

VIEQUES INSIDER

connecting visitors to vieques

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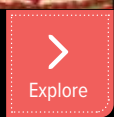
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Meet Myrna Pagán-
A Woman of Peace

Itineraries to
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CASA BLUE -

A stunning mid-century inspired residence nestled on a lush tropical 3/4 acre parcel with stunning Caribbean sea views. This architectural gem boasts 4 bedrooms with en-suites, each

offering a private retreat and an additional half bath for utmost convenience. The fourth bedroom is on a lower level and is a self contained apartment with it's own kitchenette, en-suite bathroom and tv space, perfect for an in-law, teenager or extended stay guests. Designed with meticulous attention to detail, Casa Blue harmoniously blends modern luxury with mid-century charm. The spacious living areas are adorned with sleek lines, large windows and doors, and vibrant accents, creating an inviting atmosphere that seamlessly connects with the tropical surroundings and sea views. **\$1,999,000**



SEA GLASS BEACH HOUSE -

Nestled along the picturesque shoreline of Vieques Island, Sea Glass Beach House offers a unique escape and retreat on 120 feet of sandy beachfront. This one-of-a-kind enchanting beachfront property is a sanctuary with just under one half acre of

gently sloping lawn to the beach. Picture yourself listening to the rhythmic sound of waves and the shimmering sea glass treasures you might find along the shore. The interior of the home has been completely renovated and boasts a stylish and comfortable interior, designed to complement the natural beauty of the surroundings. The open-concept living areas are bathed in natural light, with large windows providing breathtaking ocean views. The spacious accommodations include a kitchen, living, dining and office rooms all open together. Additionally, there is a main level master with bathroom on the first level and a balcony with unobstructed ocean vistas. On the lower level there is a second family room and two more bedrooms and bathrooms. One of the guest bedrooms has it's own balcony with sweeping ocean views. **\$1,590,000**



CASA LA PAZ is all about experiencing sustainable luxury living. This solar powered home is centrally located, spacious, private, and titled. Nestled on a hillside you will enjoy spectacular, breath-

taking ocean views from the indoor and outdoor spaces. The cooling trade winds offer natural air conditioning while soaking in the Atlantic Ocean views from the perennial Los Chivos neighborhood. Casa La Paz has been lovingly developed to suit the Caribbean lifestyle offering many areas for rest and relaxation including a dramatic, refreshing 40-foot lap pool. The stunning views will captivate you and your loved ones, whether while dining or lounging under the generous covered patio or around the pool, relaxing indoors in the main living space or from the top deck that extends across the full length of the house and is accessible through the top floor hallway and two of the three bedrooms. **\$899,000**





Glen Wielgus, *Six Dinghies*
Oil on canvas, 36" X 36"

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GLENWIELGUS
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Monday – Saturday: 10AM-2PM. Sometimes Sunday.

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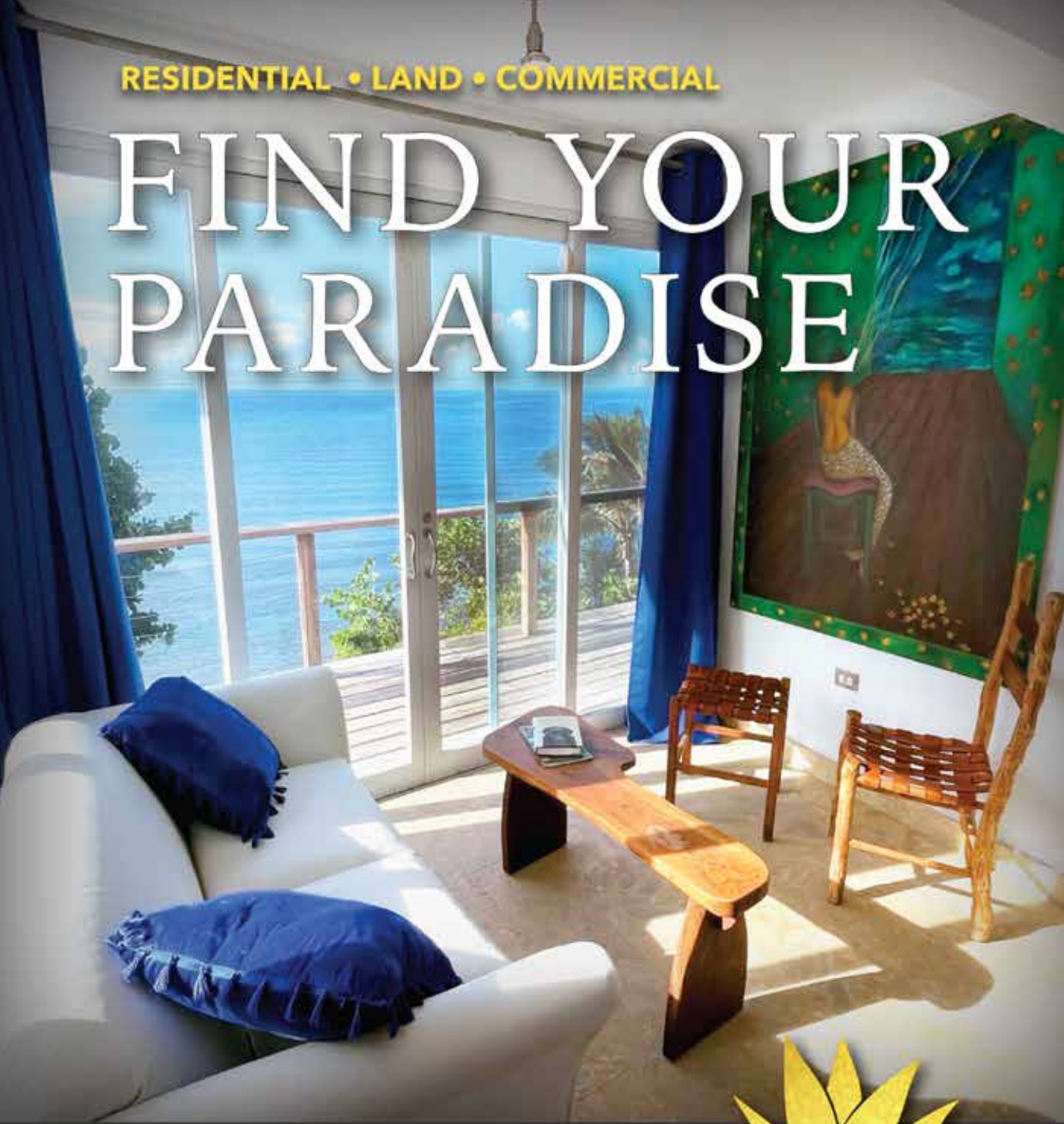
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LIST PROPERTIES & SCHEDULE TOURS



**PARAISO
REALTY**



A *THWAP!*
IN THE FACE
MEANINGFUL
COINCEDENCES

During the process of putting this issue together, I found myself with two spiritual inspirations that have much in common as they both teach and guide me. On the afternoon of interviewing community pillar, mother, grandmother, artist and activist Myrna Pagán for the magazine with writer and friend Kim Schneider, I later headed to Novillo Trail for a run. These two occurrences, seemingly unconnected, would turn out to be a lesson in paying attention.

I am not a runner, and much of the trail is uneven, rocky, and hilly, so we work very badly together. On this day, I start the workout thinking of the honor and privilege of being with Myrna in her home, in her trusting presence. She began the interview by talking about *synchronicity*, defining it by how meaningful coincidences seemingly have no cause. In preparing for our meeting, she had rummaged through a box of old letters and discovered that her grandmother was born on Vieques. Myrna had moved here with her husband over 50 years ago not knowing of her deep connection to the land, and the coincidence made her point.

Now as I run along the trail, I am deep into the chatter of my mind, trying to remember all that Myrna had told us about her guide, Tara, the Buddhist green goddess, Supreme Mother. I am recalling sitting in her home with the sound of tinkling chimes, soft classical music, the smell of incense and frangipani, and the sleeping dog at my feet. Suddenly, my toe catches a root and throws my body into the air, arms and fingers outstretched ahead of me, and I hit the ground, rolling in grey fine silt and brown mangrove leaves. Tared and feathered by Mother Nature, I'm hopped up and running again and thinking this path just might be trying to teach me a lesson. Back into my mind with very serious, profound thoughts in my head like *Be here now* and *Awareness precedes change*, I know I absolutely must pay more attention to each and every *THWAP!* a wet thatch palm direct to the face. Okay, stop... Really? Was that entirely necessary? I suspect I'm a slow learner, so I stop for a long, bent over, hands-on-the-knees-belly laugh and thank the trail for this lesson and Myrna for opening my mind to synchronous events. (Later, after researching Tara the Green Goddess, I find out that a quality she manifests with feminine spirits is playfulness. She plays pranks on those who take themselves too seriously and laughs at self-righteousness.)

I've returned to that challenging path regularly to practice the focused meditative-yet blissful letting go of the mind that the trail requires. I reflect on how Myrna's empathy for the world's situation seemed to overwhelm her at times, almost choking her. But then a feminine force would rise from within, and she would speak passionately again of all there is left to do. There *is* so much to do.

For now I am grateful for this trail and Myrna in my life, and that I have found that place in nature that speaks to me. On your path and during your time here, search for a deep connection to Vieques, its beautiful places and people. In this issue, we introduce a few itineraries as a guide to get you exploring our island. Now it's up to you to be aware of connections; meaningful coincidences, the spirituality of a place, and the (symbolic) *THWAP!* in the face.

Kelly Thompson, Publisher

VIEQUES INSIDER

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

Kim Schneider is a freelance writer, editor and photographer based in Michigan. Her work has taken her around the globe, but she considers Vieques the destination to which she wants to return again and again. Over the years, Kim has won several awards from the Associated Press, the International Regional City Magazine Association and Midwest Travel Writers Association, which named her Mark Twain Travel Writer of the Year.

Photographer AJ Stetson is a film set/unit stills and portrait photographer based in NYC. A dual citizen of the United States and Italy, AJ is also a drone pilot and scuba diver, and captures still and moving images on location around the world. His portrait work, very much like his persona, coaxes the gentle truth of his subject, exposing their very essence and authenticity. See AJ's work at www.AJStetson.com or contact him at 646-450-5590 or AJ@AJStetson.com

Photographer Elliot Anderson, originally from Portland, OR, has been dedicated to the art of photography since 2006, and particularly drawn to the timeless quality of film. Relocating to Vieques, Puerto Rico in 2012, he's found inspiration in its welcoming nature and natural beauty. Beyond work, he finds fulfillment in outdoor pursuits and spending time with his wife and two sons—often traveling in pursuit of ever richer experiences and memories.

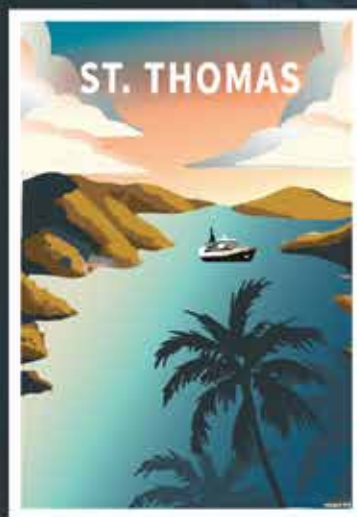
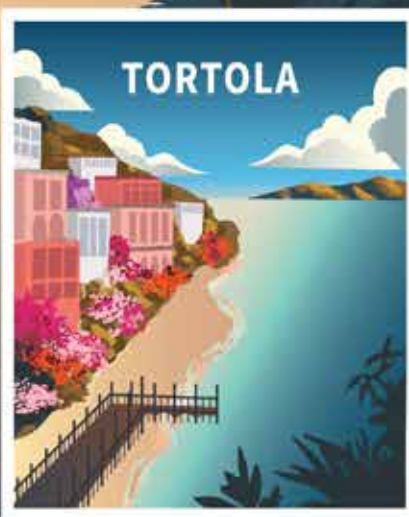
Cover Collage Kelly Thompson

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VIEQUES BEACHES

Download the Vieques Insider Beach Guide at www.viequesinsider.com

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



SOUTH SHORE BEACHES

SUNBAY Accessible by the gated entrance off 997, Sunbay is a one mile stretch of beach. Sunbay has lifeguards and bathhouse. The entrance is 5 miles from Isabel II and 0.7 miles from Esperanza (the Malecon). There is an entrance fee of \$2-\$4 depending on time of year.

MEDIA LUNA Enter the gated entrance off 997 at Sunbay. Follow the dirt road at the end of Sunbay and travel 0.6 more miles to Media Luna. Great for small children, Media Luna is shallow. You can walk 30 ft out into the water and still be in waist deep water. 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 sometimes 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 NEGRA (BLACK SAND BEACH) Leave Esperanza on 996 going west. Come to T (201) and take left. Drive 0.1 mile and look for the Playa Negra sign at the trail head. Drive 100 feet more to the parking lot across from Gallery Oro. Walk down the path to the dried stream bed and follow to the right. It is about a 20

minute walk to the beach. If it has rained, stream bed will actually be a small stream. Bring bug spray and water.

VIEQUES NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE*

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

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

PATA PRIETA* From 997, turn into the Wildlife Refuge at Km Marker 3.2 and go aprox 2 miles. Pass turn to Caracas and continue straight on dirt road for aprox 1 mile and turn right at Pata Prieta sign. After 0.2 miles, follow the road to the right to a small parking area with sign. Walk down the (slippery) gravel path to the left of the sign to the beach. Rough road so 4wd is recommended. Bring a beach umbrella as there is little shade!



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

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

ON THE WEST SIDE

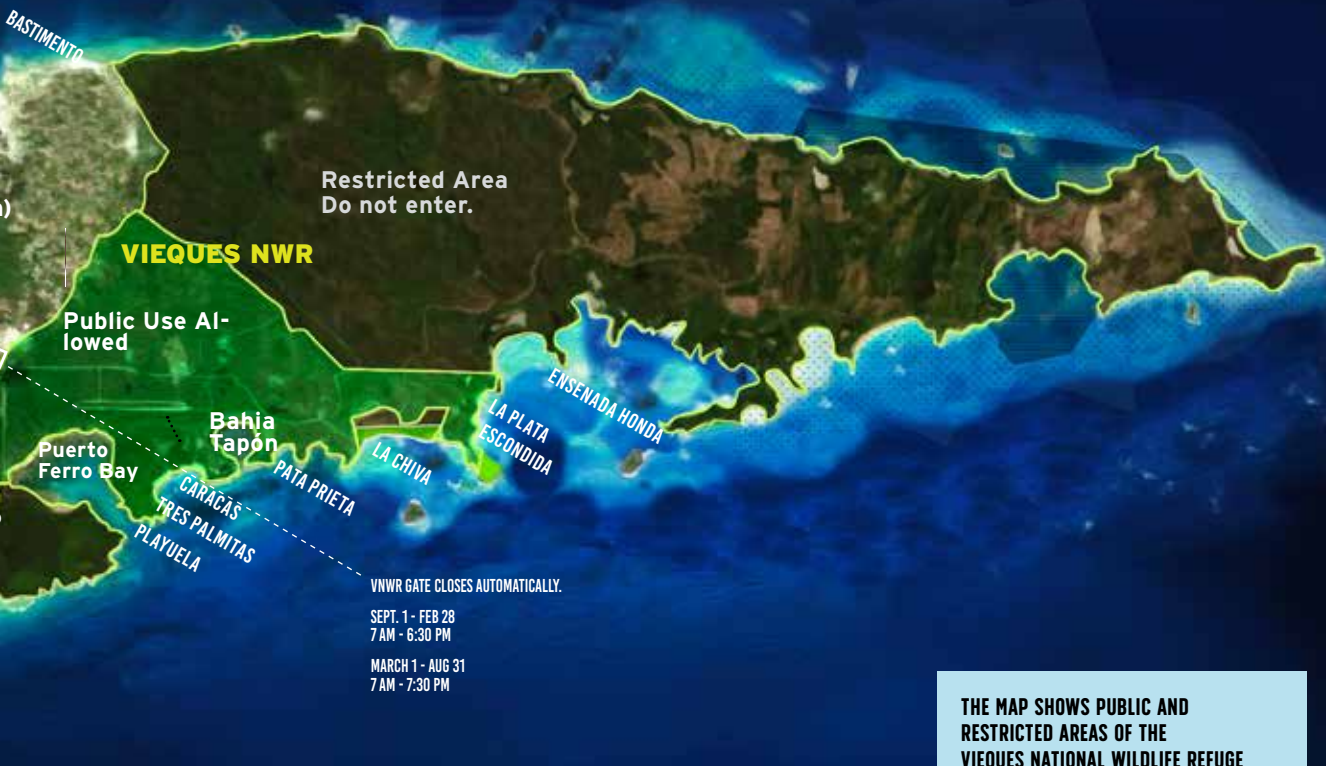
PLAYA GRANDE* Leave Esperanza on 996 going west and come to a T (rt. 201). Take a left. Go 1 mile to where the road dead ends and take a left. Follow road to the bottom of the hill, where you will be entering the southwest area of the Wildlife Refuge. Take a right onto dirt road to find a beach spot.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

PUNTA ARENAS* Follow directions to Rompeolas on the north shore but go past turn for pier and drive approximately 2 miles. You will come to a sign that says you are entering northwest area of the Wildlife Refuge. Drive 1 mile and come

PREVAILING WINDS:

WINTER - EAST TO NORTHEAST

SUMMER - SOUTHEAST



THE MAP SHOWS PUBLIC AND RESTRICTED AREAS OF THE VIEQUES NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

-  PUBLIC USE ALLOWED. ACCESO AL PÚBLICO PERMITIDO.
-  DO NOT ENTER. EXPLOSIVE HAZARD.
-  NO ENTRE. PELIGRO DE EXPLOSIÓN.
-  MARINERS PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING THIS AREA SE PROHIBE A LOS NAVEGANTES ENTRAR A ESTA AREA
-  MARINERS ARE PROHIBITED FROM ANCHORING, DREDGING, OR TRAWLING IN THIS AREA. SE PROHIBE A LOS NAVEGANTES ANCLAR, DRAGAR O LA PESCA DE ARRASTRE EN ESTA ÁREA.

Vieques has the highest number of public beaches of all the municipalities in Puerto Rico. Beaches are in protected areas and are safe. Stay in the designated public areas. Never enter restricted areas that are marked with extensive signage.

to a T / there are spots to the left and to the right with the best snorkeling to your left. Make sure to bring water and bug spray. No-see-ums come out in the late afternoon.

NORTH SHORE BEACHES

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

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

EL GALLITO 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!

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

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

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

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

MUNITIONS SAFETY
If you see something that could be a munition, follow the 3Rs.

-  **RECOGNIZE**
-  **RETREAT**
-  **REPORT**



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



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v i e q u e s



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& direct beach access

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the Malecón in Esperanza

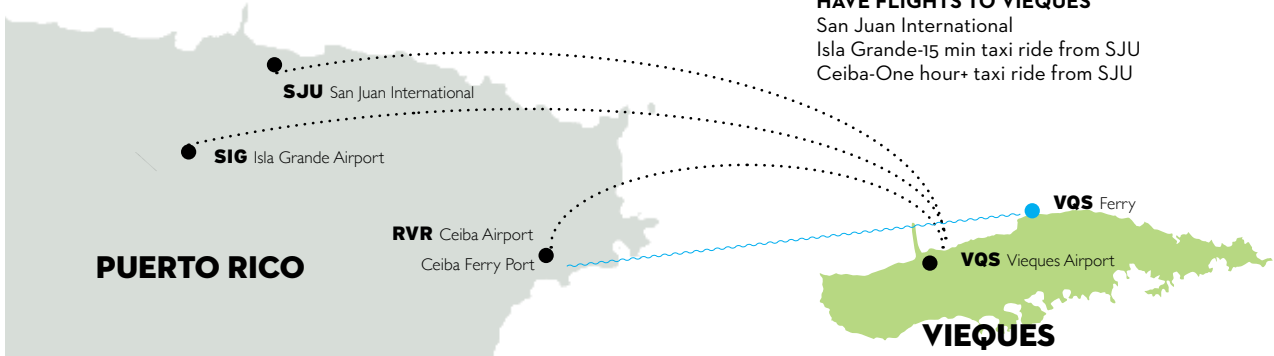


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GETTING HERE

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3 AIRPORTS IN PUERTO RICO THAT HAVE FLIGHTS TO VIEQUES

San Juan International
Isla Grande-15 min taxi ride from SJU
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Fly from Ceiba Airport (RVR) to VQS

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Charter Flights SJU to Vieques

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Ferry from Ceiba to Vieques

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

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

Insider recommendation: The ferry is used by Vieques residents to go to school, doctors appointments, shopping, work and to visit family. During high tourism season the ferry can fill up fast and residents get first boarding priority. If you don't want to chance being left at the ferry dock waiting hours for the next ferry or possibly even overnight, book a flight from one of the three airports!

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51-70 lbs. \$80

3RD CHECKED BAG
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51-70 lbs. \$80

Pet Kennel

Max 28 x 20.5 x 20.5" (1 per aircraft) free

Not accepted

More than 3 checked bags, items larger than 70 lbs, large sporting goods

Vieques Air Link

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1-25 lbs. free
Over 25lbs. \$1.50 per lb

PET KENNEL
Hard Kennel Required
(max 26x18x17") \$30 one way
Advance Reservation Required
One animal per aircraft.



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

- Take warm clothes on the ferry! It's very cold when the AC is on.
- Car rentals on Vieques have closing hours! If you arrive after closing time make prior arrangements with the company to receive your car.
- See page 41 for a list of publicos on Vieques.



GETTING AROUND

RESERVE EARLY!

▶ PUBLICOS/PUBLICOS/TAXIS:

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



▶ CAR/SCOOTER/UTV/GOLF CART RENTAL:

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



road, only in the grass on the opposite side. When returning cars you will be

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

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



Fix a Flat

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



A Twist or a Tap

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

GETTING YOUR BEARINGS

SOUTH SIDE

ESPERANZA

Esperanza, on the southern coast, boasts the deep aqua and crystal clear waters of the Caribbean Sea, gently lapping along a picturesque walkway known as the Malecón. Esperanza offers a walkable array of restaurants, museums, stores, piers, boating and social interaction. Sundays are full of music, dominos, and libations. Extend your pleasure east or west along the Caribbean shore to discover art, black sand, roadside food experiences and an endless string of unique beaches so visually outrageous you'll be at a loss for words and pictures.



NORTH SIDE

ISABEL II

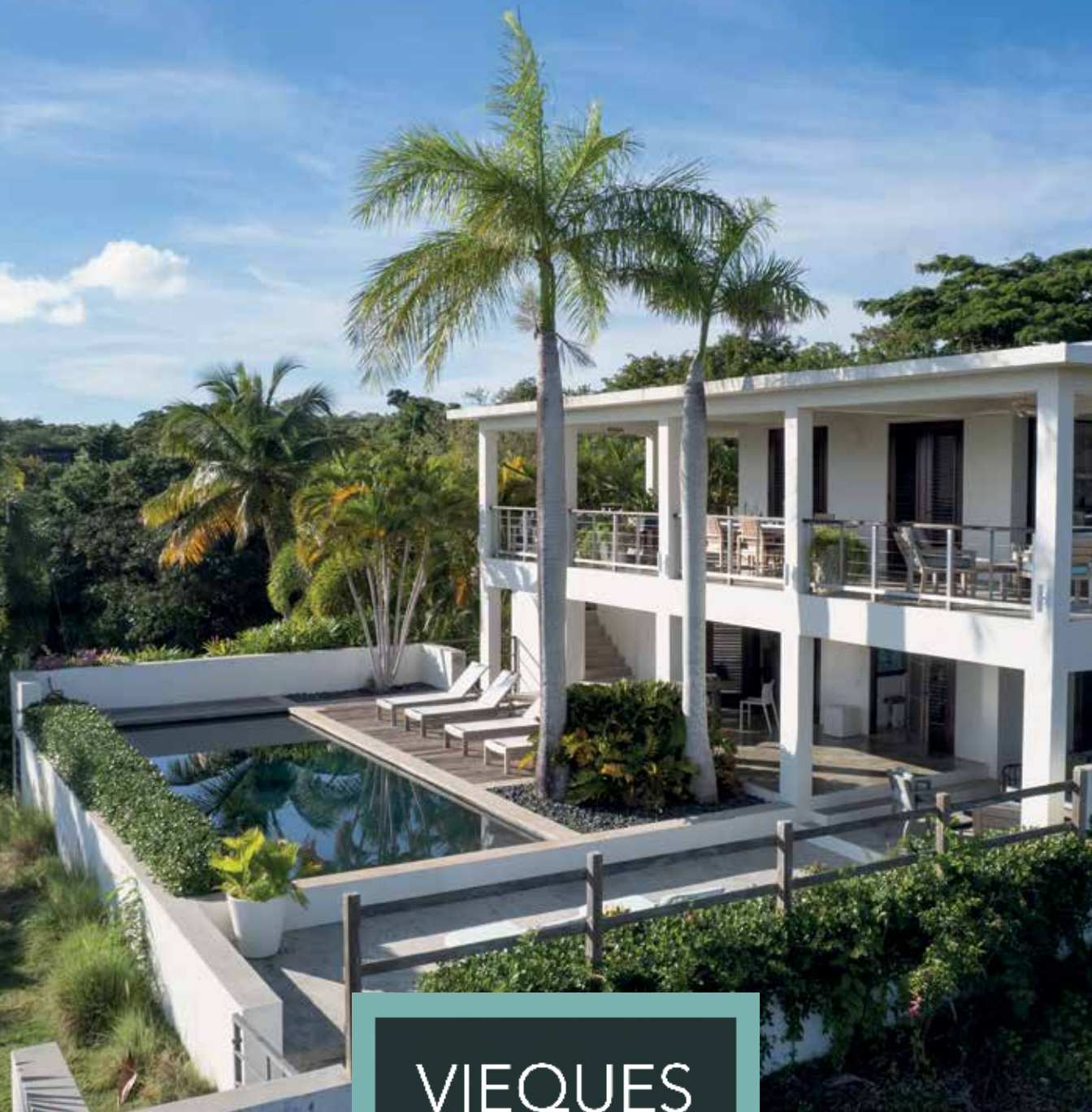
Bordered by the wavy blue of the Atlantic, the north side offers a loosely organized configuration of main and side streets, churches, stores, bars, restaurants, shops and municipal offices, all loosely draped around the Plaza, a community square for great gatherings all year round. Charming and colorful, Isabel II ("town" or "el pueblo" to the residents) is named after the first reigning female monarch of Spain. Sitting like a decorated cake high above the town is the Fortin Conde de Mirasol, the last Spanish fort built in the Americas.



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

CAR RENTAL/TOURS

		CAR RENTAL	UTV / GOLF CART	SCOOTER RENTAL	CONSERGE SERVICE	ISLAND TOURS	BEACH HOP TOURS	BIKE TOURS	BIKE RENTALS	E BIKE RENTALS	
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Bravos Boys Car Rental	787-741-1856	●									reservations@bravosboyz.com
Fun Brothers	787-435-9372		●	●				●	●	●	www.funbrothers-vieques.com
Island Jeep Rental	787-741-0190	●									www.islandjeeprental.com
Maritza's Car Rental	787-741-0078	●									www.maritzascarrental.com
Scooters for Rent	939-437-2053		●	●							www.scootersvieques.com
Vieques Car Rental	787-412-8540	●	●								www.viequescarrental.com
Vieques Tours and Transportation	787-397-2048				●	●	●				fb-vieques island tours and transportation



VIEQUES
PROPERTIES

dream a little.

Featured Listing: Villa Vieques Un Poco de Fe · Pilon · 3 beds, 3 baths on 2.93 acres



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Our retreats extend beyond the conventional and promise a holistic revitalization, discovering a mosaic of experiences tailored to elevate your well-being, from ancient healing practices in our classic Panchakarma + Janzu retreats to the soul-soothing rhythms of Yoga with Sylvia de Marco and the empowering Men's Retreat with Kano Mai. These curated experiences not only offer personal growth and rejuvenation but also foster a vibrant community of like-minded individuals, creating lasting connections that extend beyond the retreat itself.

Blend the serenity of our retreats with the enchantment of Vieques - a magical island with pristine beaches, bioluminescent bays, and a rich cultural tapestry. Your retreat transforms into a gateway to adventure, amplifying the transformative experience. Join us at Finca Victoria, where retreats guide you toward renewal, empowerment, and the enchanting wonders of Vieques.

THE BEAUTY OF SLOW

In the hustle and bustle of modern life, where every moment seems to be governed by the ticking of the clock, there exists an oasis of tranquility that beckons those in search of a respite from the fast-paced world. Embrace the art of living slow as we explore the enchanting Finca Victoria in the heart of Vieques. This haven not only offers a luxurious escape but also serves as a gentle reminder to pause, breathe, and savor the beauty of a slower, more intentional way of living.

As the sun sets, Finca Victoria reveals its magic in the soft glow, inviting you to enjoy twilight amidst the symphony of the coquis and gentle breezes. Explore vibrant gardens in harmony with the island's rhythm. Evenings at Finca Victoria celebrate unhurried moments, offering stargazing and reflection under unpolluted skies. This space promises more than just comfort; it's a transformative journey into mindful living, where serenity meets nature's embrace.



YOUR STAY

Finca Victoria beckons explorers with its unique accommodations that seamlessly merge with the untamed beauty of the surroundings. Envision a series of enchanting treehouses perched high among the branches, inviting guests to embrace the thrill of an elevated escape. For those seeking a touch of nostalgia, a vintage airstream awaits, offering a quirky and retro retreat. The Invisible Treehouse stands out as a marvel, camouflaging effortlessly with the natural landscape, creating an illusion of disappearing into the wilderness. Outdoor showers amplify the sense of adventure, allowing guests to connect with nature in the most exhilarating way possible. With fully equipped private kitchens, Finca Victoria ensures that every adventurer can refuel and recharge in style, amidst the awe-inspiring wonders of the great outdoors.



PANCHAKARMA

Finca Victoria hosts transformative group Panchakarmas, blending personalized Ayurvedic therapies, invigorating yoga, and detoxifying meals in a serene setting. Beyond physical benefits like enhanced vitality and weight loss, the retreat fosters mental and spiritual renewal, promoting balance. Embracing group camaraderie, participants emerge with a deeper connection and overall well-being. The synergy of Ayurvedic practices and lush surroundings ensures a transformative journey, appealing to those seeking holistic wellness and rejuvenation.



YOGA

Join us for daily yoga at 8am; it's included in your stay! Drop-ins are also welcome for \$15/pp but we suggest checking in with hotel prior to your visit. Our sessions, set against the backdrop of Vieques' natural beauty and the Maloka's ocean view, emphasize practical well-being with a focus on strength, flexibility, and relaxation. For those preferring a virtual experience, we offer our daily classes free of charge on Zoom. Find the link in our website for easy access.



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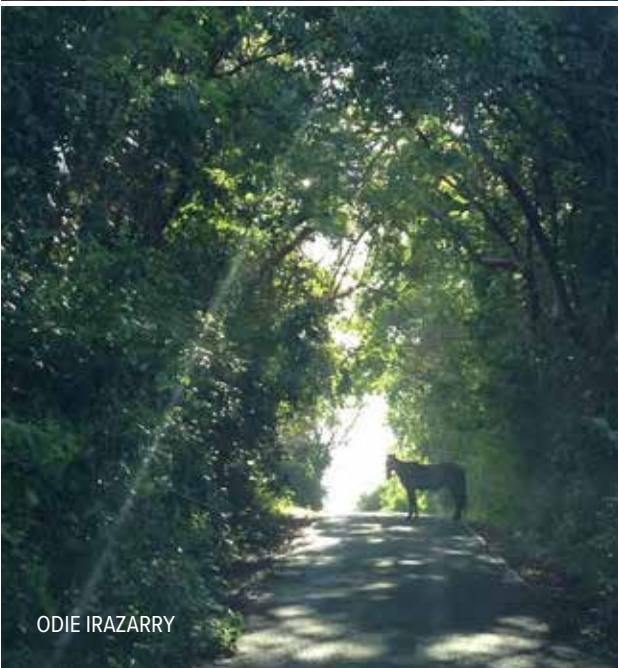


JAN KNOX



DIEGO ESPINOSA

YOUR GUIDE TO VIEQUES



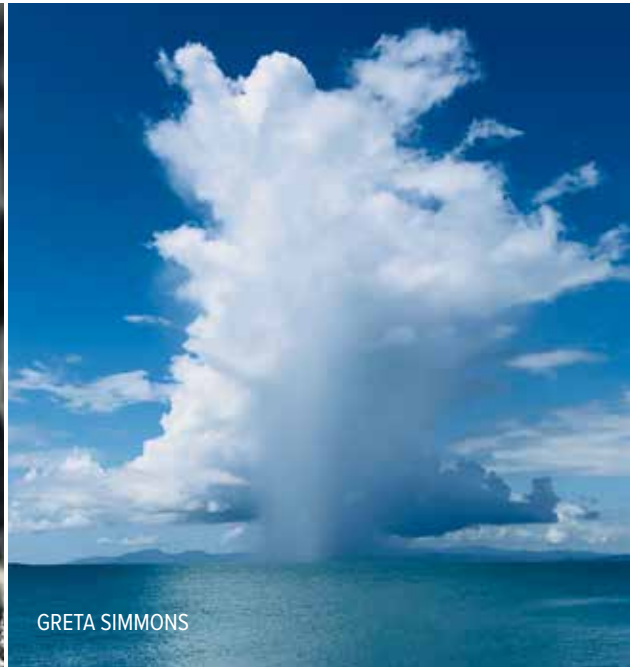
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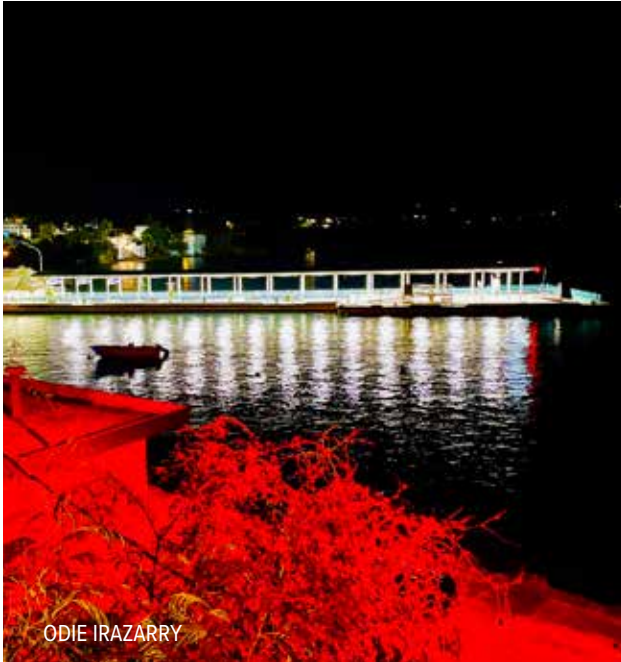
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GRETA SIMMONS



ODIE IRAZARRY



BEN KROM

Discover the charm of Vieques with its spectacular beaches, the world’s brightest BioBay, and off the beaten path experiences. In this edition of Vieques Insider, we’ve captured a snapshot of these unique moments. Immerse yourself in the visual stories of our readers’ pictures—each one worth a thousand words! Experience Vieques responsibly by choosing licensed guides for activities and prioritize environmental conservation during your visit to help preserve the pristine beaches and surroundings. Share your insights and ideas with us at kelly@viequesinsider.com—we value your input!

To submit your photos for publishing, email kelly@viequesinsider.com with the subject line indicating the credit you’d like to appear with your photo.



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May We Suggest...

4 Itineraries to streamline your adventure and maximize your time!

Vieques Insider has curated activities to locations across the island to guide you towards diverse and enriching encounters. But consider them a first step! You will find so much more on your way to these suggested attractions. So, let us ignite your curiosity and set you on a path to uncover the wonders of Vieques.



M. SAM WALKER

Fortín Conde de Mirasol



Puerto Ferro Rocks



Playa Negra

Connections + Playa Negra

Before heading out to the beautiful beaches of Vieques, take some time to connect to the island's past. Reward yourself afterwards with a visit to one of our most unusual beach, Playa Negra.

► **El Fortín Conde de Mirasol**- Our first stop is the last Spanish Colonial fort ever built in the Caribbean. The fort houses a beautiful art gallery, an exquisite collection of indigenous and cultural artifacts. It also includes the Vieques Historic Archives, an extensive library of documents related to the history of Vieques. It's listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1977.

► **Puerto Ferro Archaeological site**- Look for the sign on Rt. 997 to find one of the oldest archaeological sites

in Puerto Rico and the Greater Antilles, where ancient human remains dating back to 700 BCE to 2145 BCE were found. These remains shed light on the original inhabitants of Vieques, the Pre-Arawak people. The site features "Las Rocas de Puerto Ferro," large boulders often likened to a mini-Stonehenge.

► **Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust**- This educational tour would not be complete without stopping at the Trust on the Malecon in Esperanza to learn about the ecology,

culture and history of the island as well as the bioluminescent bay. If you are there on Tuesday from noon-2PM, you can participate in "citizen science" to learn more about VCHT's conservation and monitoring efforts. There is also a gift store with educational books, tee shirts, art and more.

► **Playa Negra**- Playa Negra is a must see for adventurous types, but it is not a swimming beach because of strong currents and riptides. A bit of a trek through an "arroyo" (stream bed), this beach

requires some walking. If it has recently rained, expect to walk through mud or ankle deep water.

What makes it black?

The black sand is the result of shifting tectonic plates pushing magma up through the surface of high areas like Mount Pirata, the highest point on Vieques. The magnetic, heavy but fine sand washes off the mountain and down through the stream bed creating the black sand beach. Depending on rains, the beach can be jet black or a mixture of the black sand and red limestone.



Sculpture by Terry Price at Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust.



Punta Arenas



Parque La Ceiba



Crab Island Rum Distillery



Military Bunkers



Road to Punta Arenas



Western Warrior + Libations!

Exploring the western end of the island requires a bit more driving and planning to be in the right location at the right time. Let this list be a guide but not limit your exploration. There is so much to see along the way!

► **Parque la Ceiba-** Head east on 200 past the airport to see our 300 year old Ceiba Tree at the bend in the road. The tree is a source of pride, respect and spirituality on the island. Take the time to appreciate Mother Nature in one of her finest forms.

► **Mosquito Pier-** built by the Navy, this pier extends 1 mile out into the ocean and is a great place to walk, snorkel (best with a guide) and appreciate the views.

► **Military Bunkers-** Past Mosquito Pier continuing East on Rt. 200, drive until you see

a painted pallet sign for recycling. Turn left down this road and you will find military bunkers left behind by the Navy. Continue farther and discover the barrel-arched earth covered bunkers known as “igloo magazines” merging with the land like hobbit houses.

► **Mt. Pirata-** Monte Pirata, the highest point in Vieques, stands within the western track of the Vieques National Wildlife Refuge. There is a 1.2-mile paved road to the top, which is a steep-but doable 30-60 minute hike. Future plans include a pair of hiking trails through the forest.

For those choosing to hike Monte Pirata, be prepared for a challenging 1.2-mile ascent with a steep 987 ft. elevation gain, suitable for those in good physical shape.

► **Punta Arenas-** Part of the FWS National Wildlife Refuge, Punta Arenas is a 3/4-mile stretch of beach on the northwestern tip of the island with crystal clear water and white sand. From the air you can see where the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea meet and form a sand drift – hence the name “sandy point”. Some say the main attraction here is best seen under the water.

But the beach is wild and the water usually calm and clear, making it a beautiful beach to visit. No-see-ums (gnats) usually come out early morning and late afternoon so try to visit between 10 AM and 3 PM.

► **Crab Island Rum Distillery-** Now for your warrior reward. On your way back be sure to stop in at Crab Island Distillery for a cocktail, live music and a bite to eat! Note: Crab Island is open Thurs, Fri, and Sun 11 AM-5 PM and Sat. 12-8 PM so plan your week and your Western Warrior Day accordingly!


To be a true warrior, bring your recyclables! Bunker #402 is a drop-off location. It is ok to leave on the cement platform in back if noone is there.



Mt. Pirata



Playa Novillo

Hike + aaaahh

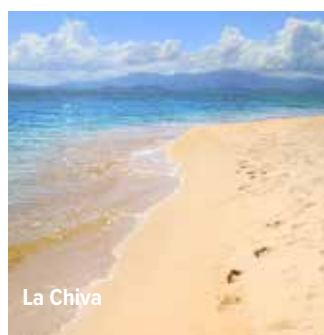
If you are the type of person who likes to feel a little productive before relaxing on a beach for the rest of the day, this itinerary is for you. Two moderate hikes, a drive to a historic lighthouse and then, aaaahhh.... your choice of pristine beaches on the Fish and Wildlife Refuge.



Puerto Ferro Lighthouse



Caracas



La Chiva



Pata Prieta

► **Novillo / Pirate's Cove Trail**- Recently opened to the public and meticulously crafted by Ticatove and the Fish and Wildlife Service, this series of trails offers a breathtaking journey through a stunning variety of landscapes. See next page for details.

► **Puerto Ferro Lighthouse**- Just a short drive East from the trail is the remains of the Puerto Ferro lighthouse also known as Faro Berdiales after the family who operated it. This majestic lighthouse, now in ruins, offers a breathtaking view. A short trail to the west leads to a rough cove called Playa Berdiales.

► **Puerto Mosquito National Natural Landmark Observation Platform**- if you are up for another short .7 mi. hike after the Novillo trail (and enjoying some time at that beach), drive back to the entrance and take a right into the National Wildlife Refuge .8 miles to a parking lot and the trail head. You can also drive to the lookout by going straight ahead on the gravel road behind the FWS office. The trail gradually leads to an overlook with stunning views of the three bioluminescent bays of Vieques.

► **Choose your beach**- The National Wildlife Refuge offers a variety of absolutely stunning beaches and more trails to explore! To find more trails, go to www.ticatove.org. Vieques Insider suggests that you end your afternoon relaxing on any of the beautiful beaches that the Vieques National Wildlife Refuge has to offer. Choose your aaaaaahhhhhh.





• Novillo / Pirate's Cove Trail

Hikers can expect a rich tapestry of terrains, from sea grasses and land crab nesting areas to the vivid hues of red clay or grey silt of mangrove roots. Along the trail, nature enthusiasts are treated to the sight of tropical hanging air plants, climbing vanilla orchid vines and enchanting canopies of thatch palms reminiscent of a Dr. Seuss storybook landscape. As the trail follows the mouth of the biobay, the aftermath of Hurricane Maria on the mangroves becomes evident. On the opposite shore, VCHT diligently works to replant the mangroves lost to the storm, preventing their degradation into the sea.

The trail unfolds to reveal the stunning beauty of Novillo beach. Hikers can venture further via the connecting trail to Pirates Cove. Expect a moderate hike with challenging inclines and rocky, uneven slopes. Essential items include water and proper hiking shoes. For the ultimate experience, layer over a swimsuit, but exercise caution due to the powerful tides at Novillo beach. Pirates Cove beckons on calm days (a rarity) for exceptional snorkeling. However, venturing over the sea-worn rocky cliff without suitable footwear is strongly discouraged. Stay on the marked trail to preserve the environment and immerse yourself in the unparalleled beauty that surrounds you.

The Vieques Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has meticulously crafted the trail with volunteers from TICATOVE. This collaboration exemplifies a shared vision for the responsible enjoyment and conservation of Vieques' unique landscapes.

Directions: After entering the FWS gate make an immediate right onto the gravel road toward Puerto Ferro Lighthouse. Park in the first parking lot on the left. The trailhead is across the gravel road.

Novillo Trail



Playa Novillo



Sunbay
Photo by: Steve Simonsen



Navio



Media Luna

Beach Trifecta

Three of the most beautiful yet uniquely diverse beaches lie just beyond the entrance gate to Sunbay on Rt. 997. Ahead lies Sunbay, to the east Media Luna and further east down a bumpy road is Navio. You can hit them all in one day with a little planning!

► **Sunbay**- A spectacular one-mile expanse of white sand with plenty of shade, Sunbay is the perfect destination to wind down, relax and enjoy the crystal clear water of the Caribbean. It is the only beach on Vieques with rest rooms, showers and food service. Sunbay is the preferred beach where locals gather for dominos, barbeques and beach games. Once you find your spot in the sun you may find it difficult to leave!

► **Media Luna**- After Sunbay, head east and then follow the signs to Media Luna. This beach is ideal for small children. It features sand as soft as powder, and lots of shallow, calm and warm water, ensuring comfort for kids and confidence for parents. The grass areas among the trees can accommodate large group cook-outs or a private family picnic. The gazebos and picnic areas are recently updated.

► **Navio**- Just a few hundred yards east of Media Luna sits Navio, the beach for the adventurer. This open water beach creates the largest waves on the southern shore. Boogie boarding and body surfing are the predominant water activities but there is also very good snorkeling along the eastern shoreline. The cave to the east is an amazing photo opportunity. Bring a beach umbrella.

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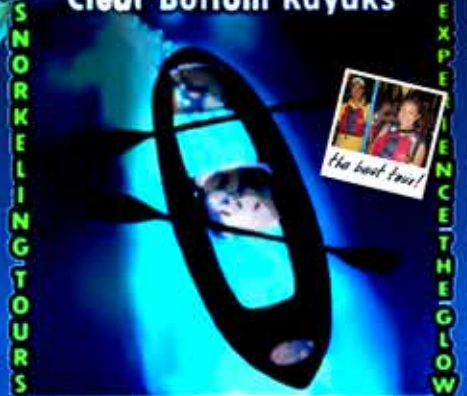


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BANANAS BEACH BAR & GRILL	787-354-0020	11-9						11-9		ESPERANZA
BIEKES BISTRO	787-451-9061	11-11						11-4		ISABEL II
BLUE MOON BAR & GRILL	787-741-3318	9AM-10PM								ESPERANZA
CARAMBOLA AT THE BLUE	787-741-3318	7-3 AND 5-10								ESPERANZA
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COQUI FIRE CAFÉ	787-741-0401	5-9								ISABEL II
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MANGO TAPHOUSE & GASTROPUB	939-891-2764	12:30-8:30					12:30-8:30		RT. 201	
MAR AZUL	787-402-9696	11AM-CLOSE						11AM-2AM		ISABEL II
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SABOR UNICO, INC	787-435-5243		8AM-5PM			8AM-9PM				
TAVERNA	787-438-1100	5:30-CLOSE								ISABEL II
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SAT 7AM-7PM
SUN 7AM-3PM
- ▶ MORALES ALMACENES
ISABEL II
MON-FRI 7AM-4PM
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events

MONTHLY EVENTS

■ March / marzo

March Madness

College Basketball Games, Mango Taphouse and Gastropub.

March 1, Fri.

Opening of the art exhibition 'Hearts in reconstruction' at 7:00 pm at the Museum Fort Count Mirasol.

March 5, Tues.

Rotary Bash-Prom Night, 7-11PM Tickets \$75. For more information www.rotaryvieques.com

March 6th, Wed.

VCHT Bird Walk
7:30 AM – 11:00 AM
Vieques, Meet at VCHT 138 Calle Flamboyán. For more information email vcht.birding.team@gmail.com

Art Opening, 5-7PM, Renowned Puerto Rican Artist, and author: Bernardo Medin, A presentation of artwork and his 2022 James Beard Award Nominated book: The Sofrito Manifesto @ Siddhia Hutchinson Glen Wielgus Gallery

March 7, Thurs.

History of El Pobre, interpretive walk led by Mary Hillery, TICATOVE staff, 9 am on March 7. Meet at El Pobre, western VNWR. Check www.ticatove.org for directions.

March 8, Fri.

Live Music at El Plaza, VQS Players, 7pm start.

March 9, Sat.

Watercolor Workshop by Karilis Morales from 2:00pm to 4:00pm at Museum Fort Count Mirasol.

March 9, Sat.

Art Opening VCHT, My Esperanza 2020 Paintings and Sketches by Valerie Gillete.

March 15th, Fri.

12 X 12 VIEQUES HUMANE SOCIETY & ANIMAL RESCUE BENEFIT ART AUCTION, Online bidding begins March 15 and goes until the closing night event March 29th, 6:30pm. hutchinsonwielgusgallery.com



March 16, Sat.

Cultural Afternoons at the Fort from 2:00pm to 6:00pm in Fort Conde de Mirasol with local artisans, creative workshops, art exhibition and more.

Mar 19, Tues.

Citizen Science Open Lab Day @ VCHT, 2-3PM Elizabeth C. Langhorn Lab, 138 Calle Flamboyán Space is limited. Call 787-741-8850 to reserve space. Admission is FREE however we suggest a donation of \$35 to help fund our conservation efforts of Bio Bay.

March 20, Wed.

VCHT Bird Walk
7:30 AM – 11:00 AM
Vieques, Meet at VCHT 138 Calle Flamboyán. For more information email vcht.birding.team@gmail.com

March 21, Thurs.

Presentation by Ardell Ferrer- Negretti, a leader of the Reserva Natural Parque La Ceiba de Vieques, conservationist, artist and visionary. At YC3/C3Y building (1.5 miles from main entrance gate of VNWR) 4PM Bilingual

March 23, Sat.

Reggae & Rock Party, El Puente La Curvita

March 28, Thurs.

Insects of Vieques, interpretive walk led by Susan Jones, Entomologist. 10 am Thursday, March 38 at Puerto Mosquito NNL Observation Platform.

March 29th, Fri.

Closing night 12 X 12 VIEQUES HUMANE SOCIETY & ANIMAL RESCUE BENEFIT ART AUCTION and final bidding, 5-7pm. Review the artwork on our FaceBook page: Hutchinson/Wielgus Gallery Vieques. Register for online bidding at

March 22, Fri.

Live Music at El Plaza, VQS Players, 7pm start.

March 27, Wed.

Theatrical Improvisation Workshop celebrating International Theater Day from 4:00pm to 6:00pm at Fort Count of Mirasol by Neisha Ramos Benjamin.

■ April / abril

For April Puertorican Culture Institute and Museum Fort Count of Mirasol Activities visit CULTURALPR.COM, Vieques Cultural in FB or IG or www.viequesinsider.com

April 5, Fri.

Live Music at El Plaza, VQS Players, 7pm start.

April 18, Thurs.

Presentation by Sandra Ortiz, Outreach Park Ranger for the VNWR. Speaking on her job as Outreach person for the VNWR -Reduce, Reuse, Recycle At YC3/C3Y building (1.5 miles from main entrance gate of VNWR) 4PM Bilingual.

April 19, Fri.

Live Music at El Plaza, VQS Players, 7pm start.

■ May/ Mayo

May 12, Sun.

Mother's Day! Check www.viequesinsider.com for events.

Mar 19, Tues.

Citizen Science Open Lab Day @ VCHT, 2-3PM Elizabeth C. Langhorn Lab, 138 Calle Flamboyán Space is limited. Call 787-741-8850 to reserve space. Admission is FREE however we suggest a donation of \$35 to help fund our conservation efforts of Bio Bay.

WEEKLY EVENTS

■ Everyday

Yoga 8AM Finca Victoria, www.lafinca.com

■ Mondays / lunes

Zumba, 5PM, Plaza, Isabel II TEA-Dance, 5pm, Mar Azul.

Yoga El Blok Rooftop Sunset 5pm, Requires advance sign up at www.viequeseventplanning.com/yoga/.

Order groceries from www.avieques.com by noon on Monday for delivery to your door on Tuesday.

■ Tuesdays / martes

Salsa, 1PM, in Coliseo Luis Paul González.

Trivia Night, 7PM, Sombrero Viejo, Isabel II.

Open Lab at VCHT, 2-3PM (3rd Tuesday of the month)

Placita Reyes Farmer's Market, 8AM-5PM, on the corner of 201 and 200. Fresh fruits and vegetables.

■ Wednesdays / miercoles

Tai Chi 8:30AM, Sunbay pavilion

Zumba with Aurita, 9am, Coliseo Luis Paul González, Isabel II

Bachata Class with Aurita, 1PM Coliseo Luis Paul González, Isabel II

Yoga Cayo de Tierra Yin Yoga, 9am. Requires advance sign up at www.viequeseventplanning.com/yoga/

■ Thursdays / jueves

Salsa Class with Aurita, 1PM, Coliseo Luis Paul González, Isabel II

Yoga Trade Winds 9am, Requires advance sign up at www.viequeseventplanning.com/yoga/

Bohemian Guitar Nights @ The Blue with Kiwi Kim - 5:30pm

■ Fridays / viernes

Zumba with Aurita, 5PM, Plaza, Isabel II

Yoga Trade Winds 9am, Requires advance sign up at www.viequeseventplanning.com/yoga/

The Only Disco on Vieques, @ La Esquina, DJ Jary Bachata Happy Hour from 8pm and DJ Paul from 10pm playing Top 40, Hip Hop, R&B

Placita Reyes Farmer's Market, 8AM-5PM, on the corner of 201 and 200. Fresh fruits and vegetables.

Live Accoustic on El Blok Rooftop with Harold Rivera. 4pm until 1 hour past sunset.

■ Saturdays / sabado

Bingo, 3PM, Isla Nena Cafe

Karaoke with Nina @ The Mar Azul - 7pm

Yoga El Blok Rooftop Sunrise Yoga 6:30am. Requires advance sign up at www.viequeseventplanning.com/yoga/

■ Sundays / domingo

El Blok Sol Set Sundays with DJ DANNY. 4pm-8pm @ The Rooftop. 18+.

These are just some of the events happening on Vieques! Check the online calendar at www.viequesinsider.com or scan here. If you have a community event be sure to email it to kelly@viequesinsider.com with the subject line VIEQUES EVENT.



ACCOMMODATIONS

At the Waves 201-707-8476
 Bananas Guesthouse 787-354-0020
 Blue Horizon Boutique Resort 787-741-3318
 Casa de Amistad 787-247-1017
 Casa Colores 443-961-5242
 Casa Corona 404-788-2262
 Casa Coqui Verde 787-477-5182
 Casa Fuerte 802-272-0704
 Casa Iguana 802-683-6474
 Casa Tesoro on Facebook
 Casita Cerromar 804-306-3423
 Crab Island Adventures 787-608-8983
 EcoCasa 617-335-4863
 El Blok 787-741-6020
 Encantada 786-239-7591
 Finca Victoria 787-646-0011
 Hacienda Tamarindo 787-741-8525
 Hix Island House 787-435-4590
 Isla Hermosa Guesthouse 787-370-3321
 Lazy Guesthouse 787-741-5555
 La Lanchita 845-891-1502
 800-774-4717
 Lejos Eco Retreat 787-254-8236
 Malecon House 939-239-7113
 Old Crow Hotel & Suites 787-741-0001
 Orita 510-682-3064
 SeaGate Hotel 201-450-8238
 787-741-4661
 SoliMar Guest Studios 787-980-8717
 Suenos del Mar (Fajardo, PR) 787-435-0221
 The Blue 787-741-3318
 The Haven on Facebook
 Tradewinds Guesthouse 787-710-7440
 The Vieques Guesthouse 787-435-1513
 Villa Dos Palmas 802-272-0704
Culebra
 Pelicano Oceanfront Villa Rentals 787-398-8635

ACCOUNTANT

Victor Simmons 787-936-7496

AGRICULTURE

Arte Tropical 787-925-8354
 Finca Consciencia 787-502-4088
 Isla Nena Composta 787-309-8408
 JaFlor 267-968-4197
 La Colmena Cimarrona 787-502-4088
 Extensión Agrícola 787-765-8000 x3921

AIRLINES

Aerotaxi Charters 787-718-8869
 Air Flamenco 787-724-1818
 Air Sunshine 954-434-8900
 Cape Air 800-227-3247
 M&N Aviation 787-791-7090
 Sebastian Aero Services Inc. 787-630-5389
 Vieques Air Link 888-901-9247

ANIMAL WELFARE

Hooves on the Ground 787-308-7876
 Juntos 787-436-6817
 Our Big Fat Caribbean Rescue 787-349-8480
 Vieques Humane Society & Animal Rescue 787.741.0209

ARCHITECTS

Arquitecto Stanley Hutchinson 787-556-5537

ART GALLERIES/LESSONS/ARTISTS

Carmen Lund / Painting Classes 203.444.1806
 Art Vault /Ernesto Peña 939-248-7200
 Fuerte Conde Mirasol 787-375-0525
 Galleria Isabel Segunda 207-467-0590
 Oro Vieques 510-682-3064
 Kadosh Art Gallery 787-371-8390
 Linda Castren 828-243-2565
 Lucky One Designs 787-223-8203
 Luna Loca 843-271-1910
 Lulu Atkin Ceramics 787-232-4976
 Painted Paw Studio/Sarah Shearer 615-812-9144
 Sandra Reyes 787-435-1155
 Siddhia Hutchinson
 Glen Wielgus Gallery 787-556-5409
 Vieques Historical Trust 787-741-8850

BEE REMOVAL

Apiario Bieke 787-312-5848

ATTORNEY

Gino Negretti VQS Office 787-467-4349
 San Juan Office 787-725-5500

BIKE TOURS/RENTAL

Bieke Eco Trips 787-922-2701
 JAK Water Sports 787-644-7112
 Fun Brothers 787-435-9372

BIOBAY TOURS

Abes 787-435-1362
 Aqua Sunset Tours 939-208-6147
 Bieke Eco Trips 787-922-2701
 Black Beard Sports 939-283-6841
 Dindin's Tours 787-403-5581
 Fun Brothers 787-435-9372
 Isla Nena Bio Bay Tours (boat) 787-403-5581
 Jak Water Sports 787-644-7112
 Salty Spirit 787-477-8664
 Taino Aqua Adventures 787-349-6964
 Tropical Reef Water Sports 787-249-8914
 Wai Vie 787-247-3249

CAR RENTAL / AUTOMOTIVE

Avis Ceiba 787-885-0505 / VQS 787-397-2533
 Bravos Boys Car Rental 787-741-1856
 Coqui Car Rental 787-741-3696
 Fun Brothers 787-435-9372
 Island Jeep Rental 787-741-0190
 Maritza's Car Rental 787-741-0078, 500-1666
 Scooters for Rent 939-437-2053
 Vieques Car Rental 787-412-8540

CAR WASH AND DETAILING

JDtailing Shampoo & Car Wash 787-556-6458

CATERERS

Biekies Bistro 787-435-9339
 Cocina de Vicente 787-232-7386
 Dexters BBQ Catering 787-435-9173
 La Tabla del Chef 939-208-4964
 Nicole Olivelli 787-435-1569
 Your Personal Chef (Waldo) 787-487-4244

CONSTRUCTION/HANDYMAN

Centro Commercial Florida 787-741-2571
 EDK Design Services 787-435-3548
 Enid Medina 787-308-8501
 Ferreteria Victoria 787-741-3061
 Isla Nena Renovations 787-233-1560
 Island Services & Management 787-238-9108
 M&M of Vieques 787-741-2577
 Navarro Construction 787-741-2577
 Rosas Depot 787-741-1307
 Thompson Construction 203-217-1454
 Tony's Painting 787-602-8359
 Tony Handyman 787-556-9941
 Vieques Locksmith 787-564-5120

DANCE CLASSES

Aurita 787-477-1334
 Ivette Yolanda 787-435-1289

DERMATOLOGIST

Elena Nogales 787-860-4500

ELECTRICIANS

High Quality Electrical Contractor 787-446-6063

ELECTRONICS/PHONE ACCESSORIES

Fire Fi 619-708-1444/787-435-2024
 Quiñones Electronics 787-400-1183

EQUIPMENT RENTAL

Aqua Sunset Tours 939-208-6147
 Bieke Eco Trips 787-922-2701
 Black Beard Sports 939-283-6841
 Fun Brothers 787-435-9372
 Jak Water Sports 787-644-7112

EXTERMINATORS

AAA Pest Control 939-777-4917
 Isla Nena Exterminating 787-310-1363
 Professional Exterminating 787-449-6950

FISHING

Abes 787-435-1362
 Amity Charters 787-502-3839
 Bieke Eco tours 787-922-2701
 Dindin's Tours 787-403-5581
 El Pescador Fishing & Marine Store 787-231-2624
 Salty Spirit 787-477-8664
 Taino Aqua Adventures 787-349-6964
 Wai Vie 787-247-3249

FITNESS

Flex Gym 404-358-7831

GROCERY

Family Market 787-968-3130
 Superdescuento Morales 787-306-3316
 Pescaderia/Fish Market 787-349-8660

HARDWARE STORE

Rosa's Depot 787-741-1307

HIKING TOURS

Black Beard Sports 939-283-6841
 Ticatove 787-428-8288 (text)

HORSEBACK RIDING

Colon Horseback Riding 787-237-9236
 Esperanza Riding Company 787-435-0073
 Jurutungo Farm 215-692-7374
 Sea Gate Hotel 201-450-8238

INTERNET

FireFi 939-239-3871

JET SKIS

Tropical Reef Water Sports 787-435-9372
 Fun Brothers 787-249-8914

KAYAK TOURS

Abes 787-435-1362
 Bieke Eco Trips 787-922-2701
 Black Beard Sports 939-283-6841
 Dindin's Tours 787-403-5581
 Fun Brothers 787-435-9337
 Salty Spirit 787-477-8664
 Jak Water Sports 787-644-7112
 Taino Aqua Adventures 787-349-6964
 Wai Vie 787-247-3249

LANDSCAPING

Anchor Landscaping 787-479-5801
 Tree Tender 860-428-4386

LAUNDROMAT

Isla Nena Laundromat 787-435-5615

LIQUOR

Crab Island Rum Distillery 787-934-8015

MASSAGE

Ayurvedic Wellness at Finca Victoria 787-646-0011
 Ayurveda Yoga & Massage 970-729-0505
 Beatriz Beauty Boutique & Spa 787-556-8662
 Blue Hill Reflexology and Massage 787-988-5914
 Rising Dawn 248-470-5495 (Tanaya)
 939-389-5556 (Pamela)
 Vieques Massage Ingrid Bergman 787-435-1313

MEDICAL CANNIBIS DISPENSARY

Punto Verde (Fajardo) 787-420-1021

MUSEUMS

Forte Conde Mirasol 787-375-0525
 Vieques Historical & Conservation Trust 787-741-8850

PADDLEBOARD

Abes 787-435-1362
 Bieke Eco Trips 787-922-2701
 Black Beard Sports 939-283-6841
 Fun Brothers 787-435-9372
 Jak Water Sports 787-644-7112
 Nauti Mermaid 754-216-8168
 Wai Vie 787-247-3249

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO

E.P. Anderson Photography 971-605-9406
 Daniel Fernández Photography 323-578-5788

PHYSICIANS/MEDICAL SERVICES

ASSMCA 787-741-4767
 Behavioral Health Care 888-440-8787
 Centro Quiropráctico 787-741-0414
 Consejería Psicológica 787-547-9467
 Dra. Daphne Torres (Dentista) 787-741-1916
 Farmacia San Antonio 787-741-8397
 Dra. Ivette Perez 787-468-2000
 Dr. José Figueroa 787-223-1687, 787-366-1931
 Dra. Fanny Garraton (dentist) 787-741-8765
 Health Pro Med 787-468-2000
 Hospicio 800-981-0054
 Dr. Luis Rivera 787-718-2250
 Vieques CDT 787-685-3960, 787-741-0398

POOL MAINTENANCE/SUPPLIES

Anchor Landscaping 787-479-5801
 Blue Water Pool (Supplies / Fajardo) 787-328-4994
 Pool Spa Tech Services 787-506-4898

PUBLICOS/TAXIS

A to B Taxi -Liza and Arturo 787-981-8023
 Angel Hernandez 787-425-3919
 Angel 787-243-2564
 or 939-224-2773
 Angie Chauffeur 787-455-4596
 Cocolo (late night) 787-328-3940
 Danny (Pinita) 787-556-9623
 Diego Quiñones 787-590-7068
 Esteban Carle (Tebin) 787-486-1145
 Esteban Ortiz (Tolo) 787-435-9608
 Freddi 787-672-9264
 Gabriel Cordero 787-245-7068
 Gerry's Transportation 787-710-6667
 787-988-5357

Hector (Tito) 787-219-3899
 Heraldó Pérez 787-710-6667
 José Felix (Cheo) 787-486-9202
 Juan Carmona 787-645-2329
 Kalet Pérez 787-585-9560
 Miguel Ayala 787-328-3940
 Tata Robles 787-486-0267
 Tuty 787-380-3007
 Letty Perez/Kiany Tours 787-556-6003
 M&M Taxi 939-208-1600
 Vieques Taxi 787-741-TAXI 8294
 Vieques Tours & Transportation 787-397-2048

PUBLICOS/TAXIS PUERTO RICO PUBLICOS (CEIBA AND SAN JUAN AREA)

CR Transportation (Puerto Rico) 787-614-8874
 Julian Transfers 787-887-5957, 787-385-7604
 Daniel Rivera 787-239-4300/787-398-0231
 Als taxi 787-590-9001
 Efrain Ortiz 787-225-4944
 John's Publico 787-354-5851
 John Rosario 787-354-5851
 José Segura 939-272-1968
 Angelito 939-224-2760
 Julian 787-245-6145
 Palma's Transportation /Jay 787-627-8264
 Hernan Nieves 787-674-0984

PUBLICATIONS /PRINTING

Jo-chanel Crafts & Print Shop 787-387-7597
 Vieques Insider Magazine 787-435-3172

REAL ESTATE

Bravos Boyz 787-550-6913
 787-550-6917
 Colibrí Realty 845-430-7479
 Island Real Estate 787-458-7997
 787-334-2943
 787-741-7001
 Paraiso Realty 787-900-8909
 Rainbow Realty 787-741-4312
 Broker Marin 787-225-5604
 Broker Wetherby 787-380-4990
 Vieques Properties 646-705-3549
 787-216-6213

RESTAURANTS & BARS

Aurora's Chicken & Grill 787-407-9067
 Bananas 787-354-0020
 Biekes Bistro 787-435-9339
 Blue Moon Bar & Grill 787-741-3318
 Bugas Mexican Restaurant 787-424-3434
 Carambola at The Blue 787-741-3318
 Casa Nativo 787-556-9920
 Coqui Fire 787-741-0401
 Dexters BBQ Food Truck 787-435-9173
 D'Frozz 787-239-4081
 Don Tito's Lechon 787-741-2898
 El Local 787-245-0936
 El Plaza 939-391-4916
 Finca Victoria 787-646-0011
 Fusion @Vieques Guesthouse 787-435-1513
 Gonzos 787-435-2801
 Kristy's on the Caribe 717-226-6257
 La Tabla del Chef 939-208-4964
 Lazy Jacks Pub 787-741-1447
 Mama Mia 787-692-0742
 Mango Taphouse & Gastropub 939-891-2764
 Marshmallows 787-930-2365
 Placita @ El Blok 787-741-6020
 Robin's Mojito Bar 787-231-8484
 Rincon del Café 787-423-4336
 Rincon del Sabor 939-358-1783
 Rincontaco 939-239-4808
 Rising Roost (Guake'te) on Facebook
 Sabor Unico, Inc 787-435-5243
 Mar Azul 939-402-9696
 Taverna 787-438-1100
 Trade Winds Restaurant 787-710-7440

SAILING/BOATS

Nauti Mermaid 754-216-8168
 Salty Spirit 787-477-8664
 Vieques Catamaran 408-386-1253
 Vieques Sailing Charters 939-332-5778

SCUBA

Blackbeard Sports 939-283-6841

SERVICES

Best Life Tarot Consults 2032143565
 Edwin appliance repair 787-209-1709
 Francisco washer/dryer repair 787-209-0059
 Narcotics Anonymous 508-873-4576
 Isla Nena Exterminating 787-310-1363
 Fire Fi 619-708-1444/787-435-2024
 JDtailing Shampoo & Car Wash 787-556-6458
 Gofers 787-220-0943
 Marc Weems 787-564-5120
 Recycling 787-741-5000 x2351
 Tony's Painting 787-602-8359
 Upholstery NorthStar Canvas 945-882-8229
 Vieques Gas 787-741-2551
 WASPR, Inc. 939-717-2121
 Vieques Tech Services 858-337-3116
 Vieques Humane Society & Animal Rescue 787.741.0209

SHOPPING

Atrevida at El Blok 787-741-6020
 Bazar la Caridad (thrif) 787-590-8575
 Dulce Mango facebook
 El Pescador Fishing & Marine Store 787-231-2624
 Finca Victoria 787-646-0011
 Lulu's Ceramics 787-232-4976
 Luna Loca 787-685-2992, 803-292-3862
 MamaPlaya Himalaya 787-548-1010
 Muebleria Quiñones 787-400-4004
 Ola Loca Beach Store 843-271-1910
 Oro 510-682-3064
 Quiñones Electronics 787-400-1183
 Rosas Depot 787-741-1307
 Scallywags 787-966-7540
 Siddhia Hutchinson & Glen Wielgus Gallery 787-556-5409
 Trade Winds Gift Shop 787-710-7440
 VCHT Gift Shop 787-741-8850
 Vieques Gifts 787-435-1244
 Vieques Soap Co. 787-909-0143

SIGHTSEEING TOURS

Bieque Eco Trips 787-922-2701
 Black Beard Sports 939-283-6841
 Vieques Island Tours & Transport. 787-397-2048
 Beach Hop VQS Island Tours 787-397-2048

SNORKEL/SNORKEL BOAT (B) TOURS

Abes (B) 787-435-1362
 Aqua Sunset Tours 939-208-6147
 Black Beard Sports (B) 939-283-6841
 Bieque Eco Trips (B) 787-922-2701
 Crystal Clear Vieques 787-242-1071
 Fun Brothers 787-435-9372
 Jak Water Sports (B) 787-644-7112
 Nauti Mermaid (luxury B) 754-216-8168
 Salty Spirit (B) 787-477-8664
 Taino Aqua Adventures (B) 787-349-6964
 Vieques Sailing Charters 939-332-5778
 Wai Vie 787-247-3249

SOLAR

Vieques Solar 939.273-0183
 (Rooftop) Solar Ambassador Program 939-391-9713

SPA/SALON/ESTHETICIAN/HAIR

Beatriz Beauty Boutique & Spa 787-556-8662
 Finca Victoria 787-646-0011
 Vieques Boutique Spa 939-279-6920

TOWING

Alex 939-238-9033
 Biggie 787-233-0879
 Chepo Towing 787-966-3985
 Freddy 787-608-9914
 Josaen Maldonado 939-247-9825

TRANSPORT

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

VET

Sam Shone 845-800-5352
 Vieques Humane Society & Animal Rescue 787-741-0209

WEDDING/EVENT PLANNERS

Eva Bolivar 787-402-0357
 Green Eyed Girl Weddings 971-506-9406
 Vieques Natural Wellness 787-436-1055

YOGA / LIFE COACHING

Ayurveda Yoga & Massage 970-729-0505
 Esperanza Yoga w/Valerie 508-945-7643
 Vieques Natural Wellness 787-436-1055
 Vieques Pilates, Yoga & Wellness 231-383-1885

MUNICIPAL / GOV. AGENCIES / PUBLIC SERVICE

Banco Popular 787-741-2071
 City Hall/Alcaldía 787-741-5000
 Sun Bay 787-741-8198
 US Fish and Wildlife Office 787-741-2138
 Recycling Office 787-741-5000
 Post Office 787-741-3891
 PR Tourism Office Vieques Airport 787-741-2300
 Isabel II 787-741-0800
 AAA Autoridad de Acueductos 787-620-2482
 FWS 787-741-2138
 Vieques Post Office 202-791-7632
 Vieques Gas 787-469-7734
 Vieques Covid Hotline 787-340-3837

EMERGENCY

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



Island Real Estate

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EASY TROPICAL LIVING! Well maintained sunny 2 bedroom 1.5 bath home on half an acre of fenced land in Monte Santo. Wonderful roof deck for entertaining has peaceful pastoral views, with a peek of the ocean, an outdoor kitchen area with a sink, a half bath, and an outside shower. It's a tranquil place to do yoga and watch the sun rise. Flowing open concept bi-level floor plan, with the living room just three steps down from the kitchen and dining area. Large terrace off the living room, perfect for a nightcap and star-gazing. The bedrooms are air conditioned, and the huge main bathroom has both a Jacuzzi and a wet shower. There is also an outside storage space, a shower room, and a laundry room. Plenty of room for gardens and a pool. Titled. **\$348,000**



*Four bedroom getaway with Stunning Views of the North Beaches.
Five minutes to Isabel II and Esperanza.*

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Las Terrazas Vacation Rental

GUARDIANS OF THE BIOBAY NATURAL RESERVE

Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust's Enduring Quest to Protect the World's Brightest Bioluminescent Bay on the Planet

MARK MARTIN BRAS



It is a vision from a dream, a dream of nature still thriving at its best. One look at the magical world inside Puerto Mosquito will connect you to what nature hides within its beauty—a myriad of creatures and organisms illuminated by a captivating natural phenomenon that is both easy to love and hard to describe.

MIKE COREY



AUSTEJSON.COM



The magic of the Biobay is created by single cell organisms called *Pyrodinium bahamense* (whirling fire of the Bahamas), a type of luminescent dinoflagellate. This single cell microscopic plankton is able to convert chemical energy into light energy. It synthesizes luciferin with the enzyme luciferase plus oxygen which produces a bluish-green light thought to be a defense mechanism.

In darkness, the bay comes alive with the captivating radiance of bioluminescence. Single-cell organisms—dinoflagellates—respond as a defense mechanism. They produce a radiant blue-green glow when disturbed. If you have not yet ventured with a licensed guide to experience the bay, it is not to be missed. There is no other as bright in the world. We have the protectors of the BioBay to thank for that.

The bioluminescent bay is part of the Vieques Bioluminescent Bay Natural Reserve under the jurisdiction of The Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources and co-managed by The Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust.

The Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust (VCHT) plays a pivotal role in safeguarding and conserving the bioluminescent bay on Vieques. Through scientific



research, education, and community engagement, VCHT actively works to preserve the delicate ecosystems of the bay. The organization monitors water samples weekly, conducts environmental assessments, and implements sustainable practices to minimize human impact. VCHT also plays a crucial role in raising awareness among locals and visitors about the importance of responsible tourism and the significance of the bioluminescent bay to the island's biodiversity.

The reserve encompasses Sunbay (and the two "Cayos" that are in front of Esperanza), Media Luna, Navio beach, and a series of wetlands and mangrove forests of great importance. The reserve also extends 9 miles to sea, to include coral reefs and other important residents of our southern coast.

Heralded as the brightest bioluminescent bay in the world, Puerto Mosquito is featured in the Guinness Book of World Record, with a concentration of 720,000 bioluminescent dinoflagellates per gallon of water.

Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust

For 39 years the VCHT has been protecting the BioBay with erosion and sedimentation control, water quality monitoring, dinoflagellate counts and restoration efforts.

The mystique of the bay is that it has many secrets. There are still many unknowns, elusive correlations, and a variability of the concentration of organisms still being studied. The record numbers that are referenced represent the bay at its best. In reality, the concentrations fluctuate to much lower numbers, yet the bay looks spectacular even at a fifth of the reported records.

The dinoflagellate, *Pyrodinium bahamense*, a single-cell microscopic plankton, has actually reached much higher abundance, with populations recovering after the devastation of Hurricane Maria. Airamzul Cabral Guadalupe, biologist and Director of the Elizabeth C. Langhorne Laboratory at the VCHT, reported a concentration of 879,333 *P. bahamense* per liter (3,319,000 per gallon) on March 12, 2019. This measurement was a record for the 9-year sampling project the VCHT lab has been conducting.

The following graph shows an average abundance from the VCHT study, which is funded by the VCHT and the Puerto Rico Legislature. It excludes the Hurricane Maria years (Jorge Fernandez-Porto and the VCHT lab developed an analysis for that period, which is available during Open Lab events at the VCHT.

A bioluminescent bay is composed of a series of ecological components. One of the most amazing discoveries scientists have made is that they were formed by a combination of oceanographic and atmospheric conditions, allowing several ecosystems and their biodiversity to thrive and provide the perfect recipe for this phenomenon.



Seagrass, Coral and Mangroves

MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTS

Along with the monitoring of plankton abundance and water quality parameters to check the pulse of the bay, the VCHT has developed a series of community-based, climate change adaptation projects. The community-based projects restore ecosystems impacted by Hurricane Maria and anthropogenic causes, and provide solutions and actions to address climate change and its effects on our beloved natural treasure.

Seagrass Bed Restoration

Seagrass beds provide protection from erosion. They are a home and restaurant to many creatures and play a role in the cyst stage of the dinoflagellate's lifecycle. As part of the VCHT's latest restoration project, new seagrass beds will be planted in the bioluminescent bay.



Coral Restoration

Coral reefs are the first line of defense for the bay. They slow down wave action and provide a protective barrier for the coastline during storm swells. Many of the organisms that are born in the mangroves and the seagrass beds go on to live on the coral reef. The VCHT teamed up with the renowned SAM (Sociedad Ambiente Marino) team to carry out a 3-year coral restoration program with coral farms, and building capacity for locals who are interested in participating.



Mangrove Restoration

The VCHT's Mangrove Project continues and now celebrates its 5-year anniversary. The Nursery has been revamped and is growing more trees and additional species, creating more jobs for the community. Along with The Ocean Foundation and Manuel Merello Consulting, the nursery will be expanding to include mangrove and hydrology restoration.



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



With a grant from Well Beings Charities, VCHT will launch an educational campaign inviting the community to embark on a collective journey toward environmental conservation.





Steve Simonsen

Puerto Mosquito is recognized around the world as one of the last remaining pristine Bioluminescent Bays. With its restoration efforts, research, light pollution initiatives, and MANTA education programs, the VCHT has created a community-based approach to the conservation of this important natural resource. We face an important moment in the history of bioluminescent bays. The growth in tourism, climate change, and ongoing development pose potential threats and require that we study the bay's carrying capacity, address climate change conditions, and ensure that the development around it is sustainable and in tune with this complex and fragile system. The residents, guides, teachers, and students who carry on the message of protecting Puerto Mosquito and participate in its conservation have created a conservation science community. As you travel through this bay of magic, respect the rules and regulations, control your lights so you can see the stars above and below, and remember, there is still magic in nature that we must conserve. ■



LIRIO MARQUEZ
Directora Ejecutiva
Executive Director

The VCHT's Executive Director and her team constantly advocate for public policy that creates a legislative understanding of the unique needs the bioluminescent bay nature reserve has. The team has participated in many planning sessions in Puerto Rico, the United States of America, and at the international level in GLISPA (Global Island Partnership) and the Western Tropical Atlantic decade of planning team for the United Nations. Lirio is currently a co-chair in the Climate Strong Islands Network.



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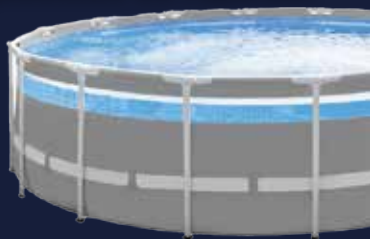
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Woman of Peace

Myrna Pagan

By Kim Schneider



Myrna Pagán keeps the needs of Vieques in front of the world as she lives a life that seeks justice, world peace and a daily dip in the waters of the island she loves.



Elliot Anderson



Ed Knisely

Tiny reinitas flit past a frangipani tree draped in Tibetan prayer flags, over a mellow dog flopped in the open doorway, to a lantern in which the little sugar birds have been building

nests for more than a few generations.

Myrna Pagán has painted the walls of her island home in various shades of blue, some more akin to the summer sky, others the deep blue of her beloved Caribbean Sea sparkling in the distance. The weavings that grace the backs of chairs mirror her multi-layered life as artist, abuela and activist.

The colorful oil paintings—most of them her own work—say even more. Some capture icons like the Buddhist goddess of compassion, a trait she calls her driving force, while others illustrate her philosophy that we are all connected. You see that in the way the hair of a woman morphs in soft curves into colorful fish and birds, such as those with whom she so openly shares her tropical home.

Other pieces showcase both the humor and directness she's brought to improving the island in so many ways. Some hint at the need for ongoing advocacy on an island once used for bombing practice and attack simulation by the U.S. Navy. But in another piece recently on display at an exhibit at El Fortin Conde de Mirasol, she's captured a sunburned tourist in a golf cart, a girl wearing a bathing suit so skimpy she appears to be wearing no clothes, looking at her phone and paying no attention to the surroundings. The message: Don't be this person.

* * * * *

Pagán is a picture of elegance with wavy silver hair and an artist's sensibility that adds class to even casual beach garb. But it's her accomplishments that stand out strikingly and the reason that she was recently honored as an elder who has contributed much to both the community and the Taino culture.

She served as the first president of the Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust, the group best known for its preservation of the brightest bioluminescent bay in the world. She drew on a master's degree in fine arts and literature to start TAINA, an art cooperative for island women as they and others recovered from devastating Hurricane Hugo. When she (in her words) "awakened" to the fact that people on the island were being sickened from contamination related to U.S. Navy maneuvers, she spoke out. And she gained notoriety as one of the first people arrested in a massive but peaceful protest that brought an end to the Navy's presence on the island.



In recent years, through her group *Vidas Viequesenses Valen* (Vieques Lives Matter), she has testified seven times before the United Nations decolonization committee. One more appearance is likely in her future to support a granddaughter who has been active in bringing more health care options to the island. Like she has every other time, she will first go for a swim. "I pray for everybody I can think of, then I step into the sea, right in front of my house," she says. "Then I am reborn, I am energized, I am calm and serene. I can present a picture of the terrible neglect taking place. But what I feel I bring when I leave here is a sense of hope, a sense of peace, a sense of love and compassion."

Now, she's begun yet another chapter—at 88—as a member of The National Council of Elders, a prestigious group of leaders in the peace and Civil Rights movements. As she serves with other leaders, she says her goal is to help create a blessed world community rooted in peace and justice. Closer to home, she's focused on an intergenerational effort to mentor a new generation of young people with their own creative ideas and hope.



Volume 105

ESPAÑOL e INGLES

Late February 1997

THE VIEQUES TIMES

153 Flamboyán St. Vieques Island, Puerto Rico 00765

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE ISLA NENA
Unexploded Military Rockets found in Luján
Cohetes militares sin explotar en Luján



* * * * *

Her parents, Pagán says with a smile, never quite understood what would take their daughter – born in San Juan, raised in New York City, educated at top universities and accustomed to singing jazz in evening gowns – to an island where she'd help her husband scale fish.

But hers is a great love story, both with the fascinating blue-eyed journalist (and fisherman) who grabbed her heart at first sight and with the fascinating island to which he would lead her.

“We left show business and the San Juan hub-bub to come here and lead as humble, simple and natural life as we could to bring up our babies and children,” she said. “I learned how to fall in love with a place—how the place becomes so much a part of you, the beauty of its nature, the rebirth you find in its waters, that you really want to protect it. You are in love, and you want to protect it. Whatever comes in that boosts your spirit is not to keep, it's to send out. It's to share, and you make room for more.”

Pagán is chatting this day about the concept of **synchronicity** as rays of light filtering in from high windows and soaring ceilings make almost a halo around her. Surrounding her, too, is evidence of a rich life filled with great joy and great sorrow. There's the framed Purple Heart and Silver Star her husband Charley Connelly earned for heroism while still a young Marine in the Korean War. There's also the family portrait of her, Charlie and five sun-kissed children. Prayer beads strung overtop the frame suggest continuous protection for both of the ones still active on the island and the two that she lost along with her husband. She and Charlie would live in fairytale villages in Spain and later Morocco before coming to the island where he'd long kept a hammock in a shack along with a manual typewriter that sat atop milk crates. Together, the couple would go on to run the island's bilingual newspaper, *The Vieques Times*, for nearly 20 years, and Charlie would found and lead the island's fisherman's association.

What she didn't know at the time, but had recently discovered in written family history, was that

her grandmother was born on Vieques after her great grandparents came from the Canary Islands in a movie-worthy plot that involves some sort of alliance with a Robin Hood-style pirate.

They would become known as Puerto Rican healers and leaders and give Pagán island roots going back five generations.

Her connection with nature has, if anything, grown. During the “dolphin chapter” of her life, her

“I learned how to fall in love with a place—how the place becomes so much a part of you, the beauty of its nature, the rebirth you find in its waters, that you really want to protect it.”

children, introduced to the water as toddlers would come home with tales of lying on the ocean floor with the animal they called Flipper. They called her outside one day when the dolphin was visiting, and she plunged in fully clothed to end up being lifted out of the water by the visitor, then to endlessly roll and play with it with a feeling she called pure ecstasy. Another day, she recalls, she stepped off her porch

during an eclipse. “I saw that every single leaf had the image of the eclipse, that everything is touched,” she says. “It makes you feel that you are nature and nature is you.”

The golden glow of late afternoon light is falling as Captain Fluffy, her dog, nudges her arm in a way that's as predictable as an alarm clock. It's time for the woman whose Taino name is Inaro Kuni (woman of the sacred waters) to head to the beach with her faithful pal and companion for the 10 years since she lost her husband.

They pile into a Toyota with a front license plate reading Paz para Vieques and park at the end of Playa Sun Bay. Fluffy jumps in first then chases a few coconuts before they drive the shortcut (as he dries) to a secluded spot overlooking Cayo de Tierra. She takes both ends of her shawl, holds it out like wings, and smiles as she talks of the miracles she's seen happen in the water and the way she hopes her ashes are one day spread at the top of the distant hill so she could keep watch over it all.





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Up the hill from Maritza's



But really, Myrna Pagan has never stopped watching. This same week, she has already given an interview to a crew from Russian Television International. They turned to her as an expert on the Navy's ongoing cleanup and island's related health issues, and for good reason. She and her Vieques Lives Matter group were instrumental in getting an allocation of \$10 million toward the cleanup of a section of the island now designated a Superfund site. She now vocally advocates as an official member of the Navy's Restoration Advisory Board for caution in the detonation of unexploded ordnance so there's no further spread of toxins or contamination.

Another evening, she opens a webinar of a committee of the National Council of Elders by reading her poem "The Boy in the Rubble" for an event titled "From Terror to Transformation: Can the violence in Palestine-Israel become a turning point for humanity?"

If she sees hope for a world affected by "racism, militarism and materialism," she has optimism for the island, too, especially because of the activism of the island's women and youth.

"They are organized," she says. "Every day you could go to a different meeting place where they are working on different aspects of the growth problems of the new Vieques. They're tackling issues like gentrification and ongoing problems faced by a colony

of a colony. For us, decisions are made, often without representation."

Her grandson Abdiel Connelly is just one of many young people offering light. He's living on a boat, once did a 12-hour swim to protest the island's lack of transportation options and is now launching a sustainable fishing project that begins by forging a connection between young divers and the sea.

He takes no credit at all, calling the protagonist the ocean floor by saying "My role is just to introduce the community to it." while crediting his parents and grandparents who helped raise him with the island as a classroom and an ethic of making a difference. Of Pagán, he says, the traits that most influence are peace, love, faithfulness and firmness.

"Hers is a beautiful way of inspiration," he said. "It's a way of faith, that all is possible." ■

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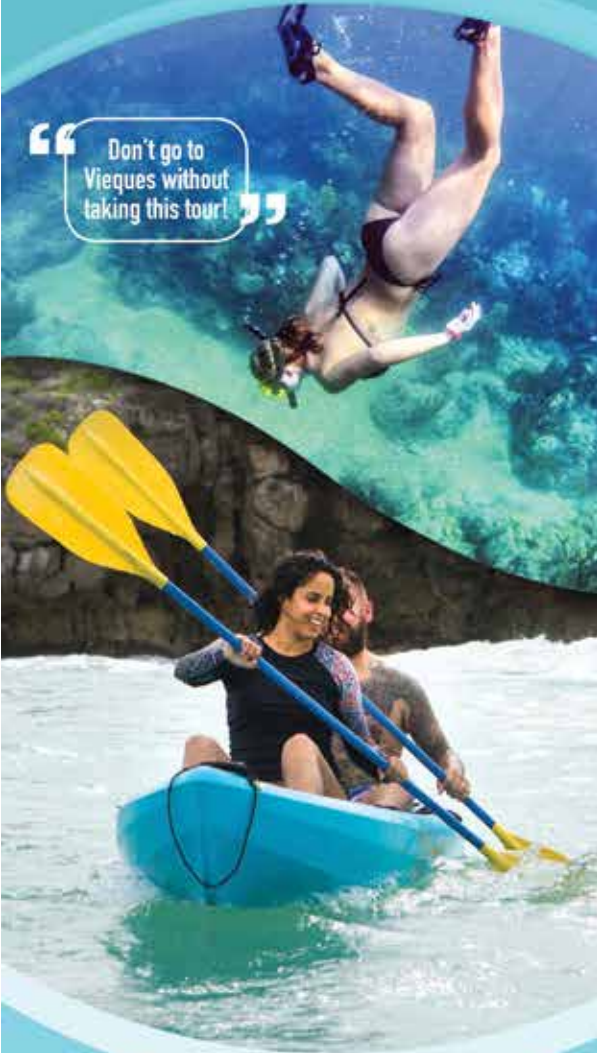
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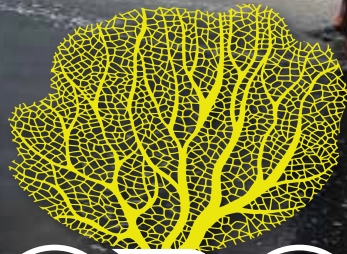
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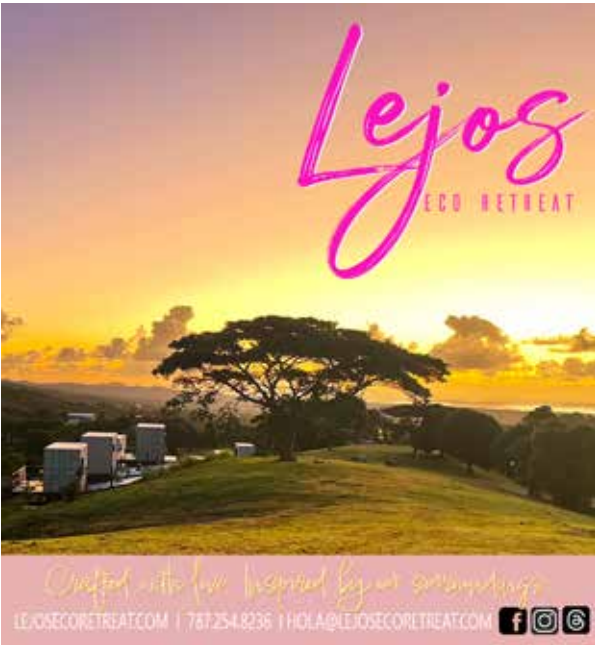


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LEY / LAW 51-2022

LEY PARA PROHIBIR EL EXPENDIO Y UTILIZACIÓN DE PLÁSTICOS DE UN SOLO USO EN TODO ESTABLECIMIENTO COMERCIAL

Para prohibir el expendio y utilización de plásticos de un solo uso en todo establecimiento comercial, de venta y de distribución autorizado a realizar negocios conforme a las leyes del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico; establecer un término de transición para cumplir con lo dispuesto en esta Ley; disponer de un procedimiento de orientación a tales fines; y establecer penalidades; y para otros fines relacionados.

La definición de plástico de un solo uso es todo artefacto de material plástico, tales como cubiertos, platos, sorbetos, vasos, tazas y contenedores hechos de poliestireno expandido (conocido como "foam"). Sea consumo inmediato (en establecimiento) o para llevar (to-go).

Esta Ley 51 entra en vigor el 1 de junio de 2024. En los primeros seis (6) meses de entrar en vigor la Ley al detectarse una infracción a la misma procederá la notificación de una falta. A partir del 1 de diciembre de 2024 la primera infracción es de \$500 dólares, la segunda infracción es de \$1,000 dólares y las infracciones ulteriores de \$5,000 dólares. Excepciones a esta Ley - Declaración de Emergencia Nacional/Estatal (por el gobierno), Envasado de carne (cruda, comestibles).

LAW TO PROHIBIT THE SALE AND USE OF SINGLE-USE PLASTICS IN ALL COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS A PARTIR DEL 1 DE JUNIO DE 2024

To prohibit the sale and use of single-use plastics in all commercial, retail, and distribution establishments authorized to function according to the laws of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; to establish a transition phase to comply with the provisions of the law; to provide guidelines for merchants and the general public; and to establish penalties for non-compliance with the mandates of the Law.

The sale and use of single-use plastics in all commercial, retail, and distribution establishments is prohibited by this Law. Law 51-2022 The definition of single use plastic are any plastic artifact, such as cutlery, plates, straws, cups, and food containers, and containers made of expanded polystyrene (better known as "sty-rofoam"), whether for immediate consumption (in store) or take out (to-go).

Law 51 comes into effect on June 1, 2024. In the first six (6) months after the Law comes into effect, if an infraction is detected, a notification of a violation will be issued. As of December 1, 2024, the first infringement will be \$500, the second infringement will be \$1,000 and subsequent infringement will be \$5,000. Exceptions to this law are: National/State Emergency Declaration (by government) and meat packaging (raw, groceries).

Dudas o preguntas (Doubts or questions contact):
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Our drinking water comes from rivers of El Junque, the Rainforest of Puerto Rico. In compliance with state and federal regulations, the Aqueduct and Sewer Authority analyze more than 90 possible contaminants that may be in drinking water. Vieques drinking water is 100% compliant and verified by the EPA. It is safe to drink. So save your money and skip the bottled water! Bring your own thermoflask to take with you to the beach. Hydrate! Your body and the island will thank you!

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RECYCLE ON VIEQUES

Currently dry cardboard, washed plastic and aluminum cans are recycled (aluminum and plastic does not need to be separated). The recycling staff are doing everything they can with limited crew, equipment and without electricity or water at their processing location. The material is transported to ISCO in Caguas, Puerto Rico. Hector Melendez, Director of Recycling, has offered his personal cell number and has asked that locals organize within their neighborhoods to collect at a house and call them to come pick up the recyclables from that location on a weekly basis. If you call them, they will come! Hector Melendez 787-646-4180.

DROP OFF LOCATIONS

- ▶ **At the end of Calle Regimiento 65 de Infanteria at Public Works Office.** Drive down Calle Muñoz Rivera (main street of Isabel II) toward the ocean. Take the last possible left onto Calle Plinio Peterson. At the next intersection make a right onto dead end and the recycling is at the Public Works building on the left.
- ▶ **Bunker 403** on the West Side of Vieques on 994 serves as the recycling center. Past the airport, Parque La Ceiba and Crab Island Rum Distillery, the left turn to the recycling center is aprox 1 mi. past distillery. Look for painted, pallet signs. The recycling center is the third bunker on the right. Leave your bagged recyclables on the loading dock or in bins located at the entrance. Make a day of it by visiting the Ceiba tree, Rompeolas pier, Crab Island Rum Distillery and then visit the bunkers stopping at Bunker 403 to recycle!



Hearts in Reconstruction

ART AS THERAPY

A group of brave women use art as therapy to find solace and hope in the face of shared grief: the loss of a child.

Guiding them through this healing process is artist Sandra Reyes, a passionate advocate for the transformative power of art in communities. Sandra, who arrived in Vieques in the 80s, experienced her own struggles, working odd jobs to survive. Despite her challenges, she never wavered in her dedication to painting, viewing it as her therapy and escape. Thanks to a generous grant from the Centro Economía Creativa and Mellon Foundation, she has now created ongoing workshops for emotional expression through painting for mothers dealing with grief.

Simultaneously, Sandra has initiated separate workshops for children, aiming to expand their creativity and provide them with a positive outlet for expression. This dual approach underscores Sandra's belief in the healing potential of art and her commitment to extending its benefits to both mothers and children in need.

This initiative culminates in an upcoming showcase where each painting tells a story of transforming pain into beauty and reflects the strength of these women. The show opens at Forte Conde de Mirasol on March 1st and highlights the healing power of art. It goes beyond being a form of expression; it becomes a therapeutic tool that helps heal deep emotional wounds and can illuminate the path to healing. ■

Hearts in Reconstruction opens at Forte Conde de Mirasol on March 1st at 7pm

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¿Como puedo solicitar? La solicitud, la cual se completará con la ayuda de su embajador de energía solar local, (Viequeslove) es únicamente para determinar la elegibilidad para el programa. De aceptarse su solicitud, un instalador solar realizará una inspección de la vivienda. Si pasa la inspección de vivienda, el instalador hablará con usted sobre las opciones de instalación solar que sean adecuadas para su hogar, y si usted está de acuerdo, las instalaciones se realizarán a partir de 2024.

¿Cuanto me va a costar? Las instalaciones y equipos de energía solar proporcionados a través del programa acceso solar no representan ningún costo inicial para los consumidores. El hogar elegible promedio aportará contribuciones al mantenimiento de los sistemas, que sumarían a menos que el costo actual

de su factura de energía. Esto garantizará que estos sistemas proporcionen electricidad confiable a lo largo de su vida útil.

¿Como sé si cualifico? para ser elegible usted debe cumplir con estos requisitos.

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- Tiene título o prueba
- Conexión a LUMA
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- Vive en última milla o dependencia médica a servicio eléctrico

¿Cual es la ultima milla? Consulte nuestro sitio web para conocer la determinación del DOE de las ubicaciones de la última milla en Vieques.

Para determinar la elegibilidad y aplicar, comuníquese con:

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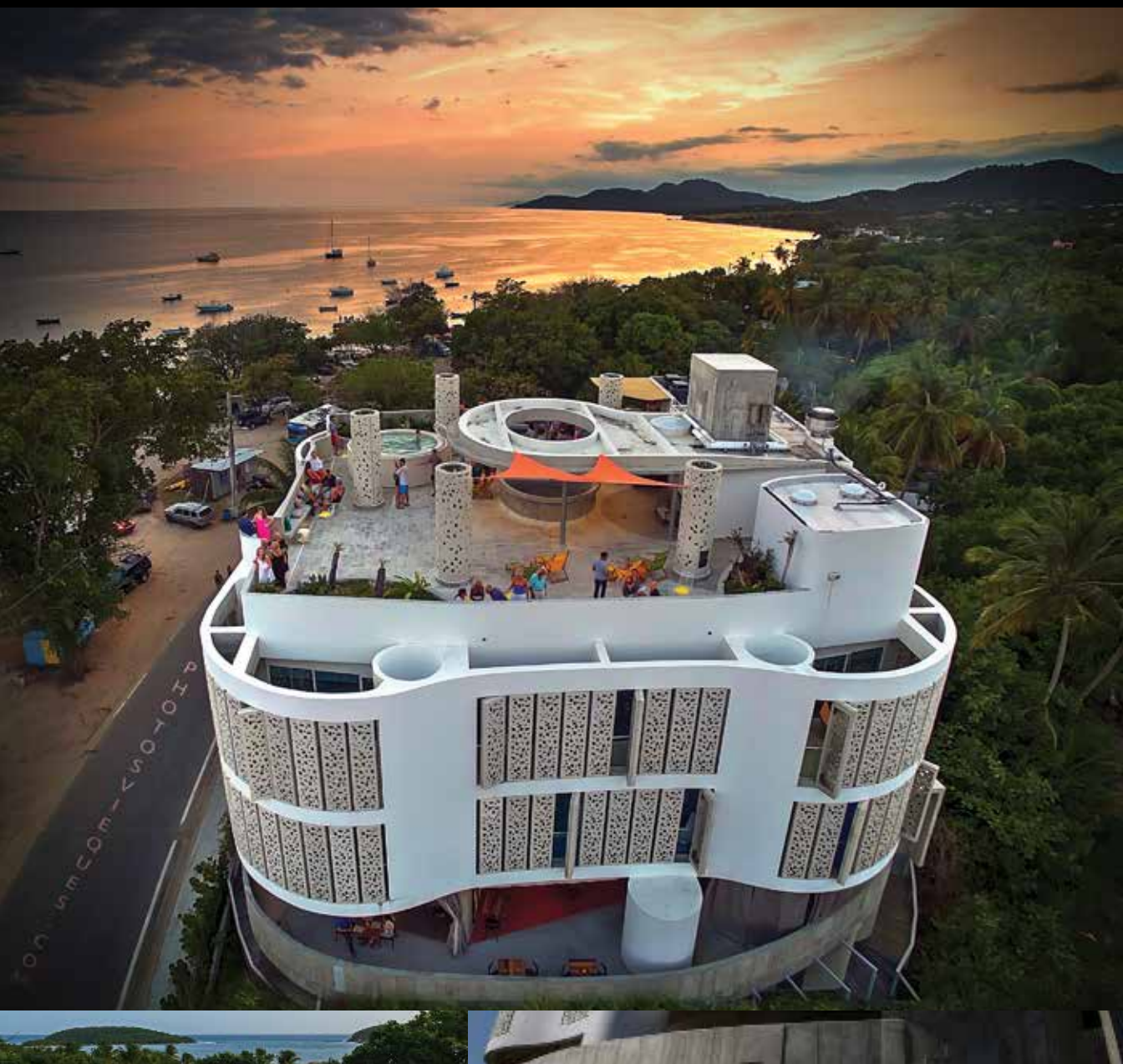
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