

Puerto Rico

Both Spanish and English are the official languages, the local currency is the U.S. dollar, and no visas or passports are required to enter Puerto Rico from the United States. Mail is sent through the US Postal Service at the same rates as on the mainland.

Geography

Puerto Rico is 100 long by 35 miles wide and as a result of its geographical position in the center of the arc of the Antilles, Puerto Rico is essentially a crossroads of Hispanic and Anglo cultures. Despite its very diverse influx of cultures, Puerto Rico has been a part of the United States since 1898 and Puerto Ricans have been U.S. citizens since 1917.



History

Since the first humans came ashore thousands of years ago, the island that is now known as Puerto Rico has sheltered Indians, Spaniards, Africans and Anglos. The Spaniards had the earliest and greatest influence to the Island at their arrival in 1493. During their 400-year tenure the Spaniards laid the bedrock of the language and culture. They built cities and towns, fortresses and churches, lighthouses and roadways. They brought slaves from Africa to work in the fields, who, in turn, contributed the spice of their culture, enriching the language, music and diets.

Culture

Close to 4 million people live on the "Island of Enchantment," with more than a million in the greater San Juan metropolitan area alone. It is a vibrant, modern, bilingual, multicultural society, one that has been molded by Spanish, African, Indian and U.S. influences. Residents of Puerto Rico have much in common with their fellow Americans in the continental United States, yet they retain a decidedly Hispanic heritage.



Climate

The climate is as close to perfect as it can get, averaging 83°F in the winter and 85°F in the summer. In other words, it's always summer! The trade winds cool the coastal towns and the temperature decreases as you go up into the higher mountains. Puerto Rico is in the Atlantic Time Zone, but does not observe Daylight Savings Time. The island uses standard U.S. electric current.

Currency

All major credit cards are accepted at most businesses, and ATMs connected to major US and international networks are easy to find. Business hours are similar to those on the mainland, 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM weekdays (the siesta has pretty much disappeared). Most stores are open Saturdays, and all of the larger towns have shopping malls that are open evenings and Sundays.

ONE WORLD MISSION

2010 Youth Mission Trip



The Baptist Convention of New York will be taking a group of high school youth to Puerto Rico on July 2010. We will be joining efforts with Mount Zion Baptist Church in the town of Humacao to have Vacation Bible School (VBS) and community outreach projects.

Last summer we took a team of students from across our territory to partner with the same church and had a great week with more than 60 kids attending VBS that week and more than 140 people from the community attended the closing ceremony. As a result 3 kids accepted Christ as Lord and Savior, the church is more influential in the community and our students came back passionate about serving.

Interested in sending students?

Date: July 3-11, 2010

Cost: \$950.00

(Includes: Travel, Meals, Lodging, Local Transportation and Fun Day!)

To Register Contact: Jonathan Santiago
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