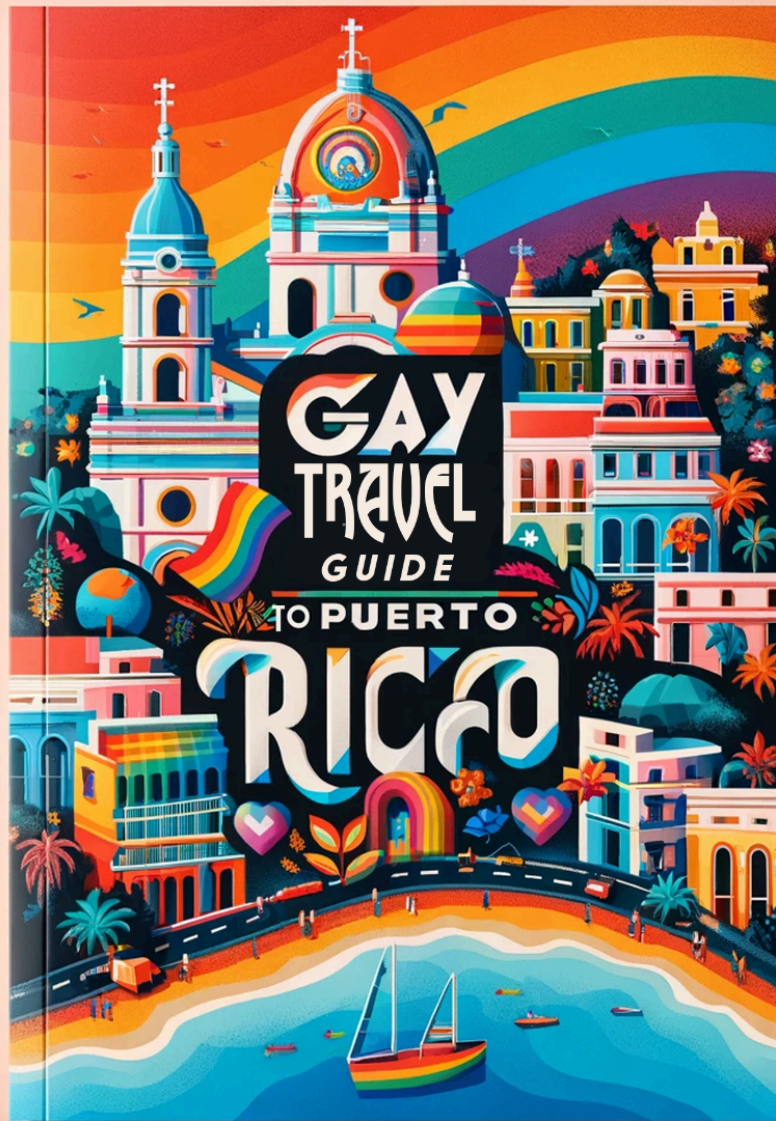


GoQueer.





Coqui Del Mar, PR's Gay Guesthouse

GOQUEER'S PUERTO RICO TRAVEL GUIDE - 2024

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Puerto Ricans pride themselves on being the **LGBTQ+ capital of the Caribbean** – and for good reason. Puerto Rico is perhaps the most accepting destination of all the Caribbean islands. The island offers a rich queer history, a thriving, diverse nightlife, and stunning natural beauty.

San Juan itself boasts **two annual Pride events** – one in June, plus a bonus **Winter Pride** in December – in addition to at least 5 other Pride celebrations across the island (key dates are down below).



As a territory of the United States (we won't get into that mess) – **Americans don't need a passport to get there**, so no waiting in line at customs. English and Spanish are widely spoken across the island.

And the warm weather all year round doesn't hurt either.



GoQueer Travel Guide - Puerto Rico

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GOQUEER GOOGLE MAPS GUIDE

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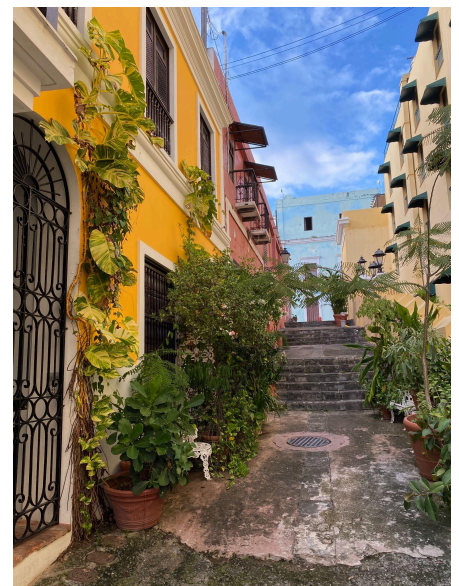
While the number of out-and-proud gay spaces in PR is rising, places that cater to queer women, trans people, and non-binary people are harder to come across. That's why we put together a locally-curated Google Maps list of the [Top 101 Queer-Friendly spots across the island](#).

SAN JUAN

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San Juan is the heart of Puerto Rico's LGBTQ+ scene, with numerous gay neighborhoods, beaches, bars, clubs, and cultural sites. The city is known for historic **Old San Juan**, with its Instagram-worthy charm – save this [Google Maps walking tour of the best photo spots](#).

There's also **UNESCO World Heritage sites** La Fortaleza and the San Juan National Historic site, which shouldn't be missed.





Atlantic Beach, Condado

GAY BEACHES IN SAN JUAN

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There are two main gay beaches in San Juan. The most popular is **Atlantic Beach** in Condado, right in front of the **Tryst Hotel**. You'll find gays there all week – but it's *particularly* gay every Sunday after 11am when groups of friends, queer families, and tourists flock there. You can even rent your very own rainbow umbrella for the day – we paid \$20 for an umbrella and two lounge chairs – bring some cash.

San Juan's other gay beach is **Ocean Park Beach** in front of the **Numero Uno Guesthouse**. It's less touristy and can get a bit cruisey late on weekend nights, if you're into that.

Isla Verde, while not specifically known as a gay beach, is also a popular and inclusive area. There's also a nude beach about 40 minutes west at **La Cueva de las Golondrinas**.

Down below we cover some gay beaches outside San Juan, too.

GAY-FRIENDLY HOTELS IN SAN JUAN

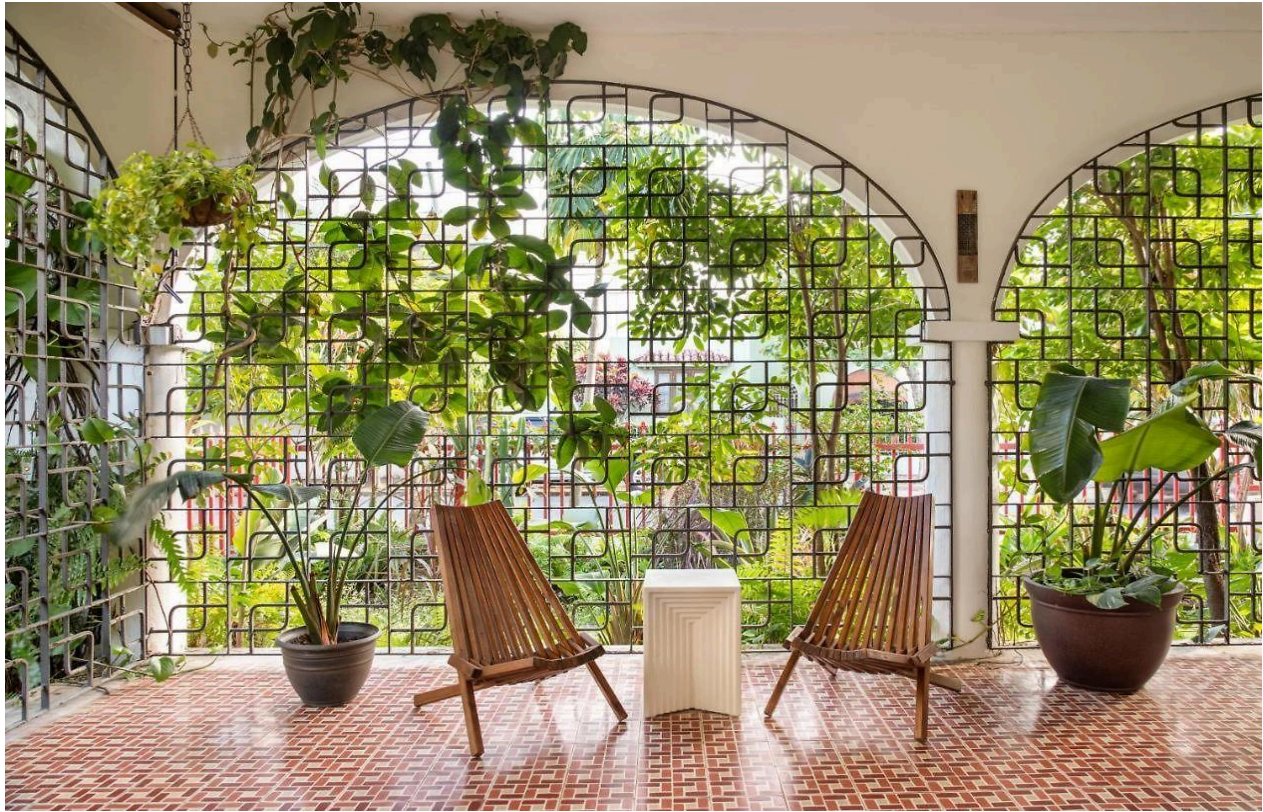
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Coqui del Mar Guest House: the ultimate queer oasis. A small gay-owned guest house offering a unique experience in the Ocean Park neighborhood, with 12 different room types to suit all budgets. They offer everything from large apartments with full kitchens to shared, hostel-style rooms for solo travelers. There's a clothing optional pool and jacuzzi and it's a short walk to the gay-friendly beaches. Highly recommended if you're looking for a great social atmosphere with other gay guests. They operate **Puerto Rico Gay Tours**, and your tour guide will likely be Antonio, an expert on history and gay spots on the island.

The Tryst Beachfront Hotel: a prime location right on the main gay beach. Years ago it was a gay hotel, and although it's not anymore... it still kind of is. They do a Sunday drag brunch at Wicked Lily, their fantastic open-air beachfront restaurant.



The Tryst Hotel



The Dreamcatcher Guest House

The Dreamcatcher Guest House: a boutique hotel with a bohemian vibe offering a communal kitchen, dance and yoga classes, and dinner parties.

Numero Uno Guest House: right on Ocean Park beach with very reasonable rates. Pamela's Restaurant has tables set in the sand, and the beach can be cruisey.

Andalucia Guest House: a gay-owned spot in the Ocean Park neighborhood. The owners are welcoming and happy to share their favorite spots. One of the city's best values.

Honorable Mentions: Condado Ocean Club Hotel, Wind Chimes Inn, Da'House Hotel, Hosteria Del Mar, O:Live Boutique Hotel – and Hotel CasaBlanca has a beautiful rooftop terrace with stone bathtubs.

Check ResortPass – some spots offer great rates on day passes to enjoy their amenities – and it's much cheaper than actually staying there.

QUEER NIGHTLIFE IN SAN JUAN

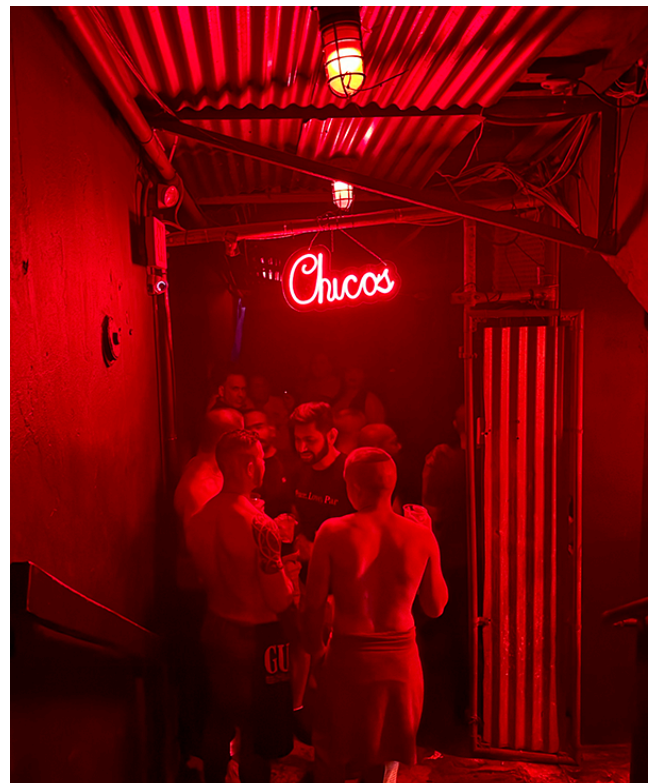
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LGBTQ+ bars and clubs are spread out across the city - but some are concentrated in specific areas. San Juan's gay neighborhood of **Santurce** is one of the most lively and energetic spots in the city.

It's a queer-friendly area with many bars and clubs taking over the streets around **La Placita** - a bustling and colorful open-air market by day, and a lively hub of bars and restaurants by night, where locals and tourists alike come to enjoy music, food, and drinks in a vibrant atmosphere. Check out **Chueca** and the rooftop bar at **El Techo**.

Just around the corner from La Placita is **Jungle Bird** tiki bar. It's not explicitly gay but a fun, welcoming atmosphere and elaborate cocktails make it one of San Juan's best cocktail bars. Trans, queer chef Paxx Caraballo ran the kitchen at one point - try the Crack Eggplant.

Nearby, one of the coolest nightlife spots in Santurce is **El Local** bar - it's a trans-friendly space with cheap drinks in a hipster dive setting. Think house party vibes. **La Respuesta**, **El Hangar**, and (a bit further out) **Club 77** are the best starting points to explore Puerto Rico's underground queer scene. El Hangar also hosts regular queer events like queer markets and healing spaces.



Less than a 10 minute walk from El Local is a cluster of other popular spots. **Kweens Klub** is the biggest queer nightclub in San Juan with a huge dance floor and great drag shows. **SX Club** features strippers, go-go dancers and a (darker-than-your-average) darkroom, catering to gay men. **Toxic Nightclub** caters to all: there you'll find themed drag shows, comedy shows, strippers and the occasional Circuit party. It's a big bar with two floors and a large dance floor. **El Purgatorio** is mostly locals with reasonably priced drinks and a fun dance floor. These spots seem to really get going around midnight or later.

The **Eleanor Roosevelt district** is a little further south than the other spots, but every Thursday night – college night – it comes alive with the city's local LGBTQ population. Cheap drinks attract San Juan's many university students. **El Cojo**, **A Pedir De Boca**, **La Esquina de Polo** and **Amigos del Jaqueo** bars are all on the same corner. A short walk away, **Atrévete** is popular with lesbians and welcomes all.

They're great spots to start a night out, around 9 or 10pm, before heading to other clubs. Heads up, you might not find many tourists in the area – the perfect opportunity to meet locals off the apps.

Other noteworthy nightlife spots...

Tia Maria Bar & Liquor Store – it's a bar, not a liquor store, despite what the name suggests. It's the longest running gay bar in San Juan.

Oasis – a restaurant, lounge and bar, just off the gay Atlantic Beach. Monday nights are popular with happy hour and go-go dancers.

La Sombrilla Rosa – a gay bar with authentic Puerto Rican attitude in Old San Juan. Rosa, the owner, is a big supporter of the community. Try the jello shots. And on the corner is La Factoria, not gay but consistently ranked among the best bars in the world.

Xteamworks – the only gay sauna/bathhouse. Look for the doorbell next to the steel mesh gate on the right side of the ground floor entry.

THE FOOD SCENE

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Some of the best restaurants in Puerto Rico are owned or operated by queer chefs – like **Ostra Cosa** in Old San Juan – but most are welcoming, delicious, and uniquely Puerto Rican.

Our Google Maps guide of the Top 101 Queer-Friendly Spots Across Puerto Rico includes queer-owned, queer-friendly dining spots including vegetarian and vegan options.

OUTSIDE SAN JUAN

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San Juan's large urban population and many gay neighborhoods make it one of the best parts to visit for LGBTQ+ travelers – but exploring outside the capital city and visiting these gay-friendly destinations is a must. **Cabo Rojo** on the west coast and **Vieques** off the eastern coast are less touristy but still popular LGBTQ+ destinations in their own right. We rented a car for \$40/day and got around easily.



Rincón is famous for surfing and stunning sunsets, with a quieter destination with a laid-back LGBTQ+ presence. Check out **Sandy Beach** and **Mangia Mi**, a fantastic lesbian-owned eatery.

Boquerón is a weekend hotspot, a beach village in Cabo Rojo known for its relaxed atmosphere and LGBTQ+ friendly beach just a couple hours

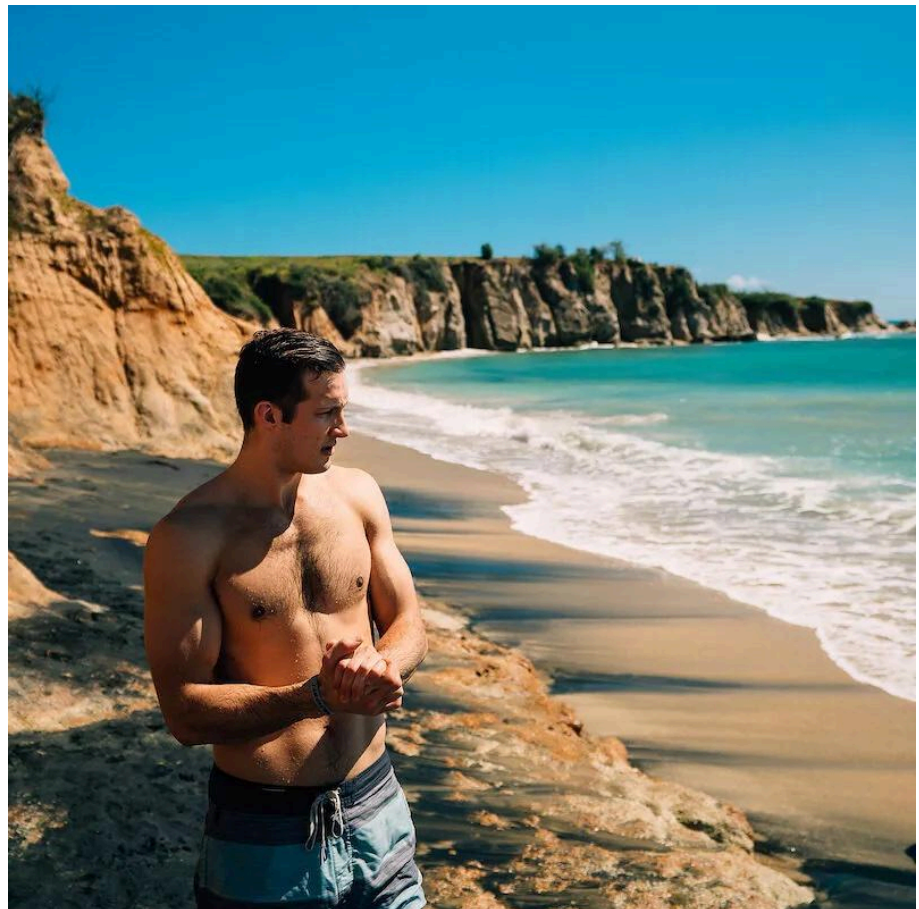
drive from San Juan. Check out **La Bohemia** on the main strip. And make your way down to **Playa Sucia**, a stunning and serene spot (pictured above) that requires a car.

Ponce is popular for locals and tourists seeking an inclusive and lively nightlife. The city's growing LGBTQ+ community plays an active role in promoting diversity and acceptance, creating a vibrant atmosphere. Check out **Mirrors Night Club**, **Q Bar**, and **Candy Bar Exotic Drinks**.

Vieques and **Culebra**: These gay-friendly remote islands are perfect for a peaceful getaway. Possible to do as day trips, but hard – better to stay a while. In Vieques, check out **Playa Navio** and **Playa Negra** – and consider staying at the gay-owned & operated **Casa de Amistad**. See the

Bioluminescent Bay in Puerto Mosquito at nighttime. In Culebra, which is definitely the island less traveled, you'll want to get to **Playa Flamenco**, consistently ranked one of the best beaches *in the world*.

Playa Negra in Vieques, photo: Discover Puerto Rico



KEY DATES FOR 2024

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March: the 2nd annual “Pride Voyage: March Madness” 7-day cruise leaves San Juan on Saturday, March 9

April: the Culebra Rainbow Festival, an intimate event focusing on community and nature – date TBD

June: Brace yourself... Puerto Rico hosts **two major Pride events** in June – one in San Juan and one in Boquerón – making it the largest Pride celebration in the Caribbean. **San Juan Pride is Sunday, June 2**, and features parades, parties, and cultural events that whole weekend. The bars along Avenida Condado host parties and events throughout the week leading up to the Pride March. Much of the Pride action is centered around La Placita in Santurce. **Boquerón Pride is the second largest Pride on the island taking place Friday, June 7**, the following weekend. The parade runs along the main street of El Poblado, as bars and clubs host live music, dancers, DJs, and more. There’s also the Ponce Rainbow Festival – dates are TBD but usually mid June – and Rincón Pride, same, dates TBD but usually end of June.

November: The Queer Filmfest starts Monday, November 4 and goes all week. Plus: the Hydro Caribbean Festival – a circuit party and the first gay music festival in the Caribbean.

December: Winter Pride – dates TBD but usually the first or second week in December. This is the big winter event in Puerto Rico – offering 4 days of parties and events including a pool party, catamaran tour, drag shows and a burlesque brunch.

FINAL THOUGHTS

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Puerto Rico is considered a safe and welcoming destination for LGBTQ+ visitors. The country has laws that protect individuals from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. While incidents of violence or discrimination can occur anywhere, LGBTQ+ travelers in Puerto Rico should feel welcomed and respected.

As with any travel destination, it's essential to exercise caution and be aware of your surroundings, it's also recommended to follow general safety practices like staying in well-lit areas, avoiding excessive displays of wealth, and using reliable transportation options as you would do visiting any major city.

ENJOY!

