Curry
Creative Director, Lewis Communications

My family is from Vieques and I travel to visit them with frequency. I discovered things in your publication, even though I thought I was pretty knowledgeable about Vieques. Colorful, informative, updated, the list goes on! Please keep on going with this excellent product.

Carlos Rivera-Vazquez

THIS SUMMER

Vieques Insider will be launching a new website with improved features for readers and advertisers. Stay tuned!

To receive notifications please sign up for our newsletter on www.viequesinsider.com



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[VIEQUES] insider

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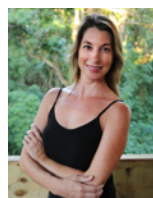
CONTRIBUTORS

Will Colón was born and raised on Vieques and is a retired pilot, music teacher, and municipal administrative official for Art and Culture. He continues to study and promote the history, art and culture of Vieques.



Linda Quinn is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, Certified Stott Pilates® Instructor and Qualified in TRX® Suspension Training from Syracuse, New York. She was a nutrition administrator, media spokesperson, writer, lecturer, radio talk-show host and video creator.

Cristina Salvesen von Essen has loved the water since she was born. She has been a diver for over 15 years and now works as a dive instructor in Vieques. She has a deep passion for conservation of our natural resources around PR and specially in Vieques.



Nicole Varady enjoys discovering the vast differences between NYC life and living and working in Vieques. She is constantly fielding questions from tourists and visitors about Vieques and island living, and is contributing these to the VQS Insider.

Daphne Vosberg is discovering the island with fresh eyes and recording her journey. With a passion for writing, particularly poetry, you might see her about with journal in hand. We are excited to see what she discovers next!



Ben M. Gasirowski, M.D., FACEP Board Certified in Emergency Medicine and Internal Medicine, he lives part time on Vieques.

VIEQUES INSIDER TEAM



Scott D. Appell,
writer • food, gardening, horticulture

.....
 the Green Man, originally from NYC, is a garden writer, horticultural taxonomist and ethnobotanist. He writes, gardens, and teaches horticulture. He happens to be a professional baker as well.



José Carrasquillo
writer • culture, traditions, architecture

.....
 has lived in Vieques for 11 years. Stateside he's a theatre director and educator. Here in paradise José is the co-owner of a guest-house, works as a volunteer for not-for-profit organizations, and logs hundreds of miles every year running all over Vieques.



Tom Kirkbright,
writer • on the water

.....
 a USCG Licensed Captain, and his wife Caroline first set foot on Vieques in 2004. They fell in love with its people, beaches and charm. They bought a house and moved from NJ to enjoy the island life and spend time "On The Water".



Tom O'Grady Jr.
assistant editor

.....
 is an author and freelance writer from Philadelphia with literature and writing degrees from Temple University (B.A.) and Rutgers University (M.A.). Tom has written in numerous commercial genres including business and training, marketing and advertising and newspaper and magazine features. He has focused on writing fiction for the last five years and has published four novels, all available on Amazon.com and select stores.



Vieques Insider's assistant editor Tom O'Grady Jr. was recently named one of the 50 Great Writers You Should Be Reading by the AuthorsShow.com. He has written four novels all available on Amazon.com or in paperback at Vieques Gifts on the Malecón in Esperanza.

***A Gift is Waiting
 Degree of Difficulty
 Dancing in Donaghadee
 Hard Flows the River***

**wish
 YOU
 WERE
 HERE**
 CAMPAIGN

Here's how it works...

Send us a short video of your vacation with a brief message to someone back home. Sailing, jumping from the pier, paddleboarding—make it fun! End the message with

Wish you were here!

Chosen videos will be posted to the Vieques Insider website.

Email videos or dropbox folder to kelly@viequesinsider.com 787-435-3172

**ON THE COVER
 GUEST PHOTOGRAPHER**



Charlie Wan
visiting photographer

Charlie Wan is a director in the worlds of beauty, fashion and performance art in New York City. He is a music composer producing a sunrise concert yearly for Burning Man in Nevada and music for transformative-life workshops. Vieques Insider was lucky to have him shoot two members of Fantasia Caribena while he was visiting Vieques for the Brittany Foundation Film Festival.

Cover Model: Jennialy Loreda

Summer heats up!

YOU'VE ARRIVED

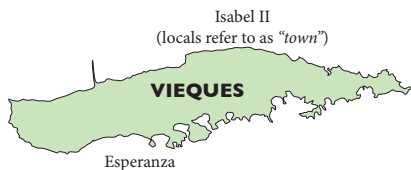
Welcome to summer, where, in Vieques, things slow down and heat up! If you are visiting for the first time – Bienvenidos (welcome)!

And if you've been here before you know that Vieques moves at a different pace than many parts of the world. "Island time" is determined by the movement of life, not the hands of a clock. Moments are presented as gifts... moments to practice breathing, being, reflecting, enjoying! Summer activities are all about beach time, hammock time, grilling, dominos, and sunset cocktails. The winds shift and the water warms. Vieques becomes the land of plenty as mangos, avocados, carambola, and quenepas start dropping from the trees like rain. For locals and islanders, summer is a time to seek out friends and activities - both becoming scarce as the summer rolls into fall. There is still a lot of activity on the island and the restaurants celebrate their chefs with experimental specials and fun events. (check the calendar on page 59). Enjoy!



DID YOU KNOW?

The sun's UV rays bounce off of the sand and 80% get through the clouds. You can still get sunburned sitting under an umbrella or on an overcast day.



4 miles

21 miles

28

Out-n-About Happenings around the island



For the Kid
in all of us

30

36

Fantasia Caribena
And the Woman
Behind the
“Seams”

Snorkel
Vieques

43

46

Corals
Identification and
Preservation



mature calls

A trip to Vieques can awaken the inner child in you – the adventurer, the explorer, the trekker. Forests of coconut palms on the west side of Vieques on the road to Punta Arenas stand majestic and untamed.



The coconut palm is an alien species originally native to the South Pacific. Its buoyant, salt-resistant seeds have made it a global colonizer of shorelines.



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**insider
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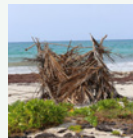
Fill Up or Top Off!

The two gas stations on the island can run out of gas if deliveries are delayed. The gas trucks come on the ferry so it can be a long wait if you run out. So if the lines at the station are not long, stop in. When it is busy the lines form in one direction only and sometimes go around the block. If you see an empty spot at the pump, before pulling in, check to see if there is a line coming from the opposite direction. Go with cash, they don't take debit or credit cards.



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. Flats happen and usually not in the most convenient places. Just connect, inflate and go! It will only seal temporarily so call your rental company for directions on where to go to get it fixed.



Leave No Trace

Remember to leave the beach just as you found it. If you or your children dig holes or make sand castles, level the sand before you go. Don't make huts from the palms for shade. Many beaches are turtle nesting beaches and baby sea turtles can get stuck, diverted by sand mounds or obstructions on their way to the ocean.



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.

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 or give them a tap and try again!

ON THE STREET

The Perfect Summer Treat

Listen for the sounds of Helado Natural.



José Segura travels the neighborhoods in a golf cart loaded with flavor.



COOL DOWN

EDITOR'S PICK:
 Parcha (Passionfruit), Fresa (Strawberry), and Mango. Impossible to just pick one!

If you hear that familiar sound that defines a hot summer day - the jingle of the ice cream man getting closer - drop what you are doing and run to the street. If you're lucky enough to be here on Vieques prepare yourself for a few pleasant and healthy surprises. You won't find the frozen cream dipped in chocolate with sprinkles on top sold from the side of a moving truck. But you will find José Segura's all natural, local fruit-flavored icy goodness called helado. Helado is similar to Italian water-based gelato, although the Spanish word can also translate to ice cream.

Calling his company Helado Natural, Segura loads five or six delicious flavors in the back of his golf cart and makes his way from neighborhood to neighborhood. All natural, free of

preservatives and dairy and mostly fat-free, this is the perfect treat for a hot day, and the taste is out of this world. Most flavors, with the exception of fresa (strawberry), are made with island fruit delivered for processing to the factory of Helado del Caribe on the big island. From there, Segura brings it to Vieques.

José carries flavors such as Coco (coconut), Parcha (passionfruit), Piña (pine-apple), Uva (grape), Guayaba (guava), Tamarind, Lemon, Vanilla, and Chocolate. The seasonal summer flavors are Acerola (Caribbean cherry) and Mango.

During the week you can find José and his Helado Natural in Isabel II in the mornings and travelling around Esperanza in the afternoons, then back to the ferry dock in early evening.



DANCE

ROOFTOP SUMMER SERIES

Watch for once a month concerts to be announced. To get your music fix join DJ Danny Danny on Sunday afternoons for his sunset rooftop T dance!

<<< Mijo de la Palma playing at the first of the summer concert series on the rooftop of El Blok.



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www.viequesairlink.com

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 7 minute flight
 Aprox 1hr cab ride from San Juan to Ceiba \$100 trip (not per person)
 plus airfare starting at \$34 one way / 7 minute flight **Note: Publico Vans are located right outside baggage claim at SJU and can seat up to 10-12 people.**
www.airflamenco.net
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🚗🚢 San Juan International (SJU) to Fajardo Ferry to Vieques 1 hour cab ride + 1.5 hour ferry ride
 1 hour cab ride to Fajardo ferry port \$100 (approx) • Ferry ticket \$2
Vans can seat up to 10 people. Cost is per trip, not per person. [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]

GOOD TO KNOW

Publico = Collective Transportation
 Buen Provecho = Enjoy your meal!
 Malecón = Esplanade or boardwalk (oceanfront Esperanza)
 No-see-ums = sandflies that come out at sunset-and they bite!



SOME AIRLINES CHARGE \$1 PER POUND FOR LUGGAGE OVER 25 POUNDS

insider tips

FERRY SCHEDULE

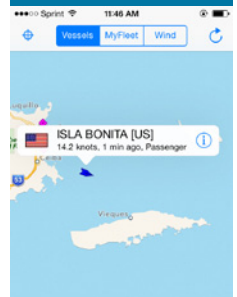
Fajardo to Vieques
 4:00 am (only Mon-Fri)
 9:00 am
 1:00 pm
 4:45 pm
 8:15 pm

Vieques to Fajardo
 6:00 am
 6:30 am (only Fri, Sat & Sun)
 11:00 am
 3:00 pm
 6:30 pm

Schedule subject to change.
 Non-residents can be bumped if ferry is full.

MARINE TRAFFIC APP

displays near real-time positions of ships and ferries worldwide. Check if the ferry has left Fajardo or Vieques and where it is en route!



SAFETY TIPS

Many visitors think that Vieques is a sleepy, laid back island where you can lay in your hammock on the beach without a care in the world. For the most part, this is true. But petty theft is everywhere and your vacation can end badly without some precaution and common sense. Follow some safety tips and always be aware of your surroundings and belongings.

ALWAYS lock the doors where you are staying. Period. First floor, second floor, every door.

DON'T take valuables to the beach.

DON'T lock your car at the beach. Leave it open with nothing in it.

DON'T leave a cell phone or iPad charging next to an open window. Never leave house keys next to a window.

NEVER leave valuables unattended.

USE COMMON SENSE when walking around at night. Never walk on the beaches alone after dark.



GO YOUR WAY

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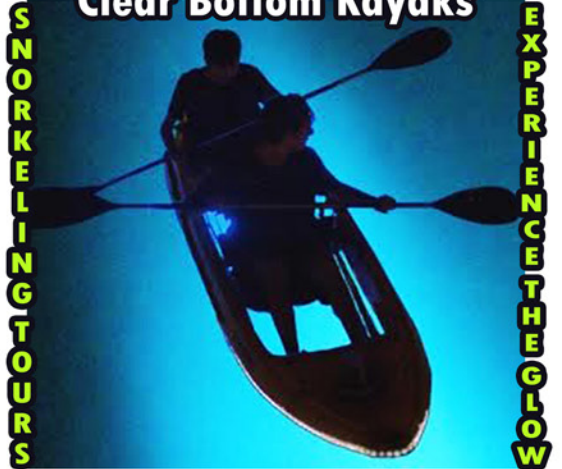
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Mango Mêlée?

Our beloved mango tree has some not-so-nice relatives.

BY SCOTT D. APPELL



▶ The luscious mango is one of our most celebrated and sought after tropical fruits. It may come as a shock to many but its botanical plant family, the Anacardiaceae, includes some of the most toxic plants we know; poison ivy, poison sumac and poison oak. Because of this botanical kinship, many people are exceedingly sensitive to them, often finding out the hard way. When the fruits are cut from the stem they exude a milky sap that becomes pale-yellow and translucent when dried. The sap, like the sap of the trunk and branches and the skin of the unripe fruit, is a potent skin irritant and capable of blistering the skin of the average person. As with poison ivy, there is typically a delayed reaction. Hypersensitive persons may react with considerable swelling of the eyelids, the face and other parts of the body. They may not be able to handle, peel, or eat mangos or any food containing mango flesh or juice. A good precaution is to use one knife to peel the mango and a clean knife to slice the flesh to avoid contaminating the flesh with any of the resin in the peel. Additionally, when mango trees are in bloom it is not uncommon for people to suffer from itching around the eyes, facial swelling and respiratory difficulty. Interestingly, the pollen grains are not air-borne: they are large and tend to stick to each other. The irritant comes from the vaporized essential oils of the flowers. And to complicate matters even more, mango wood should never be used in fireplaces, bonfires or as cooking fuel as its smoke is highly irritating as well.



MAKE TIME FOR TURMERIC

BY SCOTT D. APPELL

If you are an aficionado of ethnic cuisines then you are already familiar with turmeric. It lends its warm, peppery, slightly bitter taste to Iranian, Indian, Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian cooking. This tropical spice is a cousin of the familiar ginger (and similar in appearance, though more slender), and its rhizomes (underground stems) supply the brilliantly colored indelible dye used to tint the robes of Buddhist monks.

But what people are becoming more and more aware of are turmeric's astonishingly multitudinous medicinal properties. Basic research shows extracts from turmeric have analgesic, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-inflammatory, anti-protzoal, anti-viral, and anthelmintic (dispelling intestinal worms) properties. Studies are proving these properties offer encouraging results with such important human maladies as kidney and cardiovascular diseases, arthritis, cancer, irritable bowel disease, Alzheimer's disease and even diabetes.

Turmeric capsules are readily available from health food stores.

TUMERIC SHOTS!

BY LINDA QUINN

This may be the hot new spicy elixir on shows like Dr. Oz and the Today Show but VQS Emporium owner Maggie Keasberry says, "I have been drinking Tumeric shots for years, and now I want to share this great health booster with my customers." Her special recipe combines fresh turmeric root with a light grating of ginger root and lemon topped off with fresh-ground black pepper. So check out this tasty tonic and drink to your good health!

SE VENDEN COCOS



COCOS FOR SALE

Around the island you will see vendors selling coconuts at roadside stands or out of trucks parked along the road. The owners will remove the top of a young, green coconut with a machete and give you a straw to drink the coconut water inside. True local performance art with a sweet reward. Coconut water is the opaque liquid that comes straight from the inside of a young (unripened) coconut. Coconut water from green coconuts contains electrolytes, is naturally fat free, has less sugar, less sodium and more potassium than most sports drinks, and is delicious!



SEA GRAPE ADE *to the Rescue*

BY SCOTT D. APPELL

You may not know it but the fruit of our ubiquitous sea grape (*Coccoloba uvifera*) is edible. The grapes hang in long, stiff clusters from the branches of this small tree and are reddish-purple when ripe. They have a refreshing sub-acid flavor and are relished by young and old alike on the island. To make sea grape ade at your rental home or villa, simply harvest the ripe berries and wash thoroughly under the tap, transfer to zip lock plastic bags and freeze. When frozen solid, place an amount in a pitcher and cover with tap water. As the fruit defrosts, it will release all of its delicious juice all by itself - although an agitation or two with a wooden spoon by you is helpful. Sweeten to taste and enjoy. It's that easy. Or make your own "Jello" by adding unsweetened gelatin to the resulting liquid and following package directions.



SEA GRAPE Called uva de playa in Spanish, you'll find this highly salt-resistant and wind tolerant bush-like tree on most any Vieques beach. The long, pendant clusters of reddish-purple "grapes" are delicious, mellow and sweet, and prove to be highly popular with Viequesenses of all ages.



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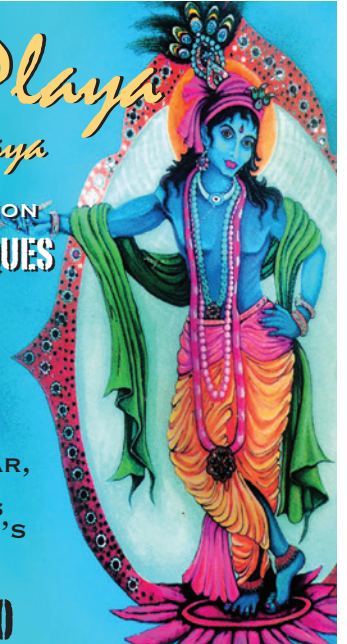
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HYDROTHERAPY MASSAGE

Let it Rain

If you are looking to escape the heat or just pamper yourself on a rainy day, you may be surprised at your options to indulge.

BY NICOLE VARADY

The hydrotherapy “Rain Massage” at **Beatriz Beauty Boutique, Esthetique Salon Spa** in Isabel combines Swedish massage techniques with a pressure shower application providing a mind-body experience unlike standard massage therapies. Water falls from the strategically placed shower heads onto the body and activates all of the body’s circulatory systems, stimulating vital organ function. The massage component of the treatment relaxes muscles and joints. The massage therapist works essential oils into the skin as the water falls at the optimal pressure onto targeted areas of the spine, legs and feet.

Viequense and owner of the Spa, Beatriz Garcia, explains the very basic concept behind this multi-faceted treatment: “Water is health!”

Beatriz traveled the world from Argentina to Paris to educate herself, bringing unique applications and techniques from other cultures back



Masseuse Chailin Ayala massages cares away under the relaxing pressure of four shower heads aligned with the customers spine.

to Vieques. For instance, the Beatriz Beauty Boutique Bamboo Massage hails from her time in Colombia, and cutting edge hair colorings are sourced from top suppliers in Italy. The custom designed spa is a startlingly contemporary accumulation of designed spaces she has seen over the years. Don't let the small store entry space fool you; one door opens to reveal multiple treatment rooms that are outfitted with state of the art laser and body sculpting machines. Side by side luxury pedicure recliners allow clients to enjoy treatments alongside

a friend. Another door reveals a mini hair salon that offers privacy from the retail storefront as well as camaraderie with a small group. Beatriz also had the foresight to install a cistern to support water conservation during the summer dry season.

Beatriz Garcia never forgets her mission of “providing harmony between beauty and wellness” as she creates and directs the protocols and treatments for the spa. Beatriz states emphatically, “This isn't my job, this is my passion.”



HOMEMADE

JUGO NATURALES

Jugos Naturales can be found next to Placita Reyes farmers market at the corner of 200 and 201 on Tues and Fridays. Owners Julita & Peyín gather fruits & nuts throughout the year to prepare their candy confections, candied papayas & fresh juices. Their natural, homemade fruit juice choices include tamarind, passion fruit (parcha), Barbados cherry (acerola), sesame seed (horchata), and wild sea grape (uva de playa) collected from the beaches. Julita also sells her homemade sofrito, the heart and soul behind many culinary preparations in Puerto Rico including rice and beans!





Bunker 412

BY DAPHNE VOSBERG



Vieques seems obvious at face value; beautiful scenery, friendly people, and an easy rustic charm that only an underdeveloped, tiny island can provide. But a closer look offers insight into the past that not only warrants admiration but also utmost respect for the strength of a people who have endured exceptional challenges.

And it can be found in the most remote of places.

The clandestine maze of post-military use bunkers at the west end of the island is the last place one would expect to find a shrine to the relics of a buried past.

Veering slightly off the “main” bunker road, the unsuspecting explorer might be lucky enough to stumble upon bunker 412. Here a collaborative artistic representation by photographer Bonnie Donohue, composer Lauren Weinger, artist Warner Wada, and animator Maggie Hughes awaits discovery. Appropriately named “Reclaiming Vieques: Memory and Imagination”, two super-enlarged black-and-white photographs taken in December of 1941 cover the doors of the bunker. According to a nearby plaque the pictures depict Viequeses leaving their homes “...between

the sugar era and military era in Vieques”, a time when the U.S. Navy began evicting thousands of residents from plantation lands in the western end of the island. A plastic adhesive, much like that used to paint advertisements on city buses, attaches the art to the building. In one photograph, a young woman, having just been served an eviction notice, stands stone-faced with her children in the door of her father’s home, to the contrast of the other, where a Navy assessor assigns value to plots in preparation of expropriation.

To this day the bunkers stand, but not without reverence. Thanks to the efforts of these artists to create this modest monument, residents and visitors alike can benefit from an expanded awareness of the past, as we contribute to the future of the Vieques we share.

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VIEQUES VOICES

creative outlet

BY DAPHNE VOSBERG

Strolling the Malecón between 10pm and midnight on the first and third Thursdays of every month, one is likely to witness performances born of the need for creative expression. In January of this year Vieques Voices arose from the late night-post-restaurant scene of the tourist district in Esperanza. Local MCs and spoken-word poets Daphne and Stephanie led the way, teaming-up to rally audience members to the single microphone in front of El Guayacán Bar & Restaurant, encouraging others to voice their passions. Equal parts local and tourist, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual, Vieques Voices has become a diverse mix of performance art ranging from acoustic singer/song-writer to spoken word to stand-up comedy, all guaranteed to make you laugh, connect, relate, and feel.

ODE TO VIEQUES
BY STEPHANIE LA CREMA LATONA

The enchantment of the sun sparkles ferociously
Humbled by the beauty, poised by the breeze
Exposing body and soul to the tropical heat
Leaving everything behind, especially cold concrete
Nature seduces so eloquently
Salt water the elixir of wounds most definitely
Hues of blues and greens blend precisely
Biolumenesince captures the true essence
Take a deep breath, relieve your stress

Take it all in Island bliss



ERNESTO SUÁREZ



Members of Ciudadanos Pro Cultura are Victor Gonzalez, Will Colon, Carmen Rosario, Corporina Félix, Salvador Fragosa, José Ley Díaz, Edwin Rivera, José King Jr. & Sr., José Bird, and Georgina Emeric.

PROMOTING CULTURAL TOURISM

A group of residents are beautifying the island one cultural site at a time. Ciudadanos Pro Cultura, a non-profit corporation started by Will Colon in 2011, has just completed its latest project, the entrance to the Puerto Ferro archeological site. The group was established in order to increase awareness of the cultural sites on Vieques and increase cultural tourism. Will, who designs and fabricates the artwork for the installations, states, "The work is not for us-it is for our children in the future." Other projects that they have completed are plastering the Leguillou Tombs for preservation, creating an entrance sign at Playa Gallito, restoring a brick wall, and the restoration and maintenance of historical tombs in the old Vieques cemetery.



Did you know?

There is a diverse wine selection at El Sombrero Viejo in Isabel II.

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MOJITO

Muddled fresh mint leaves, lime, sugar, white rum and club soda. Super refreshing. For a twist on the usual ol' mo, head to the Blue Moon Bar at Blue Horizon Botique Resort and order a **Moonjito!**



For the Kid in All of Us



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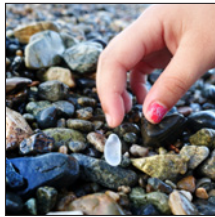
A large school of Tarpon collect daily at the fishermen's pier in Isabel II waiting for a tasty treat. The Pescaderia butcher, Thomas, cleans and filets the daily catch and throws the remains to the tarpon.



The US Fish and Wildlife Service Office at the entrance of Garcia Gate has many displays and programs for children to learn about wildlife and local conservation efforts.



To see an iguana close up, enjoy a beverage or a bite on Mamasongas upstairs deck. It's where the neighborhood iguanas hang out!



Search for seaglass at La Chata beach on the North Shore. See page 63 for directions.



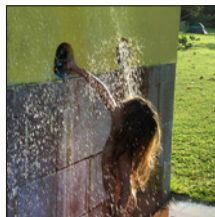
Playa Blaydín, also called "Starfish Beach", is known for an abundance of Caribbean Red Starfish. It is also a snorkeling spot perfect for beginners.



Movie nights under the stars are shown on the lawn of the Moonlight campground on Friday-Sunday. Kid's movies start at 7 with a second movie at 9pm. Text for details. 787-349-8839



The Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust has a marine life exhibit to teach children about the fragility of the coral reef habitat of Vieques.



Sunbay has a campground, bathrooms and the Arenamar Café where you can get delicious healthy snacks for the beach. After the beach, give the youngsters a quick rinse before they fall asleep in the car on the way home.



Parque la Ceiba is a wonderful place for kids to picnic, play and reconnect with nature. Pass the airport on RT. 200 and keep going west. At the bend in the road the Ceiba tree is on the right.



Make memories by renting a bit of fun for the day. Equipment rentals for children include banana boats, zayaks, and paddleboards. JAK Water Sports will deliver right to where you are at the beach! Many places rent snorkel equipment suitable for children. All are supplied with safety floatation devices.



Miss Fuzzi is a true story about a dog who found a loving home at SeaGate Guesthouse. Buy the book in stores on the island (see ad on page 21) and then visit SeaGate to have your book "Pawtographed" by Miss Fuzzi herself!



DID YOU KNOW?

Dogs are allowed on all beaches except Sunbay, Media Luna, and Navio.

HOWEVER, if your dog is not on a leash you run the risk of a fine.

There are many reasons for the leash law, please respect them.

1

There are many stray dogs on the island and the beaches. Your dog running on the beach could surprise them in their territory and cause them to attack your dog.

2

Some adults and children are afraid of dogs and want to relax on the beach.

3

Vieques is a prime nesting site for Leatherback turtles which are at critical risk of extinction. Dogs will naturally dig if they find a nest, putting the eggs or hatchlings at risk.

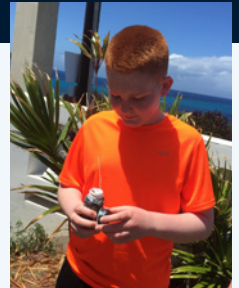
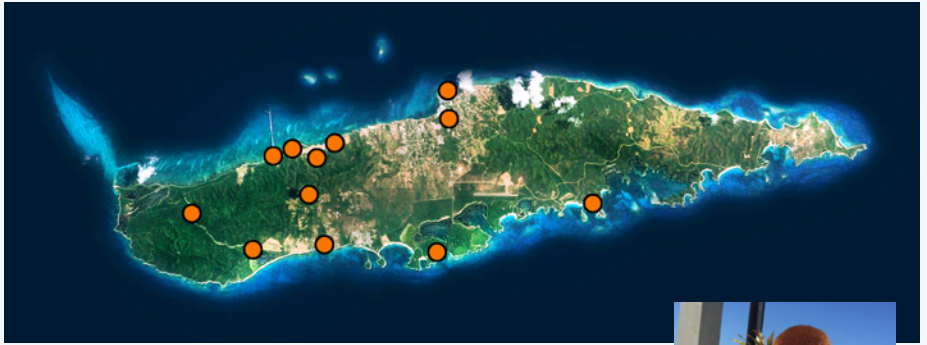
4

Dogs are domestic animals but will naturally interfere with wildlife.



KELLY THOMPSON

GEOCACHING



When my brother came to Vieques visiting from Virginia, and mentioned that there were geocaches on Vieques and that he would like to find one, I thought what I always do when I hear tech words - that this was going to be some nerdy, techno, boring, pseudo Easter egg hunt that would take us away from the beach for a day. But I was wrong. Geocaching, according to their website, is a real-world, outdoor treasure-hunt game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location.

Hunting for these little treasures with my nephew in the oddest of places on the island gave me a thrill that I didn't expect. The thought that there are 2 million geocaches all over the world, and that the game now includes Vieques with 12 geocaches hidden all over the island, is exciting. And it made me wonder? Who were the people hiding these micro-treasures, writing about the location, and coming up with exciting clues to be decrypted and followed?

"A call to the past" was one of the clues and after following the gps coordinates I found myself on a street I traveled in the past almost daily, but had never noticed the old phone booth that housed the micro-cache. I was "seeing" the island differently hunting for these little micro-treasures.

In some ways geocaching is a tour guide sending the treasure seeker to interesting places with a story to go along with the journey. The fun is definitely in the hunt, following the GPS coordinates, figuring out the clues and reading the pages of history about the location of the hiding spot. Fun for the whole family!



KATIE ANDERSON

DID YOU KNOW?

- At the bottom of the steps to the beach directly across from Belly Buttons you will find baby hermit crabs on the rocks and roots of the palm trees.
- Stroll to the tidepools to look for marine life but be careful of the sea urchins!





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incubadora.bieke@cprd.v.org,

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www.juntosvieques.org

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tomkirkbright@gmail.com

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ticatovevieques@yahoo.com,

Vieques Concert Society,

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www.viequesconcertsociety.org,

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Jellyfish enjoy the warm, shallow waters around Vieques and rarely cause harm. Unless of course you come into contact with one. Should that happen, the number one priority is to get to shore ASAP. Most stings are minimal but the danger is in having an allergic reaction to the venom. Anyone who is allergic to bees or wasps may also have a dangerous allergic reaction to a jellyfish sting. Watch for any breathing problems, nausea, or dizziness, and seek medical care immediately.

If stung by a jellyfish you want to deactivate the nematocysts (the thousands of tiny stinging parts on the tentacles), remove them, and provide pain relief. Putting together a simple kit of easily obtained items, stowed in your car, can be very helpful. A bottle of vinegar, a can of shaving cream, a plastic knife and a few paper towels are all you need.

Pour the vinegar over the tentacles attached to your skin which inactivates the nematocysts from further stinging. Apply the shaving cream on the tentacles and gently scrape off with the plastic knife. This works the same way shaving cream makes whiskers easier to remove when shaving. And dispose of the shaving cream and tentacles slurry in the paper towels, making sure not to come in contact with any

of the mess. Pain relief with any of the over the counter pain medications will help with the residual pain that can last hours or days.

By the way, don't pour fresh water over the affected area. This will cause more pain.

The Portuguese Man O' War is often confused with a regular jellyfish but its venom is different and so the stings are treated differently. Again, the majority of time their stings cause local pain and tingling but can progress to more severe systemic problems including nausea, headache, chills and, possibly death. Removal of the tentacles is just as important as with a jellyfish sting, but don't use vinegar which causes an increase in toxin release and an increase in pain. Applying heat to the affected area can quickly alleviate the pain - warmed seawater (not fresh water) or any other warmed object will do. Careful with the kids who may come across a jellyfish or Man O' War washed up on shore. They can be blue, purple or pink and may look like a beach toy with bad consequences.

But again, if you have any other symptoms, aside from local pain and tingling, go to the local ER for help. And if you haven't had a tetanus shot within the past 5 years, time for that last sting!

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Watch out! for the Coast Sandbur - *Cenchrus incertus* - very prevalent at Caracas and Pata Prieta and painful to step on. Tea made from the leaves has been prescribed for home use in kidney trouble, fever, colds and vomiting.



Left to right:
Geysa (Chinita)
Olmedo and
Jennialy Loredo



FANTASIA CARIBENA

A look behind the “seams”
at the troupe that travels to
NYC each year to represent Vieques.
And the woman who gets them
there in style.





Marisa and Geysha (Chinita) Olmedo work on butterfly wings on her porch piled high with materials.



Marisa Santiago stands at a concrete table on her front porch as island breezes move around her. She is hunched over a 3' wire frame - a soon-to-be butterfly wing - with a hot glue gun in one hand and gold piping in the other. It is 1pm, and I know she will probably be in that position until 1am. During that time the task at hand will trade places in her tireless mind with dance steps and a pressing deadline. Forty two costumes need to be completed by May 16th then shipped by container to Pennsylvania. The final destination? The New York City Puerto Rican Day Parade on June 12th, an event seen by over 2 million people and covered by all the major networks.

The porch is piled high with boxes of ribbons, bolts of fabric, silk flowers and leaves, rhinestones, foam filler, metal headdress frames and Puerto Rican flags. And enough feathers to carpet the Plaza in Isabel II. Marisa stops what she is doing to greet me with a warm smile and hug, then picks up the glue gun again.

Her troupe, Fantasia Caribeña, will wear the costumes, all custom designed for each member.

This year's theme, Flora and Fauna of Vieques, is Marisa's concept, a vision she has shared with welder José



Ríos who has fabricated the metal frames; turtle, bumblebee, butterfly, parrot, iguana, and Ceiba tree, hibiscis flower and palm tree. José also welds other costume pieces and the elaborate headdress frames. But there is more to it than that. Many of the costumes are like personal floats as they are rolled down the street by the wearer. Each design has to be carefully thought out and constructed to fit inside the Crowley container and be easily disassembled and reassembled at the parade.

Marisa tells me to peek around the corner of her porch where all of the metal skeleton frames are stacked, waiting their turn to be covered in fabric and embellishments that will bring her vision to life. She grew up in St. Croix where carnival is celebrated by all. Her interest in the costumes and visualizing designs came easy to her, an interest that led her to found Fantasia Caribeña. The group was started when Marisa's niece asked if she would create costumes for her and her friends, just days before Vieques' 2008 Fiestas del Pueblo parade. Marisa quickly put together twelve costumes and a dance

routine for the neighborhood girls, and Fantasia Caribeña was born. The organization has since grown from twelve

Welder José Ríos uses a 4' by 8' board to make a pattern for the butterfly wings. The individual metal pieces cannot be larger than the board or they won't fit into the shipping crate. He then pounds nails into the drawing and bends the metal frame around the nails before welding it together.



Each piece of the costume has numerous steps to create it. José Ríos has developed special tools over the years to easily bend the wire circles to fit an arm band, leg cuff, or headband for a headdress.





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members in 2008 to sixty members today, and is now a registered non-profit corporation. With its youngest member just 3 years old and its eldest over 70 this is a true community group, all working together and proud to keep the tradition alive.

The NYC Puerto Rican Day Parade has grown to become the largest demonstration of ethnic pride in the nation and honors the inhabitants of Puerto Rico as well as the nearly 4 million Puerto Ricans residing in the States. I asked Marisa what she is most proud of in the process and why she does what she does. “Each year we dedicate our performance to a higher purpose. We try to send a message. This year it is for the renal patients. We represent our island with pride. We try to put Vieques on the top of the mountain. Our presentation is serious.”

Serious, but with a lot of smiles, laughter and fun. Almost every night of the week the group practices the choreography of the walking dance they will perform in June at Fifth Avenue and 44th Street in NYC, and then again for the Fiestas del Pueblo parade on Vieques in July. Marisa tells me they aren't sure if the Vieques Fiestas del Pueblo will be held this year due to budget cuts. “But we will do something,” she says, “even if we have to have our own parade.”

As with most people's passions, there is never enough time or money. Marisa Santiago's to-do list is staggering; fund raising to support the trip to New York and pay for costume materials, dance practice every night, and the design and manufacture of all of the costumes. But Marisa is undaunted because it is her passion. Chinita, one of her dancers, joins us on the porch and gets to work on

the butterfly wing. “You know,” she tells me, “Marisa threatens every year to not do this the following year.” Marisa responds without taking her eyes from the work in front of her. “Yes, but every year one of the girls starts crying or gives me one of those looks and I just have to do it. We love to represent Vieques. We do it for the island.”

Fantasia Caribeña is a non-profit organization.

Show your support for the group by donating to their gofundme account - F.C. Vieques to NY P.R. Parade 2016 or contact them on their Facebook page to become a sponsor.



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Some of the youngest members of Fantasia Caribeña. They all learn a 15 minute dance routine for the parade.



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PHOTOS BY DONNA CICNEROS

SNORKEL VIEQUES

WITH CAPT. TOM KIRKBRIGHT

So many choices, so little time.

The secret is out. In just a few short years Vieques has grown from a snorkeling hidden treasure to one of the top snorkel destinations in the Caribbean. With its miles of accessible shoreline, numerous open water and inshore reefs, diversity of sea life and assortment of healthy corals Vieques offers nearly unlimited opportunities to explore beauty and harmony in an amazing underwater ecosystem. As a result, expert and novice adventurers from the States, Europe and other Caribbean locales are making Vieques a priority on their must-snorkel agendas. Let the Vieques Insider help find the snorkel experience best suited for you.

Without question, a snorkel charter or guided tour will offer the best opportunity to observe the beautiful underwater seascape of Vieques. The charter captains and tour guides are experienced professionals, familiar with the reefs and the conditions that can influence clarity, current and other factors that will determine where and when snorkeling will be optimal.

OPEN WATER REEFS

Accessible only by boat, the open water reefs of Vieques offer some of the most spectacular snorkeling found anywhere. Diverse reef systems with an ever changing assortment of corals and sea life fill your senses with an incredible display of color and light. Off the South Shore sits Lemon and Blue Tang Reefs. The North Shore hosts Cayo Blanco and Mosquito Reefs. Each of these reefs is unique in its offerings, but what they share is the ability to provide a wonderful habitat to all the life that resides within. To access these one of a kind open water reefs contact a charter captain.

SNORKEL TOURS

Interested in exploring the inshore reefs? Tour operators on Vieques can accommodate your needs. By kayak or swim these inexpensive tours will put you on outstanding inshore reefs best suited for your ability and experience. They're perfect for experts seeking a more remote adventure or families who want to share the adventure with children. The tour guides can customize your adventure.

EXPLORATION SNORKEL

For those who want to venture off on their own there is plenty to enjoy. On both the North and South Shores there are a plethora of beaches offering easy access and a jump in the water to explore their magnificent underwater seascapes. If you've brought your own equipment then it's off to the beach. If not, stop at Blackbeard Sports in Isabella Segundo for rentals or purchase.

NORTH SHORE

ROMPEOLAS

Located two miles west of the airport on Highway 200 this mile long pier-road is suited for both the novice and expert. Park on the side of the road just before the guard house and enter via the steps on the leeward or west side. Snorkel the rocky shoreline out to the ferry terminal. Depths will reach 40 feet at the end of the dock. This is one of the most popular spots for turtle sightings.

PUNTA ARENAS

Continue west on 200 to the entrance of the Wildlife Reserve then follow the road to the beach. Novice snorkelers should enter the water by the gazebo. A south wind will deter visibility. This long reef is loaded with sea life and corals. Manatee have also been seen on Punta Arenas. Best times are between 10 am and 2 pm.

EL GALLITO

The first beach on Rt. 200, just west of the W Hotel, holds two reefs. The first reef is located in a popular surfing area. If you see surfers, move on. The waves will be strong enough to push you into the reef. When calm, these are great reefs to view large groups of Blue Tangs and other schooling fish. The second reef requires some experience. Experts should swim west around the point.

SOUTH SHORE

The best snorkel locations on the south shore are in the Wildlife Reserve. Follow the signs.

CARACAS

Bring the kids. Caracas is a swimming beach so head to the left or right sides to enter the water. Usually calm, this location has rocky areas on the east end and usually very good visibility. Look for rays.

LA CHIVA 10

La Chiva 10 is undoubtedly the standout beach for underwater photography. A novice should keep close to the shoreline. The experts can swim out to deeper water. Rays, Tarpon, and various corals will put your head on a swivel, so keep track of your partner.

TRES PALMITAS

Just after turning towards Caracas the sign for Tres Palmitas is on the right. Follow to a parking lot then take the hiking trail. It ends at a beautiful secluded beach. Enter the water and swim around the point to your left. This is an EXPERT ONLY snorkel that requires an arduous half hour walk and an even more difficult deep water swim. Please do not attempt unless conditions, yours and the weather, are conducive. If your timing is right this could very well be the highlight of your visit.

Sea Life You May Encounter

Turtle, ray, shark, barracuda, octopus, eel, conch, lobster, manatee, sea urchin, starfish, crab and too many species of tropical fish to name.

These are just a few of the snorkel opportunities sure to inspire your imagination until you return to spend more time "On The Water".

Snorkeling Safety Tips



- Never snorkel alone, and stay together. If you don't have a partner, don't go.
- Limit your snorkel to two hours and never explore in the dark.
- Plan your snorkel and snorkel your plan. It's best to swim out against the current and float back over the reef.
- Don't panic. You are not in danger unless you place yourself there. If an unforeseen problem occurs, stay calm, formulate a solution and then execute.
- Don't touch anything. Protect yourself and the reef.
- Rest on your back. It is much easier to float and keep your feet up than by treading water.
- White tipped coral means keep clear. Anything with white tips usually means Fire Coral. Sea Fans are Fire Coral.
- Know your limits. If not positive you can do it, don't try.
- Bring a small bag with water, reef-safe sunscreen, and, if jelly fish are present, vinegar, shaving cream and a plastic knife. See page 33 for treatment.
- Check equipment beforehand. Everything must fit.
- With a north wind snorkel the south shore and vice versa.



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CORALS

BY CRISTINA VON ESSEN



PHOTOS BY CRISTINA VON ESSEN

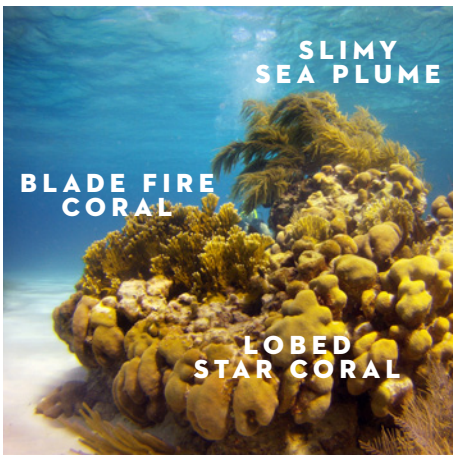
When you think of underwater landscapes you see textures and colors that belong in fairytales, but it is not a figment of your imagination. Those landscapes are the amazing ecosystems that live just below the surface of the ocean, and only 95% have been explored.

- C**lean the surrounding areas
- O**nly take pictures
- R**ef Safe Products
- A**ppropriate equipment
- L**ook don't touch!
- S**pread the word!

► Earth's tropical waters are full of reef builders, generally called corals, that grow in various colors and sizes. Most of us perceive their amazing colors and patterns as rocks or plants but they are actually microscopic organisms living in colonies, providing an amazing visual display through their pigments and clear polyps.

There are two main types of corals; hard and soft. Hard corals build reefs by creating calcium deposits while soft corals are seen dancing with the movement of the waves. Around Puerto Rico you can see both types growing near the shore.

In Vieques we are lucky enough to have some very healthy colonies of hard and soft corals that we can see when we jump in the water, including Elkhorn and Staghorn, two species of coral which were recently added to the Threatened Coral Species list. If you visit Mosquito Pier and peek into the water you will be able to see a large colony of Elkhorn coral just under the surface, while just a short boat ride from Punta Arenas we have amazing Staghorn colonies that span over 200' in length!



As the name suggests, this is one of those corals you want to avoid. The name is misleading as they are actually closer to jellyfish than corals. They have many growth patterns but are easy to spot with their mustard yellow color. Fire coral has a hard surface that can scrape the skin and small hairs that actually cause the sting. They are easy to spot from a distance so are avoidable. If you accidentally brush against one, thoroughly rinse and wash the area with mild soap. Soaking the skin in white vinegar works wonders. Keep an eye on the area, redness and itching/burning is expected. If you are concerned about the affected area, contact your doctor.

Because we have these amazing ecosystems around us it is very important that we take care of our environment and our ecosystems. If we want to keep corals around for future generations to enjoy we must remember these simple rules.

- **Don't step on the corals.** Colonies are very delicate and do not react well to pressure and blunt trauma.
- **Use reef-safe products.** Some products we use for personal care (like sunscreen) are actually filled with chemicals that affect the reef. Using a sun protective rashguard will protect you and the reef.
- **Get proper equipment.** Make sure your equipment fits correctly and you are comfortable before heading out over reefs. If you need some assistance floating use a snorkeling vest or a flotation device.
- **Learn proper snorkeling techniques.** If you haven't been snorkeling before or have limited experience take part in a tour or snorkel class.
- **Pickup after yourself.** We all enjoy taking drinks and snacks on our beach outings. Let's just make sure we leave the beaches cleaner than we found them.
- **Spread the word.** Teach family and friends about corals and how to best appreciate them. The more people know, the less negative impact on the environment.
- **Take only pictures.** Everything underwater gets reused and becomes shelter for something else.



La Noche de San Juan

Are you ready for some LUCK?

BY JOSÉ CARRASQUILLO

IT IS FIVE MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT ON JUNE 23,

and hundreds of people line the shores of Vieques.

It is La Noche de San Juan (St. John's Night), a celebration observed by millions around the world. It is a Christian celebration of pagan origin. Catholics celebrate the birth of St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of Puerto Rico, on

June 24th. It's believed that on the eve of this day the waters are blessed with the power to cure diseases, cleanse the soul, drive evil spirits away and bring good luck. At the stroke of midnight those by the shore turn themselves around and begin walking backwards into the water where they will dunk themselves three times in quick succession. The act of walking into the water backwards and dunking three times is symbolic of the act of baptism preached and practiced by St. John. The pagan tradition celebrates the advent of the summer solstice on June 21. During the solstice many cultures set bonfires at midnight. It's believed fire gives the sun the power needed for it to remain strong as the days begin to get shorter. In Puerto Rico and Vieques the summer solstice celebration and La Noche de San Juan have been combined into a summer family tradition. Generations of families, friends, and visitors flock to the beaches to partake in what has become a cultural ritual.

Be part of the tradition and experience an unforgettable summer night!

WHAT

La Noche de San Juan - St. John's Night

WHEN

Midnight between June 23 and June 24

WHERE

Sunbay; alternatively, the Esperanza beach by the Malecón (between the piers)

HOW

Walk to the water's edge around 11:55pm. Turn yourself around and walk backwards into the water. When the water is around your waist, stop and wait until midnight. At midnight, plunge yourself backwards into the water three times in quick succession.

IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND THE FESTIVITIES:

Leave valuables at home as there is a high probability you will get WET!



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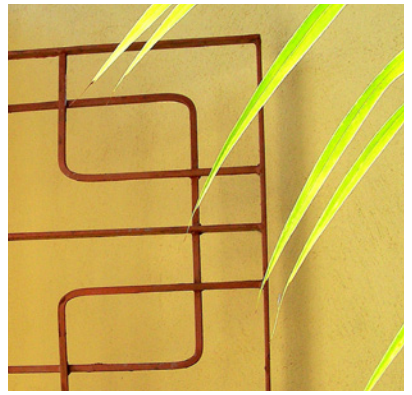
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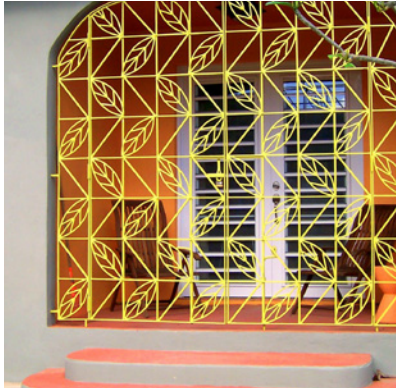
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THE ART OF REJAS
 VIEQUES IN DETAIL
 PHOTO STUDY BY ELAINE GURIAN



easy island

VEGGIE BURGER

BY LINDA QUINN, MS, RDN



Finally! A veggie burger that can be made from ingredients easily found in our Vieques grocery stores! Buen Provecho!

INGREDIENTS:

- 15.5 OUNCE CAN OF CHICK PEAS, DRAINED AND RINSED
- 15.5 OUNCE CAN OF BLACK BEANS, DRAINED AND RINSED
- 7 OUNCE CAN OF CORN, DRAINED
- 1/2 CUP OF GRATED CARROTS
- 1 SMALL ONION, CHOPPED OR 3 TO 4 SCALLIONS
- 1/2 CUP CHOPPED MUSHROOMS
- 1 CUP OF SPINACH OR DARK GREEN, CHOPPED
- 1/2 CUP ALMONDS OR OTHER NUT, FINELY CHOPPED
- 3 TABLESPOONS TAMARI OR SOY SAUCE
- 4 TBSP OLIVE OIL
- PINCH OF SALT, GARLIC POWDER, CUMIN AND PEPPER

PREPARATION:

Heat pan on medium heat and add 1 Tbsp olive oil. Add onions and stir. After 1 minute add mushrooms and spinach. Cook until tender. Add carrots and corn to chick peas in a food processor. Pulse until mashed. If no processor is available, add to a bowl and mash with potato masher or fork. Add Tamari then add almonds last. Texture should be moist like chunky mashed potatoes. Make into round balls and flatten. Makes 6-8 burgers.

Heat pan on medium and add 2 Tbsp of olive oil to pan. Add patties and cook for approximately 3 minutes on each side or until lightly browned. Enjoy on a toasted bun with lettuce, tomato and other toppings as desired. Buen Provecho!



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BOYS AND THEIR TOYS!

The Eye Catching Car Known Around the World!

BY JOSÉ CARRASQUILLO



José Cuenca has an all-consuming hobby: his car is adorned with hundreds of ornaments. Everyone on Vieques knows the vehicle even if they don't know the Vieques native personally. Cuenca, born in Esperanza in 1932, is tremendously proud of his vehicle and the attention it gets on a daily basis. Due to social media, his car has traveled the world in images and pictures. Not surprising, visitors to Vieques look for a chance to see the car, take pictures and meet its artistic owner. Cuenca told the Vieques Insider that his idea for decorating the car started at the beach. "One day I was walking on the beach and saw hundreds of sea shells next to one another. I thought the surface of my car would be the ideal place to display the shells." Unfortunately, under direct sunlight and exposure to the elements the shells became brittle

and broke. After his failed experiment, he gave up on the shells, but not on the car as a potential canvas for something else. And so he began to glue items that he found at home starting with dolls. Now friends, neighbors and visitors bring him items to put on the car along with the special glue it requires. Cuenca says, "It takes many hours a week to maintain and to clean and to re-glue. I'm constantly replacing items and getting new ideas. Today I will try some plastic iguanas." Obviously Cuenca's work is a labor of love mixed with pride. The octogenarian is very aware of his notoriety and lets you know with a twinkle in his eye that pictures of his car can be found as nearby as the main island of Puerto Rico and as far away as Japan.

Paid Mourners

BY WILL COLÓN AND HEATHER KNORR

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LLORONAS OR PLAÑIDERAS OF VIEQUES

Did you know...

➤ During the 19th century, if someone died on Vieques, and family members did not think that there would be a high turnout for the funeral, an age-old custom was employed. Island resident Will Colon remembers as a child hearing the elders talk about "mourners for hire." A paid mourner would attend the funeral and fill an empty seat, and moments of silence, by crying loudly. This demonstrated

how loved and popular the deceased was to friends and family. Professional plañideras (Spanish for criers), sometimes referred to as lloronas and lloronos (female and male) on Vieques, would walk with the funeral procession to the grave site wailing loudly.

The trend, dating back to the sixth century B.C., has been practiced all over the world, and the services provided have varied over time. Hired mourners, depending on the request,

weep, wail, or even faint from emotion at the funeral of the stranger. Payment is based on performance. Today, the tradition is still popular in parts of the world. In the United Kingdom, Rentamourner.com offers to "supply professional, discreet people to attend funerals and wakes. If you simply need to increase visitor numbers or introduce new faces, we can help."



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E HISTORIA
DE VIEQUES

THE VIEQUES
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TRUST



VCHT Conservation Efforts Culminate in Historical Agreement with DNER

BY JOSE CARRASQUILLO

An agreement between the Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust (VCHT) and the PR Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) to co-manage the nature preserve that holds the Mosquito Bio-luminescent Bay (Bio-Bay) was signed in a public ceremony held at the VCHT in February. The signing brought together residents of the Vieques community, business representatives, biobay-tour operators, members of VCHT, and state government officials, including the Secretary of DNER Carmen R. Guerrero Pérez.

Guerrero’s commitment to the conservation of the Bio-Bay, a mission she shares with the Trust, predates her current position as Secretary of DNER. She has worked with the Trust in the past in an effort to preserve the unique bio-luminescent phenomenon that occurs in several bays and lagoons of Puerto Rico. Familiar with Vieques and the island’s rich bio-diversity, Guerrero spoke of the historic nature of the agreement. **“To be very sincere, the DNER cannot do it on its own. Vieques has been an example of that through the support of the Trust. One of the things that I have been supporting as public policy is to expand the number of collaborative agreements all throughout Puerto Rico.”** She

concluded her remarks by saying: **“Your work has not only impacted the island of Vieques, la Isla Nena, it has impacted all of the work that we do in conservation across Puerto Rico and, I can say, in other parts of the world.”**

Lirio Márquez, Executive Director of the VCHT, discussed what the agreement means in both historic and scientific contexts. Marquéz sees the agreement as a step forward in the continuing efforts to monitor the bay and the possibilities for more scientific studies and measuring standards. Under Márquez’s leadership, the Trust has conducted several scientific studies in conjunction with universities as well as the the USGS, an agency that plays an important role in Biobay research

for conservation. She has been an advocate of ongoing community education efforts and was instrumental in securing the funds that brought much needed infrastructure improvements to the tributary access road to the Bio-Bay.

Mark Martin, who spearheads community outreach efforts at the Trust, highlighted some important clauses of the agreement with a state-of-the-arts presentation that included the total acreage inside the Sunbay Natural Preserve now covered under the agreement. With his unique enthusiasm and passion for the conservation of the Bio-Bay, Martin reminded attendees that the agreement was a big and significant step, but “the real work has just begun.” He elaborated on this point.

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"We celebrate what has happened here. We are so gracious to Barbara and Myrna to mark the time and celebrate all of the work that has been done. But we understand this as two things; the trust that has been given to us, and the responsibility and work that we have to do now. And there is a lot of work. There's a lot that we already do, sure; education, science, etc. But we have to step it up because, and I want to make this clear, this is not a co-management for the bay, this is for the entire reserve, which includes our front steps and goes all the way to the bay with all the beaches in between. There's a management plan that has been approved. Well, now it's an action plan that needs to happen. And we're ready. It's time because Vieques is changing and, very closely related, the world is changing.

The importance of the agreement was expressed by the potent words of Myrna Pagán, VCHT first Board President. An excerpt from her address follows.

"From its conception, the main mission of the Trust was the protection of the Bioluminescent Bay, preservation of the archeologi-

cal sites and involvement of the community in achieving its goals. Eco-consciousness was a budding force and I know that the work being done since our beginnings has served greatly in augmenting the concept of service and unity in Vieques. We have all grown as defenders of the environment aware of the essential role we play en defensa de los Recursos Naturales de la Isla Nena.

The co-management agreement with the DNER has taken decades to achieve. Many have been the official visits to San Juan for lobbying and conferences; many have been the Secretaries of DNER to receive us and our offer to collaborate in the protection and management of the Bio-Bay. But both the perseverance and dedication to the cause, the constant growth and innovative contributions to the island by the Trust, have brought us recognition as a valuable ally, one to trust.

Directors and members have worked long and hard at making a difference for the benefit of our community, and the community has responded and benefited by association. I would recognize one colleague who has labored from

day one and served as an inspiration to all during these decades of education, outreach and sharing with local and off-island professionals and universities. Considering the importance for the Trust of being regarded as an integral part of this society this woman stands out as one who has established among Viequenses a sincere, dedicated, caring presence which has served to attract members and supporters, young and old alike. We applaud Dr. Barbara Bernache Baker. Barbara, we are beholden to you."

Pagán also thanked Lirio Márquez, Mark Martin, Jorge Morales, zaimara Pagán, Pedro Ayala and Airamzul Cabral Guadalupe. She then summarized the overriding meaning of the historic event by quoting Baba Dioum, a natural resource management advocate from Senegal.

"In the end we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught."



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JULY FESTIVITIES

The Patron Saint of the Fishermen

Virgen del Carmen

BY HEATHER KNORR

July 16th is a day dedicated to the Virgen del Carmen, patron Saint of the Fishermen. The day is celebrated by bringing the statue of the Virgen to the Catholic Church in Isabel II where she is adorned with flowers and a special dress. She is then carried by the singing and praying participants to the Fishermen's pier where the statue is placed in a boat and taken out to sea with the priest. Other fishing boats follow, carrying the participants and fishermen who wish to honor the Virgen del Carmen for protecting them throughout the year.



Did you know?

Patronales is a yearly celebration dedicated to the patron saint of the town or municipality. Vieques' Patron saint is the Immaculate Conception of Mary and her official feast day is **December 8th**.

The celebration held in **July** in the town plaza is often referred to as Patronales but this is inaccurate. The July celebration is the **Fiestas del Pueblo** and is dedicated to the Virgen del Carmen, Patron Saint of the Fishermen. This year festivities were limited due to budget cuts.

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Located on Highway 201 in front of Ferretería Nales.



WHERE TO DRINK & DINE

AGUACATE "A CATERED AFFAIR" 787-615-2320

A 6 course prix fixe dinner in a Hix designed hilltop villa. Thursday nights. Reservations required.

ARENAMAR CAFE 787-239-7771

Great food, vegetarian options, Frappes & Frozen drinks. Beach delivery. Located at SunBay. Summer special - Buy 10 Piña Coladas and get one free!

AURORA'S CHICKEN & GRILL 787-741-3002

Roasted, BBQ, fried, and rotisserie chicken, hand dipped ice-cream, authentic local food and more! On 201 across from Nales Hardware store. Open everyday 10:30 am- 8:30pm

BANANAS BEACH BAR AND GRILL 787-741-8700

Open air, ocean view with an eclectic menu and social atmosphere. Open 7 days a week Lunch & Dinner 11:00am to 10:00pm, Daily happy hour.

BELLY BUTTONS 787-741-3336

Open everyday breakfast & lunch 9am-3pm; Dinner Wed-Sun 3-9:30 Weekly specials! Call for schedule. Beach Restaurant with the island's best ribs and sandwiches! Ocean views on the quiet side of the Malecón. Island vibe.

BIEKES BISTRO 787-741-6381

Caribbean Style Bistro with Puerto Rican cuisine. Speciality Bakery, pastries, custom cakes and sweets. Mon-Sat 11am-9:30pm, Sun 5-9:30pm

BLUE MOON BAR & GRILL

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BUEN PROVECHO 787-529-7316

Deli, Market, Café, Wine & Spirits. Breakfast, lunch and occasional pop-up dinners. Next to Siddhia Hutchinson Gallery in Isabel II. Summer Hours Mon-Fri 8am-4pm, Sat. 8am-1pm. Sept/ Oct TBD

CAFE DEL MAR

787-248-2097 Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, fresh bread and pastries, gourmet coffee, espresso, tapas, cocktails, chef's specials. Open everyday 8am-close.

CARAMBOLA AT THE BLUE HORIZON BOUTIQUE RESORT 787-741-3318

Breakfast 7:00am - 12:00pm Lunch 12 -pm - 3 -pm Dinner 3:00pm - 10pm Great local and international dishes served in Caribbean fashion. Open 365 days. Beautiful, unique setting overlooking the ocean.

CONUCO

787-741-2500 Dinner Tues - Sat 5:30 - 9:00pm Lunch Tues - Fri 11-2 Cocina Puertorriqueña. Authentic Puerto Rican food in a warm elegant atmosphere. Located in Isabel II across from Banco Popular. No reservation necessary.

COQUI FIRE CAFÉ 787-741-0401

Mon - Fri 5-9pm Gourmet Mexican food, reservations a must. Isabel II. Closed Aug 29th through Oct 2nd. Reopening Oct 2nd with third Annual Sunday Brunch.

EL SOMBRERO VIEJO BAR & LIQUOR STORE 787-741-2416

Everyday 12noon-after midnight. Local bar, hang out and wine cellar.

HORTA'S BBQ 787-614-2399

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EL BLOK 787-741-6020

Open everyday, Breakfast 8-11am, Lunch 11am-3pm, Dinner, 6-10:00p Caribbean flavors

with locally sourced products. Mesquite fired grilled-whole fish, beef & pork porterhouse. Offering whole roasted chickens and a large selection of smaller dishes. Rooftop Sunset Cocktails 4-6pm. Sunday Sunset on the roof with DJ Danny 4pm

EL QUENEPO 787-741-1215

Fine Dining on the Malecón. Chef's specials nightly. Eclectic cuisine featured in Travel & Leisure and New York Times. Wed-Sunday 5:30-close. Closing Sept. 5th-reopening in Nov.

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787-741-3318 OPEN 365 DAYS Fri, Sat, Sun 5pm, Specials, Thai, Vegetarian and Vegan specials. Fun, lively setting with ocean view.

MAR AZUL 787-741-3400

Fri-Mon 10am-close, Tues-Thurs 3pm-12am, Quality Pub Food / Late Night Snacks. Fri Fish Fry. Tues \$12.99 dinners Awesome sunsets and cocktails. Karaoke Sat. Isabel II up from the ferry.

NEXT COURSE 787-741-1028

Caribbean lobster, local market fish, house dry aged beef, home made pastas. A menu that encompasses American cuisine with Caribbean flair. Reservations requested.

RINCON DEL SABOR 939-358-1783

Authentic Puerto Rican food. Daily lunch specials starting at \$6.95 Great mofongo. Kiosk truck next to gas station on 200. Tues-Fri, 10:30am-5pm

SUBWAY 787-741-1049

Ocean front near ferry in Isabel II

SMOOTHIE GAL

Delicious, healthy fruit smoothies and treats. In front of the ferry terminal Isabel II.

TRADEWINDS 787-741-8666

Fresh Seafood, Steaks, Pasta, Paella, and more! Lobster specials nightly. Overlooking the ocean on the Malecón Esperanza. Check the website for summer/fall hours. www.tradewindsvieques.com

Tsunami Bar & Grill 787-438-1049

Pitchers, beer towers, wine, craft beer, & delicious food. Ocean-front in Isabel II near ferry.

insider tip

To avoid having to wait at a restaurant or worse yet, not getting a table, please make reservations.

WHAT TO DO SPECIAL WEEKLY EVENTS

EVERYDAY

Happy Hour, Mar Azul, 5-7pm

Happy Hour, Trade Winds Restaurant, 5-6:30pm

Happy Hour, Tin Box \$2 Tacos 4-6pm

Happy Hour, Bananas

Yoga W Hotel 8:15am

MONDAY

Vinasa Yoga w/Maureen Hix Island House Yoga Pavilion, 9:30am

Plein Air Pastel Class with Siddhia Hutchinson, 8am-11am, \$45, Sign up at the Gallery or call 787-741-1343 Through June.

Still Life Studio Class with Siddhia Hutchinson, 1pm-4pm, \$45, Through June. Sign up at the Gallery or call 787-741-1343 Through June.

TUESDAY-SUN

Vinasa Yoga w/Jennifer Hix Island House Yoga Pavilion, 9:30am

TUESDAY

Farmer's Market, Placita Reyes, INT RT 200/201, 8am-4pm

\$12.99 Dinners, Mar Azul 5-9pm

Radio Vieques-Better Together, English language show 7pm, Tune in to 90.1 Stream at www.Radiovieques.net

WEDNESDAY

Happy Hour, Belly Buttons 4-6pm

Paella Night with Waldo Belly Buttons 6:30-8:30pm Reservations requested 787.741.3336

Seafood Gala, "Island Style" Fry and Broil, Trade Winds Restaurant, 5:30-9:30pm, Reservations requested 787.741.8666

Ladies Night @ Tropical Guest House Lounge 7-11pm. 2 for 1 specials for ladies. Gentlemen welcome.

THURSDAY

Happy Hour, Belly Buttons, 3-7pm

Belly Busting Dinners, Belly Buttons, 3-9:30pm, 787.741.3336

Bomba Class with Erika Esperanza Biblioteca Electronica, 7pm

Radio Vieques-Better Together, English language show 7pm, Tune in to 90.1

"A Catered Affair", 6 course Prix fixe dinner in a lovely hilltop Hix designed villa, \$65, see this week's menu on facebook at A Catered Affair, Reservations required, call 787-615-2320

Vieques Voices - stand up spoken word. First & third Thursdays 10:30pm-midnight Plaza Guayacán

Bingo Night -Benefit for Vieques Humane Society (VHS). 4th Thursday of each month. Location La Cava. Doors open 5:00 PM. Buy-in ends 5:45 PM. Bingo 6:00 PM. \$20 for five rounds. Cash prizes. Call Val for info: 787.690.0890

FRIDAY-SUNDAY

Movies under the stars. Noches de Películas al aire libre, 6:45 & 8:45 For info and movies showing text: (787)349-8839

FRIDAY

Farmer's Market, Placita Reyes, INT RT 200/201, 8am-4pm

Pizza Night, Blue Moon Bar, Blue Horizon Boutique Resort, 4-11pm, 787.741.3318

Live Music/Open Jam, Mar Azul 9pm-1am

Beach Dog Walks, Vieques Humane Society Volunteers are welcomed each Friday, 10:00AM - 1:00 PM at the back gate of the VHS shelter in Santa Maria to enjoy a beach walk and provide enrichment and exercise for the shelter's sats (island dogs). For details: Call Cyndi Casey Thomas (703) 623-2613.

Fish Fry, Mar Azul

Happy Hour, Belly Buttons 3-7pm

Belly Busting Dinners, Belly Buttons, 3-9:30pm, 787.741.3336

Lobster Specials, Trade Winds Restaurant, 5:30-9:30pm Reservations 787.741.8666

Free Salsa lessons by Stephen at El Guayacan 8-9pm

SATURDAY

Pizza Night, Blue Moon Bar, Blue Horizon Boutique Resort, 4-11pm, 787.741.3318

Happy Hour, Belly Buttons 4-6pm

Belly Busting Dinners, Belly Buttons, 3-9:30pm, 787.741.3336

Karaoke Night, Mar Azul 9pm

SUNDAY

Sunday Brunch Specials, Trade Winds Restaurant, 7:30am-2:30pm

Sunset Dance and cocktails on El Blok Terraza, beats of DJ Danny and drink specials. 4pm, All welcome 787.741.6020

Paella Night, Trade Winds Restaurant, 5:30-9:30pm Reservations 787.741.8666

Happy Hour, Belly Buttons 4-6 pm

Belly Busting Dinners, Belly Buttons, 3-9:30pm, 787.741.3336

Quaker Worship Group 10am Villa Borinquen 732.713.5047

AA (ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS) 787 741 0639

OPEN MEETINGS

Mon. & Tues. • 5:30pm Esperanza/ Bldg. behind the Trust-Malecon

Weds. & Fri. 6pm Behind Catholic Church /Isabel II

Thurs. • Beach Meeting! 8:30am Playa Gallito / west of the W (Gringo Beach)

Sat. & Sun. • 10:30am Behind Catholic Church Isabel II

ALANON (FRIENDS AND FAMILY OF ALCOHOLICS) 207.869.0925

Weds. • 9am Behind Catholic Church Isabel II

NA (NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS) 508.873. 4576

Thurs. • 6pm Behind Catholic Church Isabel II



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VIEQUES VISITORS AND FELLOW ISLANDERS

These events have been carefully planned all year with you in mind. Please come out and enjoy them!



MAY 2016

MAY 5 Thursday
Sunset Series at El Blok Continues @ 5:30PM for Madera Fina. Tickets are \$10 per

person and are available in advance or at the door.

MAY 7 Fantasia Caribeña presents La Noche del Capitán Dinner and Music for \$35 at the Multi-Use Center Building on the Plaza. Funds support participation in the NYC Puerto Rican Day Parade.

MAY 8 Sunday, Mothers Day

Special Offerings for Mom and a free dessert at Tradewinds Restaurant

MAY 12 Thursday JUNTOS Vieques Inc. brings you the first Animal Wellness Fair in Vieques at the Old Municipal Coliseum in Isabel II. 11:00am to 5:00pm. Organizations from Vieques and Puerto Rico come together to promote animal rights and well being.

MAY 12 4-7pm, an evening of MAGICAL ELIXIRS at the VQS Emporium featuring SAGESTONE probiotic sodas and Tinctures by ADONITO. Come learn about the benefits of these amazing Elixirs

May 30 Monday, Memorial Day

JUNE 2016

JUNE 3-5, Isla Neña Skate Fest,
Friday June 3 - Skate parade, Music & Skate Jam, Video Contest, Movie Night
Saturday, June 4 - Half pipe, Street Course, Slidejam :
Sunday, June 5 - Vieques Downhill

JUNE 12, NYC Puerto Rican Day Parade

JUNE 19 Sunday, Fathers Day

Special Offerings for Dad and a free dessert at Tradewinds Restaurant

Father's Day Brunch, Blue Horizon Boutique Resort, 4-11pm, 787.741.3318

June 23 Noche de San Juan
See page 50

JULY 2016

July 15th Coqui Fire 15th Anniversary Cookoff

OCTOBER 2016

October 2 Coqui Fire Third Annual Sunday Brunch 10am-2pm

October 10 Monday, Columbus Day

October 31, Halloween



LOCATION: Santa Maria (on the way to Villa Bourinquen), 787.741.0209

CLINIC HOURS:
Tuesday & Wednesday,
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
(vet on island)

SHELTER HOURS: Friday & Saturday,
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM (adoptions/meet 'n greets)

DOG WALKING: Every Friday, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM. Meet at the back gate of the shelter. Volunteers welcome. For details: Call Cyndi Casey Thomas (703) 623-2613

VIEQUES HUMANE SOCIETY THRIFT STORE

LOCATION: Isabel II. as you are driving into Isabel II. Look for the sign on the right as you are driving into Isabel II at the corner of the Mambichi bridge. It is one block up the hill. Follow the painted paw prints!

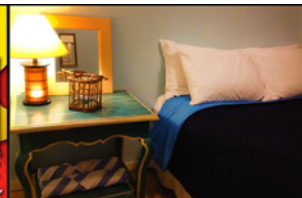
HOURS: Wed.-Sat., 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Donations of gently used items accepted and encouraged.

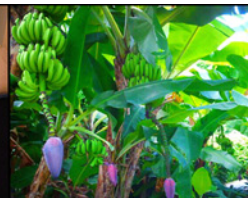
VIEQUES HUMANE SOCIETY BINGO NIGHT BENEFIT 4th Thursday of each month. Location La Cava Vieques. Doors open 5:00 PM. Buy-in ends 5:45 PM. Bingo 6:00 PM. \$20 for five rounds. Cash prizes. Call Val for info: 787.690.0890



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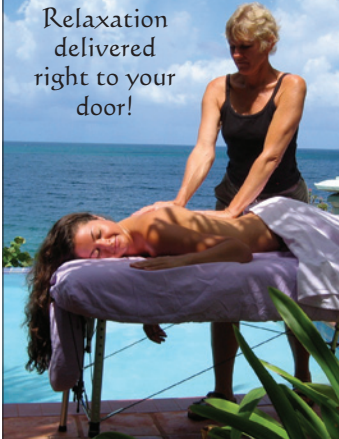
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SOUTH SHORE BEACHES

SUNBAY Accessible by the gated entrance off 997, Sunbay is a one mile stretch of beach. Sunbay has lifeguards and bathhouse. The entrance is 5 miles from Isabel II and 0.7 miles from Esperanza [the Malecon]. There is a \$2 entrance fee.

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. Also, for a free "spa experience," enjoy an exfoliation from the silky, fine sand.



NAVIO Follow directions to Media Luna but pass Media Luna and take a left at the sign and go another 0.3 miles. The road is extremely rough and 4wd is required but you can also park at Media Luna and walk

to Navío. 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 fishing piers in Esperanza.

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. 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.



PLAYA NEGRA (BLACK SAND BEACH)

Leave Esperanza on 996 going west. Come to T [201] and take left.

Drive 0.1 mile and there will be a guard rail and small pull off on your left. Park here. [It is easier to turn around if you drive 100 feet more to Gallery Galleon and turn around in drive just past entrance to Gallery.] 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.

BEACHES ON THE VIEQUES FISH AND WILDLIFE REFUGE*

For reference, Sol Food is parked right in front of the entrance to the FWS Refuge

CARACAS* From 997, turn into the FWS Refuge at the Sol Food truck. Go aprox 2 miles to a sign for Caracas. Turn right and go aprox 1.5 more miles. No shade except for picnic gazebos in the grass area. Watch out for the sandburs! (see below). 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 cul-de-sac at the very end, to avoid fines.



PLAYUELA* From 997, turn into the FWS Refuge at the Sol Food truck. Go aprox 2 miles to the brown sign for Caracas. Turn right and go aprox 1 mile to brown sign for Playuela and Tres Palmitas. Turn right and drive 2 minutes to the sign and take the walking path to the left to get to the beach. A short walk and you're there!



PATA PRIETA* From 997, turn into the FWS Refuge at the Sol Food truck 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. Rough road so 4wd is recommended. Bring a beach umbrella as there is little shade!

LA CHIVA* From 997, turn into the FWS Refuge at the Sol Food truck 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 # 1-21. At marker #15 the road splits so stay right if you want to explore La Chiva spots #16-21.

LA PLATA* Follow directions to La Chiva but when road splits take left and go 0.5 miles to reach La Plata.

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 Pass the W on 200 going west and look for a parking area and short peninsula on your right. The beach is on the right. Great place to be at sunset! Excellent photo spot!



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.

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. There are lots of starfish here so be very careful where you step!

PUNTA ARENAS Follow directions to Rompeolas but go past turn for pier and drive approximately 2 miles. You will come to a sign that says you are entering FWS 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. Much of Punta Arenas has eroded away so, in many places, there is not a beach to sit on until further down on the right. No-see-ums tend to come out in the afternoon so make it a morning excursion and bring your bug spray!



BUNKERS To see the hidden Navy bunkers follow directions to Rompeolas but keep straight past the turn for pier. Drive 2 miles and take the second paved road to the left. This road is a short loop that will bring you back to the same road.

★ IF YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO EXPLORE THEM ALL, THESE ARE INSIDER FAVORITES!



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