



Non-resident visitors spent \$4,582 million on Puerto Rico's economy

According to the international firm Tourism Economics and Discover Puerto Rico, spending from off-island visitors exceeds the pre-pandemic high by 11%.

San Juan, Puerto Rico, April 28, 2022 – Non-resident visitors in Puerto Rico spent \$4,582 million on the Island in 2021, an amount 11% higher than 2019, the year that used to hold the record, Discover Puerto Rico announced today.

According to figures from the global firm Tourism Economics, consumers (residents and non-residents) spend in the Puerto Rican visitor's industry \$7,398 million in 2021, an 15% increase compared to 2019. This implies that the Puerto Rican visitor's economy not only recovered its pre-pandemic, but exceeded its highest milestone by a significant margin, confirmed Alisha Valentine, Director of Analysis and Research at Discover Puerto Rico.

"This reflects the increased average daily rate for lodging, which grew 15% for hotels and 23% for rentals", Valentine explained during Discover Puerto Rico's Industry Update.

This is one of many industry recovery milestones. The Chief Executive Officer of Discover Puerto Rico, Brad Dean, highlighted that in March the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that the leisure and hospitality sectors of the economy employed 85,200 people, the highest figure in Puerto Rico's history.

This improvement was achieved, although the cruise industry is still on its way to a full recovery. In 2019, about a third of the passengers arriving in Puerto Rico were attracted by cruise ships. This group of visitors contributed 7% of consumer spending that year.

"Now, while there is much to celebrate, we cannot overlook the challenges that remain. The pandemic is not yet over, and we must continue to be vigilant with our communications and protocols. The cruise line industry has not yet reached pre-pandemic levels, and there can be no full recovery in Puerto Rico tourism until we see a robust schedule of calls and homeporting throughout the year. We've reached record employment levels, yet we still have too many open jobs and not enough qualified employees to fill those jobs", Dean said.

Another area that promises to take significant steps towards full recovery is the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) sector. Dean recalled that the North American Travel Journalists Association will hold its annual convention in Puerto Rico next week. Similarly, Puerto Rico will host the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the U.S Travel Association meetings.

Also, in May, Puerto Rico will host Connect Marketplace, an event that will bring together nearly a thousand events and convention planners. "Our Brand is getting stronger, our visitor base is expanding, and we are attracting high-profile groups," Dean highlighted.

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