

Puerto Rico's 500-year-old capital is a history buff's dream come true. The Spanish settled this harbor as a New World home base, and that influence is still evident, from the fortress walls lining the coastline to the rainbow of colonial buildings along narrow streets. Venture further out from the old town and nature unfolds. You can scale high into the jungled mountains of El Yunque Forest, or keep to the foothills on a riverside horseback ride. If despacito is more your speed, pick a pristine beach and recline with codfish fritter and rum drink in hand.

CASTILLO DE SAN FELIPE DEL MORRO

Strong and beautiful, this fort has helped guard the shore for nearly five centuries while overlooking some of the island's best scenery. Explore it via spiral staircases between levels, and grab a photo at one of the iconic garita sentry boxes that line the outer walls.



LOCAL CUISINE

In Old San Juan, you'll find plenty of island fare and criolla cuisine— home cooking flavored by Spanish and African influences. Try some mofongo, mashed fried green plantains often stuffed with meat, or snack on some codfish fritters, called bacalaitos.





CATEDRAL DE SAN JUAN BAUTISTA

Founded in 1521, this can't-miss landmark is one of the oldest churches in the Americas. It houses the tomb of Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon and the mummified remains of religious martyr St. Pio.



SHOPPING

During your San Juan port of call, head to the blue-hued cobblestone streets of Old San Juan for your pick of boutiques offering handmade lace and hand-rolled cigars, plus duty-free luxury items like diamonds, gemstones and watches.

MAGIC TIP

"The free, open-air trolleys in Old San Juan are a great way to see the city's top sites."





"Wear comfortable walking shoes. The cobblestoned streets in Old San Juan can be steep and uneven."