



Discover Puerto Rico Announces Tourism Industry Rebounds as Travel Resumes

Low infection rates and the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions fuel economic recovery

San Juan, Puerto Rico, February 16, 2022 – Lower COVID-19 cases and the easing of restrictions improved travel confidence, and lodging reservations resumed rapidly, signaling promising economic recovery.

TravelClick data shows that by the end of January, hotel reservations for the second quarter were 17% higher compared to January 2020 before the pandemic became a worldwide concern.

Likewise, AirDNA's January data suggests that, in the case of short rentals, reservations for the second quarter are 329% over 2020 pre-pandemic levels.

"This positive trend is the result of a collaborative effort between Discover Puerto Rico, the Tourism Company and all the components of this sector, which in the face of adversity have not stopped working hard to keep the tourism industry afloat," said José "Peco" Suárez, president of the Board of Directors of Discover Puerto Rico.

"While we are still feeling the impact of the pandemic and its recent variants, I'm encouraged by several positive signs. As you know all too well, the high season has been severely disrupted. Yet, the booking pace for the Spring has improved substantially since health and safety protocols were relaxed," said Brad Dean, Chief Executive Officer of Discover Puerto Rico.

The Omicron variant affected reservations during December and January. Still, as cases subside, reservations have gained traction and are on their way towards typical levels.

The rebound in reservations points to the growth trend exhibited by Puerto Rico's tourism industry during 2021, a record year for lodging income and room tax collections.

For instance, short-term rentals show a 20% growth in bookings during this year's second quarter, compared to what was booked by the end of January 2020.

High lodging revenues came from increments in passenger arrivals and a surge in demand for lodging venues. This led to an increase in hotel room prices and short-term rentals. Puerto Rico outperformed other Caribbean destinations, bringing in revenue per available room at a 51% higher rate than the average for the region.

Airline Data, Inc. projected that the number of domestic commercial airline seats available to and from Puerto Rico will increase 10% during the remainder of the fiscal year, compared with 2021. Extended air capacity connects San Juan with New York, Orlando, Washington DC, Hartford, Atlantic City, Austin, Jacksonville, and St. Louis.



“Still facing unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 had a positive balance in the recovery of air access in Puerto Rico. Likewise, as a result of the negotiations and efforts of the Government of Puerto Rico with our airline partners, routes to new destinations were added,” said the executive director of the Puerto Rico Tourism Company (PRTC), Carlos Mercado. “Among our immediate plans, we remain focused on continuing to expand the offer of non-stop routes, both at the Luis Muñoz Marín Airport and at the regional airports of Ponce and Aguadilla. Puerto Rico has implemented health and safety protocols that have served as an example for other destinations, which demonstrates our commitment to serving as a facilitating agent in the recovery of tourism and the visitor economy.”

International air capacity is also increasing with additional seats in Colombia, Panamá, and Spain. The increase in international commercial airline seats is at 91%. At this point in time, pre-pandemic international travel accounted for 11% of passenger activity at the Luis Muñoz Marín Airport.

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