



Discover Puerto Rico's Efforts Result in Record Tourism Numbers for the Island

Key metrics show occupancy, revenue and other business drivers currently outpacing 2019, the Island's best-ever year for tourism

San Juan, Puerto Rico, July 12, 2021. The Great Recovery of travel and tourism in Puerto Rico is moving forward at an impressive pace, as shown by Discover Puerto Rico's latest data, released during the July Industry Update. Visitor numbers continue to grow, occupancy has reached unprecedented peaks, and revenue from visitor spending and taxes are at an all-time high. Room nights sold have surpassed 2019, the Island's best year to date, for eight consecutive weeks, while meetings and convention leads have outpaced 2019 for eight of the last 10 weeks.

"Despite facing many challenges stemming from the pandemic, the tourism community in Puerto Rico is once again showing the world its strength and resiliency," said Brad Dean, CEO of Discover Puerto Rico. "We are achieving a high rate of return on our marketing, sales and promotional investments, and the impact of our ads is not only helping attract record numbers of visitors, it's also leading to higher spends and dispersion of visitors throughout our Island."

The last eight weeks have shown that Puerto Rico's tourism recovery is exceeding that of other U.S. states and territories. For instance, hotel occupancy rates are 15% higher than 2019, while the rest of the United States is showing hotel occupancy to be 7.5% below where it was two years ago.

Equally remarkable is the fact that high hotel demand isn't fueled by low rates. In fact, rates are 37% higher than they were during the comparable period in 2019 and the Puerto Rico Tourism Company (PRTC) reported that taxes collected in May were 53% higher than two years ago; while final numbers for June have not yet been released, tax collections for the month are expected to be 70% higher than in 2019.

Puerto Rico is also outperforming other Caribbean destinations, both in terms of resilience during 2020 and in terms of post-pandemic recovery. Adam Sacks, President of Tourism Economics, shared during the Industry Update that the Caribbean as a region experienced a 68% decline in visitor numbers during 2020, while Puerto Rico's was only 47%. In 2021, even by the most conservative estimates, Puerto Rico will bounce back to 2019 figures, whereas the rest of the region will only see a 39% recovery. This trend continues into 2022, when Puerto Rico is expected to surpass by at least 3% 2019's numbers, in contrast the rest of the Caribbean, which is expected to be 38% below the number of visitors it had two years ago. "Our research shows that travelers do look to DMOs to make their travel plans, and throughout the challenges it has faced, Puerto Rico has shown that they know what they are doing, time and again. If I could grade them, I would say Puerto Rico has a PhD in recovery," said Sacks.

Independent research reveals that these outstanding results have been fueled in large part by the marketing strategies and tactics implemented by Discover Puerto Rico. In fact, according to tracking technology provided by Adara, consumers exposed to Discover Puerto Rico's ads are



not only more likely to arrive on the Island but pay daily rates 34% higher than the average and stay 12% longer than other visitors.

Results driven by research

As it has since its launch in 2018, Discover Puerto Rico continues to rely upon sound research and insightful analytics to make data-driven marketing decisions, and to accurately measure the financial impact and return on investment of its initiatives. Independent research carried out by Destination Analysts -- used to measure the DMO's results and inform its decisions -- reveals that two-thirds of consumers in target markets recalled hearing about travel to Puerto Rico in the past six months and 40% of them anticipate visiting Puerto Rico in the next two years. More than 70% said the advertisements made Puerto Rico look like a safe place to visit, and more than half of the consumers interviewed indicated they are more likely to visit Puerto Rico in the next year and a half after seeing the ads.

While the increase demand is expected to continue throughout the summer, future booking projections show a decline come October. This slowdown in bookings is consistent with shoulder season, and further explained by a return to normalcy in traveler behavior and the lifting of restrictions for international travel. As the landscape grows more competitive than ever, many U.S. destinations are already planning their biggest marketing campaigns ever, and Discover Puerto Rico is urging the local government to allocate a portion of federal American Rescue Plan funds to tourism promotional efforts, in order to continue delivering exceptional results that translate to economic impact for the Island.

"Puerto Rico has many needs, but further investment in tourism, the industry that sustains 86,000 jobs and generates over \$760 million in tax revenues, is timely and necessary. As our results have repeatedly shown, an investment in tourism is an investment in Puerto Rico's future," concluded Dean.

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About Discover Puerto Rico

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