



## Nine out of ten Puerto Ricans embrace the culture-centered tourism promotion executed by Discover Puerto Rico

*A survey ratifies support for the award-winning Live Boricua campaign, highlighting the cultural characteristics that make our archipelago a unique and authentic destination.*

**San Juan, Puerto Rico, April 17, 2023** – A survey by Gaither International, commissioned by Discover Puerto Rico, showed that nine out of ten Puerto Ricans (87%) are proud to share the Puerto Rican culture with travelers and portrayed as positive that it's the central topic on the Island's destination marketing.

Almost the same proportion (86%) of residents in Puerto Rico validated the Live Boricua campaign in all its manifestations (television, print, and digital ads). Less than 1% responded negatively to the campaign that debuted almost a year ago.

"We saw that 86% of residents wanted tourism marketing to focus on culture. With this survey, we see that 87% are proud to share the culture with visitors and that residents embrace Live Boricua," said Alisha Valentine, Director of Research and Analysis of Discover Puerto Rico, during the most recent webinar for the tourism industry.

"We know that the campaign successfully attracts travelers and generates support locally and in the diaspora. This study is important because it validates that this support is maintained one year after we started the campaign and that visitors and residents are reacting positively to Live Boricua," said Brad Dean, CEO of Discover Puerto Rico.

Over 500 people responded to the survey. The survey consulted Puerto Rican residents in Puerto Rico and abroad. Before the campaign's launch, Discover Puerto Rico conducted a series of focus groups to see how different audiences, including Puerto Ricans on and off the Island, responded to the campaign. Similar studies were conducted with people from major cities in the central, southern, and eastern United States.

Since its premiere, the campaign has been awarded in different forums, such as the International Tourism Fair (Fitur) in Madrid and the Adrian Awards of the Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI). The campaign's cultural focus extended the visitors economy benefits beyond hospitality and to cultural enterprises, supporting the economic sustainability of these projects.

Leah Chandler, Chief Marketing Officer of Discover Puerto Rico, said the Live Boricua campaign generated over 120 million traditional media impressions in the DMO's primary and secondary markets between January and February. That impact translated into an audience of over 5.7 million page views on DiscoverPuertoRico.com and over 256,000 referrals to local tourist businesses' websites or social media accounts.

This performance is expected to continue with recent marketing initiatives, including Discover Puerto Rico's entry into the TikTok social media platform, special campaigns highlighting southern and western Puerto Rico, and theatrical ads during the premieres of Fast X and Guardians of the Galaxy in May.

### **2023 STARTS WITH GREAT MOMENTUM**

During the first quarter of 2023, Puerto Rico's tourism industry had 24% more lodging income, 21% more passenger movement, 21% more hotel demand, and 15% more demand for short-term rentals than the same period in the record year 2022.

Continued growth led to a 3% expansion in hotel rooms and a 29% expansion in short-term rentals. When this growth in hotel supply is combined with expected demand, according to reservations, occupancy rates are projected to be slightly lower than in 2022 for the second quarter (-2% in hotels and -5% in rentals) and significantly higher for the third quarter (+4% in hotels and +18% in rentals). If supply



had not grown, second-quarter occupancy would be above last year. All these projections signal an increase in visitation.

Similarly, the economic benefits of tourism are spreading more throughout Puerto Rico. The firm KeyData recorded that, during the first quarter of 2023, short-term rental reservations were 9% higher in the West, 5% in the North, 20% in the Center, 21% in the South, and 11% in the Metro area. The only region showing a reduction is the East (-1%).

The events, conventions, and business meetings industry have also strengthened the visitor economy. Ed Carey, Chief Sales Officer of Discover Puerto Rico, said that, compared to last year, the number of requests for service cost estimates has increased by 38% and quotes for lodging nights by 22%. Similarly, the number of events booked, and lodging nights have grown by 56% and 20%, respectively.

"And in a few short weeks, we will welcome over 800 travel professionals as the American Society of Travel Advisors hosts their annual global conference at our convention center. This is a critically important event as nearly every major travel consortium, cruise line, airline, rental car company, and even travel insurance provider will descend upon Puerto Rico for this prestigious event," Carey said.

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