

A Cruising Guide to Puerto Rico 2.0

by

Frank Virgintino



Flag of Puerto Rico

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A Cruising Guide to Puerto Rico 2.0, October 2015

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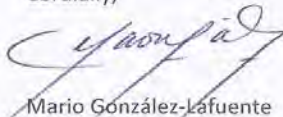
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I am certain you will realize that Puerto Rico is the perfect port for a nautical vacation filled with entertainment, exploration, luxury accommodations, gourmet cuisine, and state of the art facilities.

We hope you enjoy your stay and experience that indeed, *Puerto Rico Does It Better!*

Cordially,



Mario González-Lafuente

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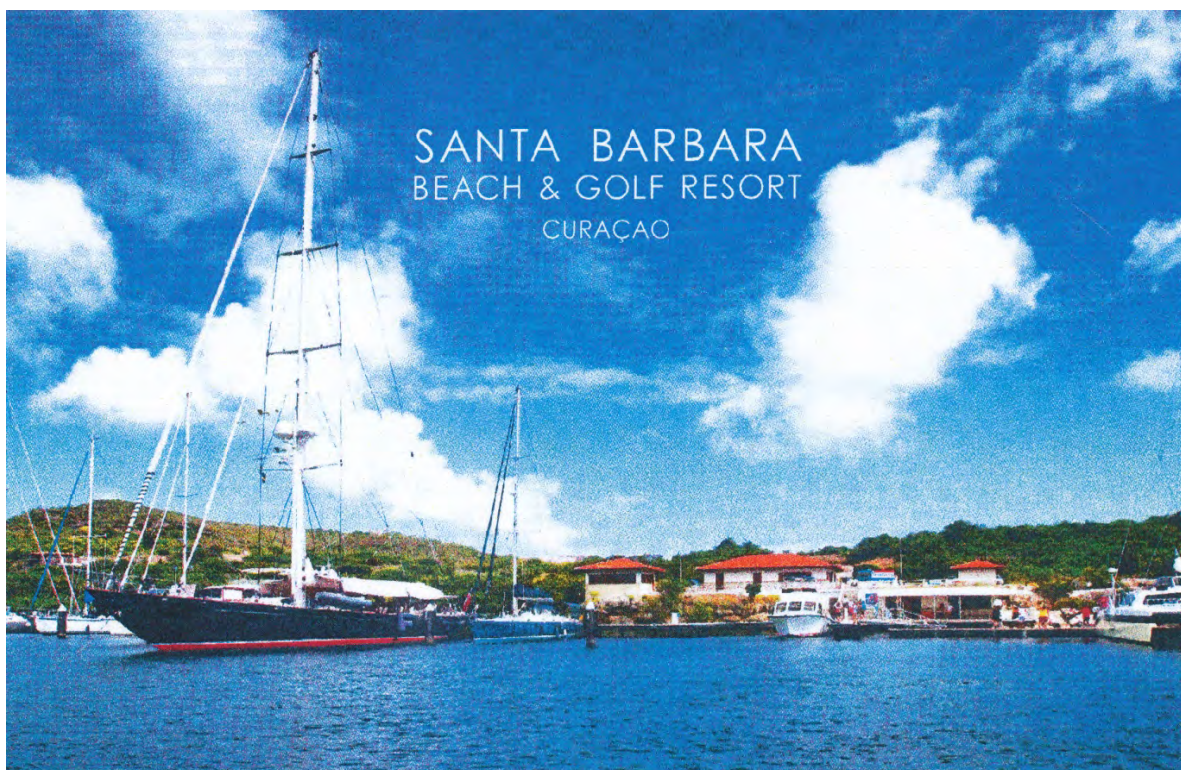
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A cartoon illustration of a person in a small boat on a wavy sea. The boat's sail is a large computer monitor. The person is sitting in the boat, looking towards the monitor. The sea is represented by simple wavy lines.

A Cruising Guide to Puerto Rico 2.0

by

Frank Virgintino

DEDICATED to:

All cruising sailors who have a desire to sail far and wide. May this guide provide you with insights that will make your trip through the waters of Puerto Rico an unforgettable experience.



Figure 1. PUERTO RICO

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Normally acknowledgements are placed at the end of a book. However, in the case of this Puerto Rico cruising guide, I had such extensive help of such value that I thought it appropriate to make note at the introduction.

My teachers

Mrs. Evelyn Marzan...A woman of Puerto Rican descent and my executive secretary for more than 30 years. She has taught me well the beauty of the Puerto Rican heart.

Mrs. Yvette Sencion...A woman of Puerto Rican descent and godmother to my daughter Josephine. She has taught me well the loyalty of the Puerto Rican spirit.

Mr. James Mercado...A man of Puerto Rican descent and my friend of many years. He has taught me the patience of the Latin American spirit. He is a far better sailor than I will ever be.

Thomas Cordero...The owner of Discovery Bay marina development and a resident of San Juan. Without his help and encouragement, this guide would not have been possible. His assistance with research for *A Cruising Guide to Puerto Rico*, coupled with his polite and gentle spirit, has made it possible for me to reach into all areas that relate to the navigation of Puerto Rican waters and an understanding of the Puerto Rican community.

He is also the Seven Seas Cruising Association Host for Puerto Rico and you can call on him for any questions or help that you may need.

The Government of Puerto Rico extended a farsighted level of cooperation and access through the good offices of the following:

Daniel J. Galan Kercado, Secretary of Department of Natural and Environmental Resources

Angel L. Rodriguez~Commisioner of Navigation

Mario Gonzalez-Lafuente ~ Director, Puerto Rico Tourism Company

These men opened their offices and took the time to meet with me and to answer my many questions. Rarely have I found such welcoming and attentive officials. These men are devoted, and work hard through their tourism and development mission to make Puerto Rico interesting and safe for all comers.

Angie Adams ~ a special mention for this remarkable woman who was born and reared on the island of Vieques. She claims to be “just a guide” for the island but I found her to be an unequaled resource for those who want to explore Vieques. There is nothing and no one that she does not know, and to travel with her for a day is to be immersed in a fascinating learning experience that is, simply put, world class.

Sponsors

Rafael Baez, president of Marina ZarPar, has provided unending support in the development of these guides. Marina ZarPar in Boca Chica, Dominican Republic is not only an especially friendly cruiser location but a resource to everyone who wishes to cruise the Caribbean ~ the *entire* Caribbean.

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Luis Duprey ~ This young general manager of Allied Car & Truck Rental, which company has offices in San Juan and other locations around the island, provided an excellent rental and went out of his way on numerous occasions to give his time generously to support the writing of this guide.

PREFACE AND PORT REFERENCES



Figure 2. PUERTO RICO AND OUTLYING ISLANDS

The following are the four coasts of Puerto Rico and the respective harbors/anchorages on each coast. The comments are for overview and planning purposes only.

For detailed information see section on “Cruising Puerto Rico”.

COASTS:

Noteworthy

West Coast
South Coast
North Coast
East Coast

Mona Passage
Caribbean Sea
Atlantic Coast
Islands of Vieques and Culebra

SOUTH COAST

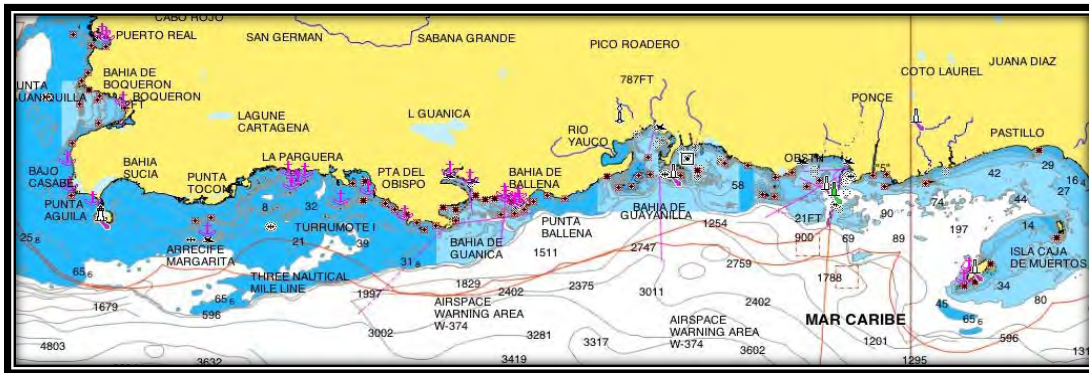


Figure 3. SOUTHWEST COAST

La Parguera	Excellent
Bahia de Guanica	Fair
Punta Jacinto	Excellent; good holding
Cayos de Cana Gorda (Gilligan's Island)	Excellent; good holding, can get crowded and noisy.
Bahia de Guayanilla	Industrial; avoid
Ponce	Excellent; don't miss!
Isla Caja de Muertos	Good anchorage, pretty
Jauca	Good anchorage, small town
Punta Salinas	Excellent anchorage
Bahia de Jobos	Excellent anchorage
Las Mareas	Commercial/avoid
Puerto Patillas	Excellent anchorage



Figure 4. SOUTHEAST COAST

EAST COAST

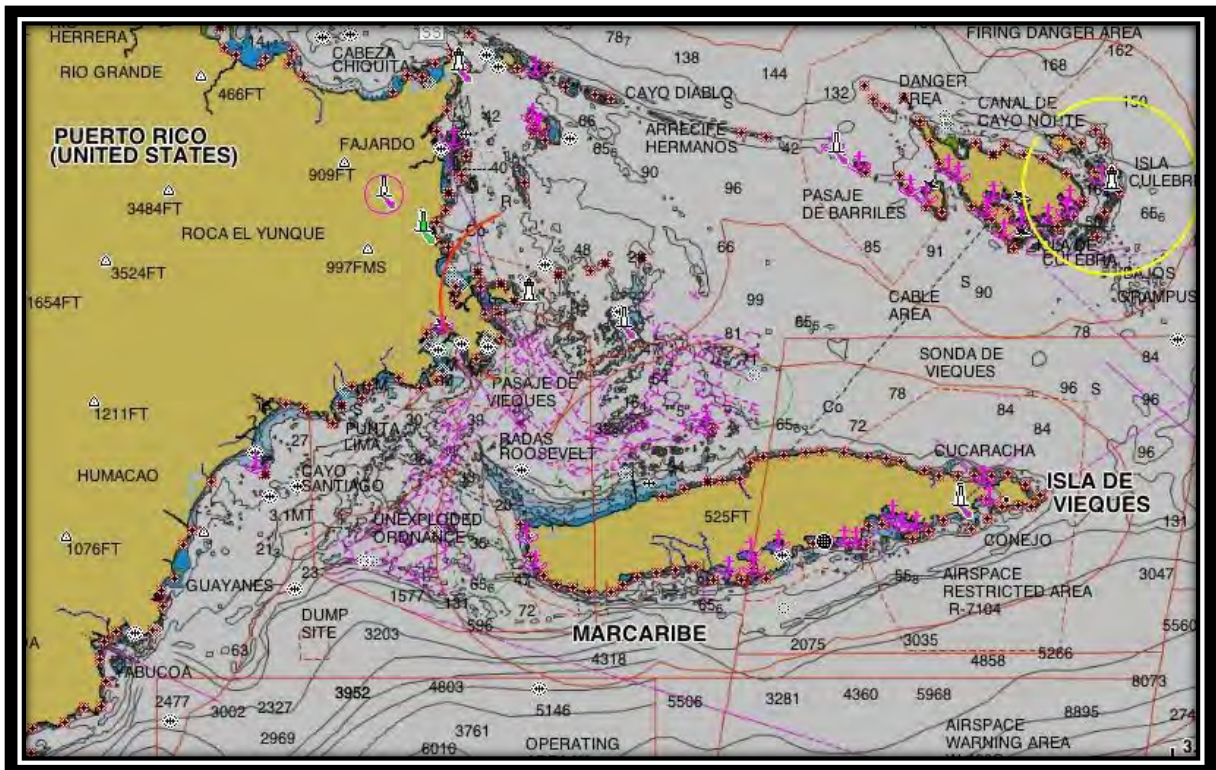


Figure 5. EAST COAST

Mainland

Puerto Yabucoa	Commercial
Palmas Del Mar	Nice marina & YC
Cayo Santiago	Fair Anchorage
Roosevelt Roads	Commercial
Isla Pineros	Day anchorage
Puerto Del Rey	Large marina
Isleta Marina	Marina & anchorage
Fajardo	Marina facilities
Las Croabas	Shallow 5ft or less

Islands

Vieques

Do Not Miss

Culebra & Culebrita

Do Not Miss

Isla de Palominos

Can be rolly

Cayo Icacos

Can be rolly

Cayo Lobos

Can be rolly

NORTH COAST

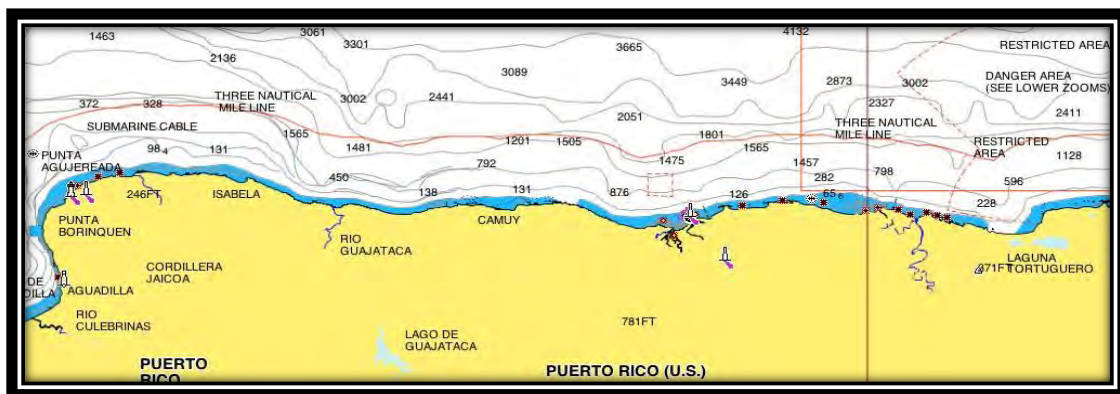


Figure 6. NORTHWEST COAST

Arecibo

Somewhat exposed and rolly

Puerto Palmas Atlas

Exposed, and can be rolly

San Juan

Big protected harbor with yacht club
and marina

Bahia de Cangrejos

AVOID



Figure 7. NORTHEAST COAST

WEST COAST

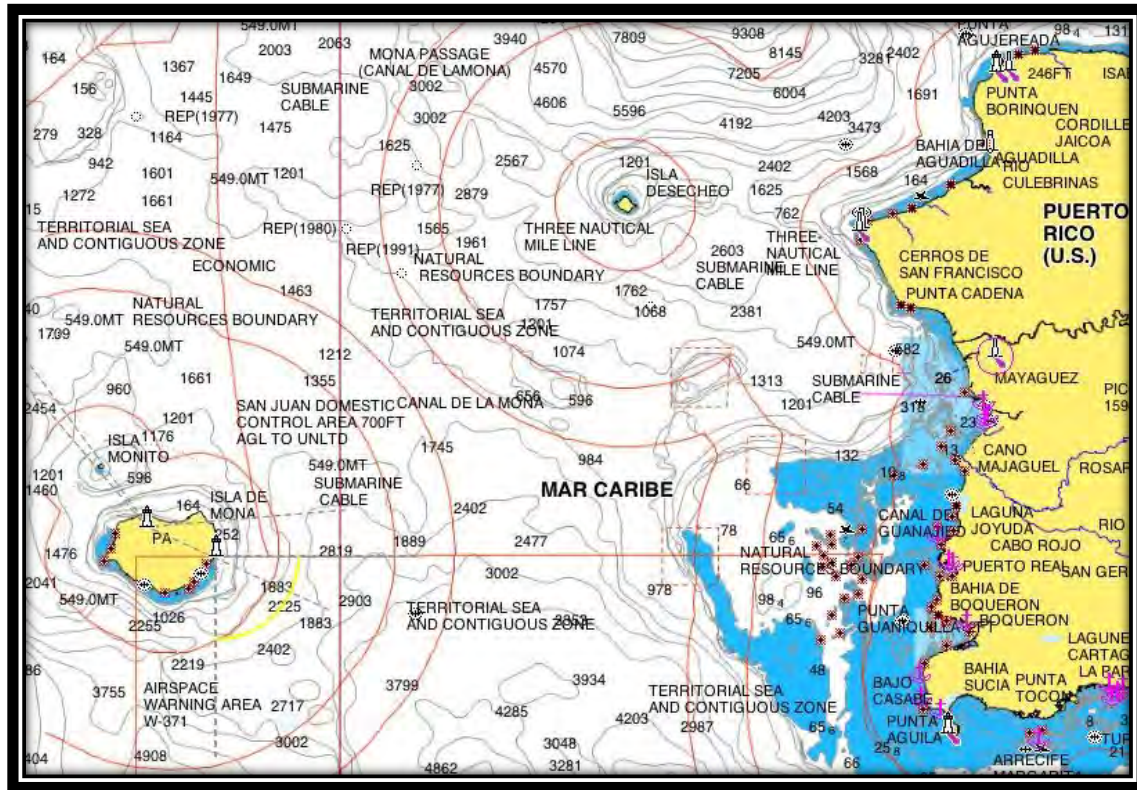


Figure 8. PUERTO RICO WEST COAST

Mainland

Aguadilla	Can be rough anchorage
Rincon	Can be rough anchorage
Mayaguez	Big bay, clearance facilities
Puerto Real	Protected bay & marina
Boqueron	SW corner of island, easy entry, good protection
Bahia Salinas (Cabo Rojo)	Fair anchorage at best

Islands

Isla Desecheo	Day stop only
Isla Mona	Small anchorage

INTRODUCING PUERTO RICO

Puerto Rico is an island which is part of the Greater Antilles. The Greater Antilles are located in the northwest part of the Caribbean Sea.

Inasmuch as many cruising sailors define “The Caribbean” as the Lesser Antilles (Virgin Islands to Grenada), the Greater Antilles and thus Puerto Rico are often overlooked. This is indeed unfortunate as Puerto Rico is truly a wonderful and safe cruising ground, offering exceptional cruising on all of its coasts as well as superb opportunities to explore inland.

SAILING DIRECTIONS TO PUERTO RICO

From North:

From the north, many cruising boats that avoid the offshore routes follow the islands of the Bahamas and Turks & Caicos south and east to Puerto Rico, choosing to pass through the Mona Passage or along the top of Puerto Rico on the north coast in order to make their easting.

One should note that the north coast of Puerto Rico can be a challenging coast that really has only one good harbor; San Juan. The north coast of Puerto Rico borders the Atlantic Ocean which can be rough in a Trade Wind passage. It is made more so early in the Trade Wind season when “northers” come down from North America every 7 to 10 days. Mariners should treat this coast very carefully and be extremely careful of weather. Other routes

should be considered as well; routes that will take them along the south coast (Caribbean coast), which is a safer coast.

Additionally, the north coast of Puerto Rico borders the Puerto Rico Trench which is the deepest part of the Atlantic Ocean at over 25,000 feet deep.

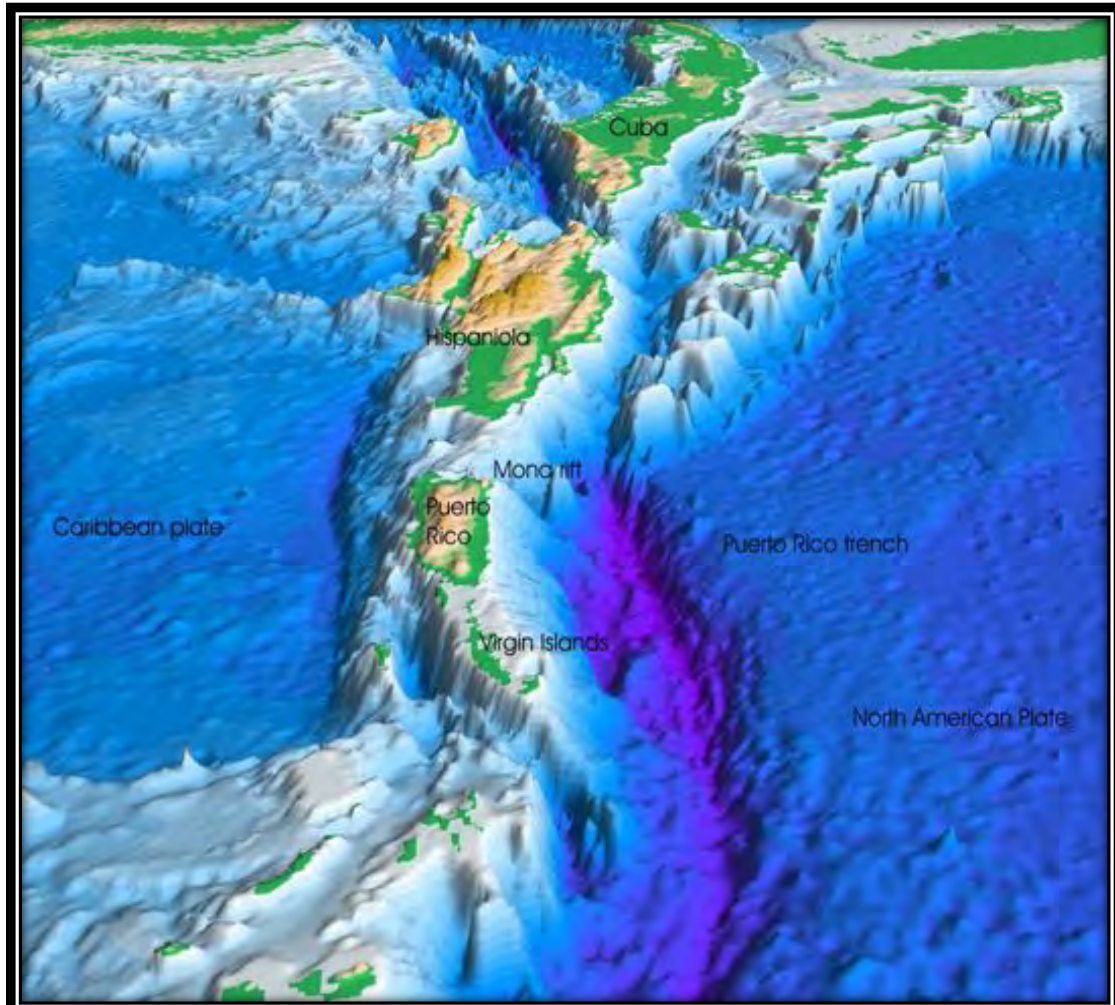


Figure 9. PUERTO RICO TRENCH

The depth of the Trench combined with the shallows at the west side of the Mona Passage (the north-south passage between the east end of the Dominican Republic and the west end of Puerto Rico) can produce conditions that are challenging.

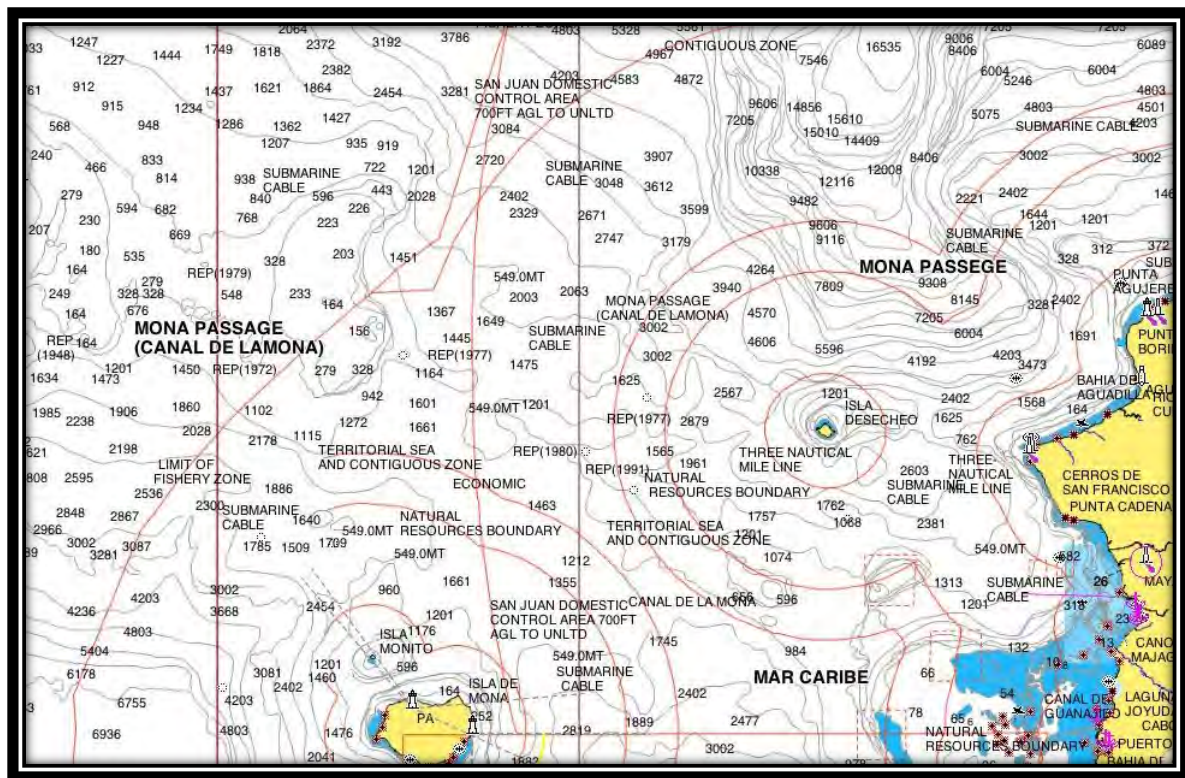


Figure 10. WEST END OF PUERTO RICO ~ MONA PASSAGE

There are a number of factors that can make the Mona Passage difficult.

- a. The Puerto Rico Trench and the Puerto Rico Rift. If you look at your chart you will see depths north of and east along the Atlantic coast of Puerto Rico for a distance of 500 miles that are over 25,000 feet deep. They meet the Mona Passage which, on the west or Dominican Republic side, has depths as shallow as 200ft or less in places. The change in depth is extreme and sudden. When the wind is heavy out of the NE, the west side of the Mona Passage is similar to being at a beach and standing in the surf with large waves headed at you.
- b. “Northerners” come down from North America early in the Trade Wind season (December through March) and come through the Mona Passage like freight trains. This can result in very high seas in parts of the passage.

- c. At the west (Dominican Republic) side of the Mona Passage is Cabo Engano (Cape Cheat). It did not earn this name by accident and the wind shear effect that it produces is noteworthy.
- d. Variable tidal currents that run through the Mona Passage complicate navigation as do sand shoals and three islands (Mona, Desecheo, and Monito); one large, one medium, and one small, which further exacerbate the transit. The currents are generally north and south.
NOTE: A current stronger than 3 knots setting west-southwest has been observed north of Mona Island. A current stronger than 3 knots has been observed near the shore south of Cape Engano on the Dominican Republic side of the passage. The ebb of this current sets northeast and the flood sets southwest. The southwest flood has a much longer duration than the ebb. Strong currents will affect your passage and when strong winds act on strong currents, rough condition prevail.

The master of this crossing, in my opinion, is Bruce Van Sant, who explains the “ins and outs” of the passage in his famous work, “A Gentleman’s Guide to Passages South” (any edition).

From South:

From the south most cruising boats will arrive to Puerto Rico as they proceed north and west up the Lesser Antilles (Grenada to the Virgin Islands). Access from the south is unimpeded with the exception of a small unmarked island located at: **15° 40.51N 63° 36.77W** (1/2 mile from north side).

The island, called Isla Aves, is located approximately 112 miles east of the SW corner of Guadeloupe and 135 miles south of the SW corner of St. Croix. It is owned by Venezuela. **Many times on many chart plotters it does not show up in the higher resolutions and one can run into it at night thinking that the sea is clear of landmasses.** If you are heading offshore from the southern portion of the Lesser Antilles and navigating to the north and west or heading south and navigating south and east, be careful of this island.

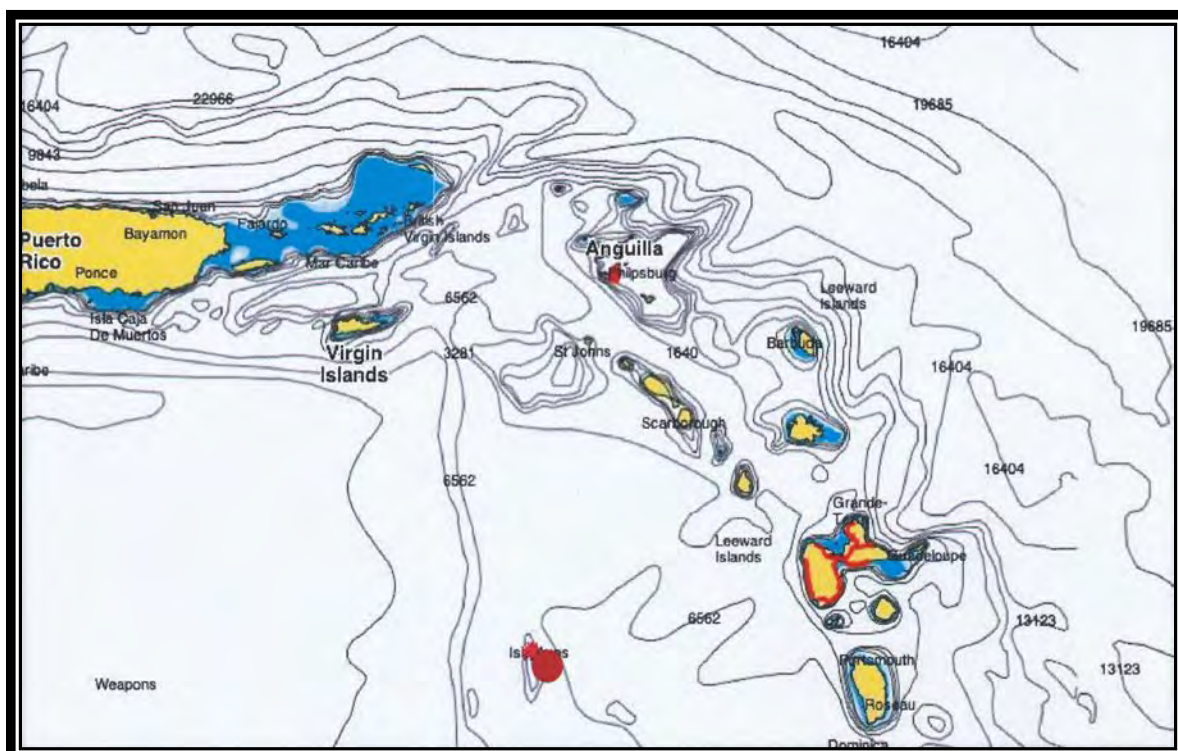


Figure 11. ISLA AVES, MARKED BY RED DOT (center bottom)

From East:

Sailing in from the east to Puerto Rico one must take note of the off lying islands of Puerto Rico at the east end; some large, such as Culebra and Vieques, and many just small cays. There are currents to take into account as you pass between the islands. Anchorages are easy to find and there are many stops that are excellent prior to making landfall on the mainland of Puerto Rico.

From West:

Along the Caribbean coast

Coming from the west along the Atlantic Coast ~ see section above, "From North".

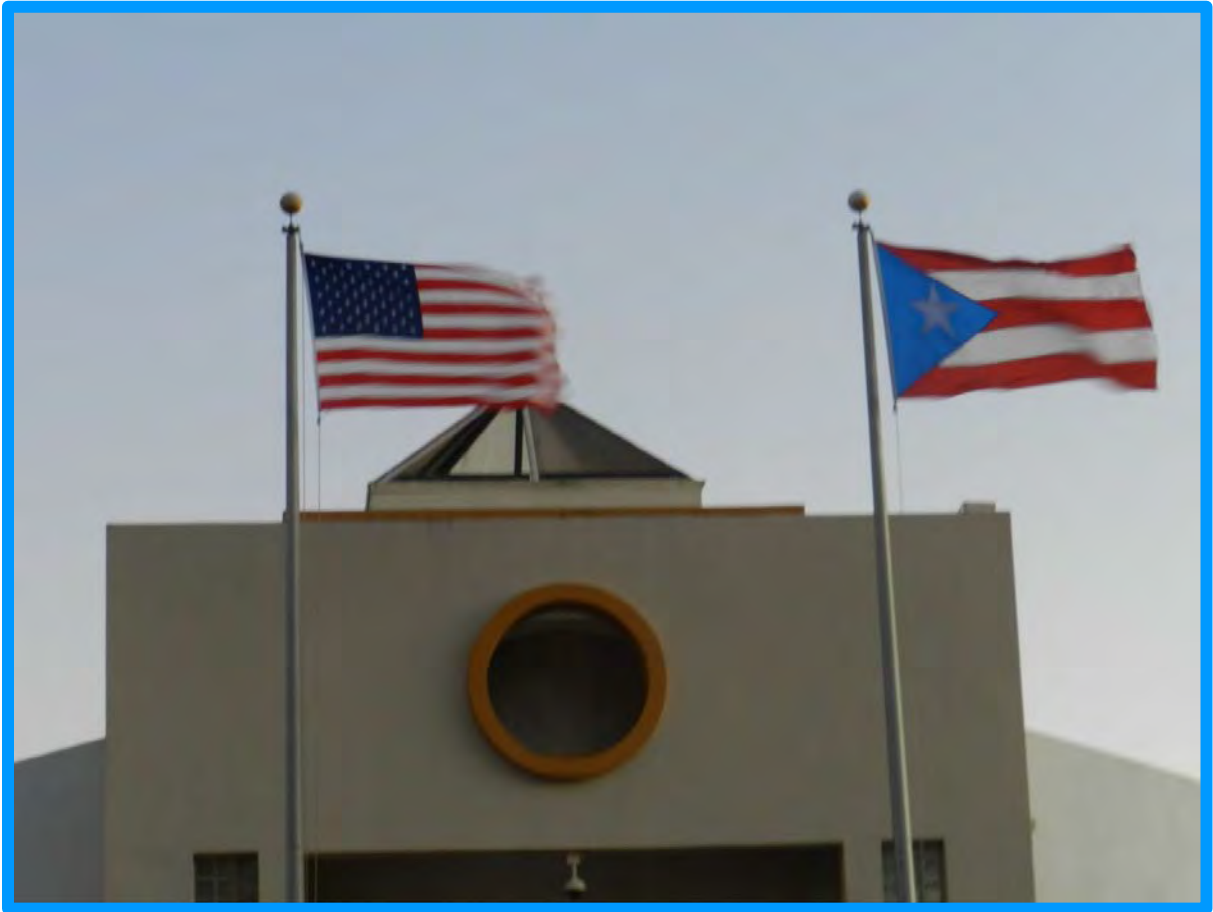
Coming from the west along the Caribbean coast to Puerto Rico, there are no impediments of any type other than the prevailing Trade Wind. These are best negotiated by using the mountain ranges of the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico which generate copious amounts of katabatic winds (cold land mass winds that slide down the mountains at night after the sun sets). These “night winds” have a tendency to stall normal trade winds within 3 to 5 miles of the island. At their best one can sail east on a port tack using the land breeze that develops and at worst, motor along in dead conditions and flat seas to make one’s easting.

Redefining “THE CARIBBEAN”:

*Lesser Antilles + Greater
Antilles (including Puerto Rico)
+ ABCs + all bordering countries*

= THE CARIBBEAN

PUERTO RICAN CULTURE



DOS BANDERAS ~ UN CAMINO

TWO FLAGS, ONE WAY

Puerto Rico is an island of the Caribbean and as a result is made up of and reflects Caribbean culture. That culture comprises Native American (Taino), African, European and a small amount of “other”, with a distinct patina of the culture of the United States which has been associated with the island since 1898.

Puerto Rico is a Commonwealth of the United States and Puerto Ricans are United States citizens.



Oil painting in Town Hall of Aguadilla, PR. Look carefully and you will see a variety of cultures represented as well as the “red, white and blue.”

One can refer to the Spanish speaking parts of the Caribbean as “Latin American”, which term in itself conveys a sense of many characteristics especially as to language, music and art.

Puerto Ricans often call themselves Boricua derived from the Taíno word *Boriken*, which illustrates their recognition of the island's original Taíno heritage. The word *Boriken* translates to "the great land of the valiant and

noble Lord." Many times you will hear Puerto Ricans say "*Yo soy Boricua*" which is equivalent to saying "*Yo soy Puertorriqueño*" ("I am Boricua", or "I am Puerto Rican") to identify themselves as Puerto Ricans.

They are proud of who they are and while they are part of the United States, they do not want to lose their identity which stems from their heritage.

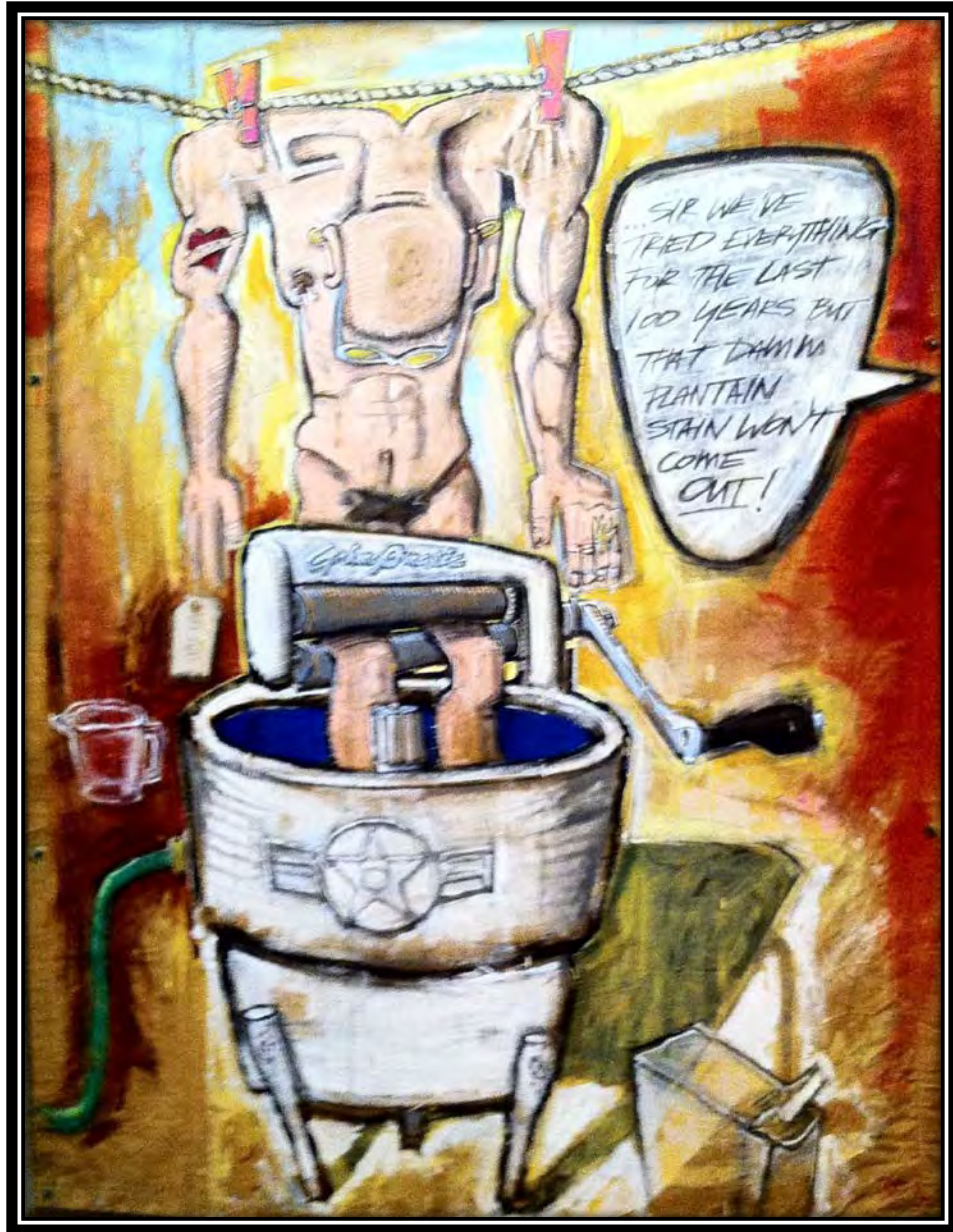
The culture and its attributes are so ingrained that no matter how much the island may be "Americanized", it retains its Puerto Rican culture in all its attributes; many of which are not seen at first glance.

The painting below, which is contemporary Puerto Rican art, shows a man being passed through a wringer from a washing machine and the comment says "*Sir, we have tried everything for the last 100 years but that damn plantain stain won't come out!*"

Plantains, a type of banana, are often part of a Puerto Rican meal and are very much associated with Puerto Rico culture. Many peoples that immigrated to the United States have seen their old culture subsumed by "American" culture. In the case of Puerto Ricans, while most are very much "American", they retain their distinctive Puerto Rican culture.

There are three positions in Puerto Rico regarding the future of the island politically. Those positions are the independence position, the statehood position and the commonwealth position. The majority position swings back and forth between commonwealth and statehood. Like all positions there are pros and cons to each of the above; all of which are quite complex and have been the subject of many scholarly studies.

The question of Puerto Rico's future in this regard is a very sensitive one that is argued with great fervor by Puerto Ricans. If you are visiting Puerto Rico, understand that this sensitive subject is best left for Puerto Ricans to work out. There is nothing you can say or add to the discussion that they have not thought about or discussed in the past and it is best that you avoid any reference to it. In many respects it may be best for a non Puerto Rican to consider that every Puerto Rican really has all the positions going on inside their thoughts at one time; just that they favor one over the other for a variety of very good reasons at any given time.



"Can't get that plantain stain out" and it seems most Puerto Ricans do not want to as well. That is why when you meet them they will tell you "Yo Soy Puertorriqueno" or "Yo Soy Boricua".

Good etiquette in someone else's country always goes a long way to make for a good visit and this applies double to those from the United States who may think of Puerto Rico as an "owned territory".

Puerto Ricans are US citizens and have the right under current US federal law to determine their own status and their own destiny.

They have excelled in many areas that range from sports to politics. They have fought in US wars and there is no scarcity of purple hearts amongst Puerto Ricans.

There are now more Puerto Ricans living in the continental United States than live in Puerto Rico itself. In broad numbers, the population of Puerto Rico is about 3.5 million.

The University of Michigan's World Values Surveys (WVS) has compiled data on the happiest countries in the world for over twenty years. Puerto Rico always comes out in the top 5 and has placed #1 more than once.

What makes Puerto Ricans so very happy?

Many things. Very close knit but very extended families certainly is one good example. It is not unusual for a Puerto Rican to maintain contact with a host of cousins, uncles, and aunts; not to mention sisters and brothers.

Puerto Rican culture likes music and it likes color. It is not in a rush and being in a rush is bad form in Puerto Rico. The culture is not utility based like that of North Americans. Its values are based on “sentidos” and thus putting people’s feelings first is most important. Confrontation is frowned upon as are angry outbursts (do not take this to mean that there is no violent crime in Puerto Rico).

Puerto Ricans say “Buenos Dias” to each other in the morning. They nod to each other when they walk into a room, even if they do not know each other. They smile a great deal. If you were to visit a Puerto Rican with something in mind that you wanted to accomplish, it would be considered very bad form if you went directly to the subject. Keep this in mind when you anchor, or come into contact with the authorities who will clear you in, or when you enter a slip in a marina or perhaps even a store.

To get right to the point is not appreciated; it indicates you are in a rush and does not show respect or value the person you are speaking with. You may speak about the weather to ask how it has been. Or if you know the person, you can ask about their family. The discussion remains social until everyone is comfortable and ready and then it addresses the business at hand. This is considered good manners.

You will not have a good experience if you arrive in a rush or try to “push your way through”. Don’t be pushy and never be in a rush. Do not lose your temper or show any sign of anger in your face. Smile and go with the flow and you will come to experience the Puerto Rican spirit that is so warm and welcoming.

If you speak a little Spanish; so much the better. Many people have asked me if Spanish is a necessity in Puerto Rico. Actually most Puerto Ricans are bilingual and many trilingual. As to their “English”, you will find most as fluent as residents of North America. However, most prefer Spanish or at least some Spanish mixed with English.



(Photo taken inside Punto Café restaurant, Old San Juan)

You will find Puerto Rican fruits and vegetables exceptional in variety and flavor. If you like avocado, pineapple, bananas and mangoes, you will never go hungry.



TYPICAL PUERTO RICAN DISH

The centerpiece of the above dish is Arroz con Gandules, which is the rice and beans at the center. Around the rice are the ever present piece of fried chicken, as well as ripe plantains and pastelillos (small fried stuffed pies ~ upper right).

This dish with a cold Medalla (Puerto Rican) beer (say MA DA YAH), will make you happy!

Puerto Rican food and culinary art reached a broader audience with the advent of Daisy Cooks (Daisy Martinez), a program which is syndicated on national television in many countries.



If you get to see the Daisy show on TV, she will enthrall you with stories of when she was a little girl growing up in a Puerto Rican household, while she cooks wonderful Puerto Rican Meals.

You should also not overlook visits to art galleries and museums while in Puerto Rico. If you like architecture, you will be captivated everywhere you go. The sound of music comes from everywhere. Latin music is filled with beat and rhythm. Perhaps with a local beer, a dish of local food and the beat of Puerto Rican music in the background, you will join the ranks of the “happiest people in the world” as well.



COLORS ARE BOLD AND ARE USED IN SO MANY ENTERTAINING WAYS



Afternoon gardens where shade trees and benches provide for respite from the Caribbean sun are common in all the towns you will visit. Making time for socializing with family and friends is a high priority in Puerto Rico.



Time with family and friends is highly regarded.



Amongst the happiest people in the World!

Children are cherished!



"UNA NINA LINDA ESPERANDO SU HELADO"



THE ARCHITECTURE IN PUERTO RICO IS RICH AND VARIED ~ SO MUCH TO SEE AROUND EVERY TURN BOTH IN THE CITY AS WELL AS IN THE COUNTRY.





PUERTO RICO IS FILLED WITH BEAUTY EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK

SERVICES AND SUPPORT FOR CRUISERS

In this area there is much to be said for Puerto Rico. Banks and ATM machines are everywhere and the island can easily cater to any and all nationalities of the world. The US Dollar is standard currency throughout Puerto Rico. Credit and debit cards are in use most places.

Hospitals and doctors are readily available as is the standard United States emergency phone number 911.

Cell phone service is readily available and you can easily arrange to have your cell phone made to work in Puerto Rico. Calls between the United States and Puerto Rico are often at “local rates”.

Internet and Wi-Fi are readily available.

Car rentals are available everywhere at reasonable prices and good service. The roads are overall excellent. Driving is not difficult and there is a highway system that connects the entire country. GPS units that provide driving instructions work just fine in Puerto Rico.

Supermarkets, hardware stores, **marine supply stores**, pharmacies and mega malls with every conceivable store are easy to find.

There are many anchorages as well as ample marinas and yacht clubs throughout Puerto Rico. In some parts of the country, such as the islands out east, there are free park moorings. Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA) has a number of “hosts” in Puerto Rico to assist cruisers with questions and to provide help.

The US Coast Guard, the Puerto Rican Marine Police, the Federal Park Rangers, and other agencies as well, keep Puerto Rico well patrolled and as a result it is very safe. Acts of theft against cruisers with or without assault are virtually nonexistent. Nonetheless, keeping an eye on your dinghy and its motor and taking normal security precautions is always good seamanship.



What to do when: WWW.CBP.GOV

Inland travel is a pleasure with very reasonable hotel accommodations available for visits to attractions throughout the island. Scuba diving, snorkeling, surfboarding, sport fishing, and all manner of ocean related sports are available in Puerto Rico.

ACCESS TO AIRPORTS

There are airports throughout the country, the largest of which is San Juan's Luis Munoz Marin International Airport (SJU). (See table below for commercial and general aviation airports convenient to ports and anchorages discussed in this guide.) It is easy to leave your boat and return as well as to make crew changes through the international commercial airports, or to arrange for further flight service into or out of general aviation airports.

Puerto Rico has two other international airports: Mercedita International (PSE) in Ponce and Rafael Hernandez International (BQN) in Aguadilla.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The following are entrance locations where you can clear in:

San Juan	northeast coast
Fajardo	east coast
Ponce	south central coast
Mayaguez	west central coast
Culebra	off east coast
Vieques	off east coast

Additional information on clearance requirements can be found at <http://www.cbp.gov/travel/pleasure-boats-private-flyers/pleasure-boat-locations/pr-us-vi>

The following applies to pleasure boats. Pleasure boats or yachts are defined as those that do not carry passengers for hire and do not engage in trade or commercial activity.

Note: Any vessel that arrives after normal working hours: No one may leave the boat until such time as it is necessary in order to clear in.



INFORMATION THAT BEARS REPEATING

Note: Customs clearance is *not* Immigration clearance. Both must be obtained in order to clear in. Immigration clearance is always face to face for *everyone* except in cases where a special program is in force. These programs include Nexus, Oars and LBO.

U.S. FLAG BOATS

The master of any American pleasure boat must report to Customs and Border Protection immediately after arriving into the US from a foreign port and must also report any foreign merchandise on the boat that is subject to duty.

The Department of Immigration requires a face to face confirmation of the master and all crew members and each must submit his U.S. passport. If a foreign national is a member of the crew of a U.S. flag boat, he must submit his passport and legal entry can only be obtained if a valid U.S. Visa is contained therein.

For U.S. citizens, if you had previously registered through the LBO program (Local Boater Option), a free program available to pleasure boat operators in Tampa, Miami, Puerto Rico, and the U. S. Virgin Islands, then procedures for entry are simplified and expedited and may result in only the need for a phone call.

Additionally for Canadian and American citizens the NEXUS program (which replaces the I-68 program) provides for expedited entry.

Keep note in your logbook of all conversations you have with any Customs or Immigration officials as to approval numbers, names, etc. This way, if there is any question by another official down the line, you have your information written down as to date and time in your log book. *A ship's log book is a legal document.*

FOREIGN FLAG VESSEL

All foreign flag vessels and foreign nationals are required to notify Customs of their arrival. Additionally, the master and all members of the crew must report to U.S. Immigration and present valid passports that contain a valid U.S. Visa.

All foreign flag vessels are required to hold a cruising license, which can be obtained at the first port of entry. The cruising license, if obtained, is good

for one year and allows transit throughout U.S. waters. In the absence of a cruising license, the vessel must obtain a permit before proceeding to each subsequent U.S. port.

NOTE FOR ALL BOATS

U.S. security measures have been increased and it is very important for all vessels, U.S. flagged and foreign flagged, to meet the requirements for entry. In brief,

- *YOU MUST NOTIFY CUSTOMS OF YOUR ARRIVAL.*
- *YOU MUST HAVE THE MASTER AND ALL CREW MEMBERS APPEAR WITH THEIR PASSPORTS IN FRONT OF AN IMMIGRATION INSPECTOR.*

Be sure that you fly your yellow quarantine flag the moment you drop anchor or enter a marina. This announces that you have not yet cleared and with it flying you cannot later be accused of not announcing yourself.

FIREARMS

U.S. boats do not have to declare firearms that were registered with ATF (Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms) PRIOR to departure from the U.S.

Foreign boats **MUST** have a permit to carry firearms and this permit must be submitted and approved PRIOR to the arrival of the boat. If a foreign flagged boat arrives with firearms without an approved permit, the firearms will be seized.

PETS

See <http://www.pettravel.com/immigration/PuertoRico.cfm>

Cats and dogs must be free of diseases that can be passed on to man. If the cat or dog is from a rabies free country, a vaccination is not required.



Figure 12. PUERTO RICO AND ITS ISLANDS



Figure 13. PUERTO RICO AND ITS SURROUNDING SEAS

CRUISING PUERTO RICO: SOUTH COAST

COAST SEQUENCE:
SOUTH (West to East), East, North, West

LA PARGUERA

17° 57.42N 67° 2.41W

Entrance between Cayo Enrique and Cayo La Gata



Figure 14. SOUTH COAST: LA PARGUERA AND ISLANDS

It is best that you do not try to enter this anchorage from the west. Proceed east until you can pass between Arrecife Media Luna and Turrumote Island at which point it is safe to turn northwest and make for the anchorage.



ANCHORAGES AT LA PARGUERA

You can anchor just north of Cayo Enrique in 10ft of water or proceed a mile more to La Parguera and anchor in 10-15ft depths. Holding is good and the anchorage is secure in most conditions.

The town is not large but it is ample and you will find restaurants, pharmacy, supermarket, post office and a marine parts store.

The anchorage allows for dinghy exploration and there is no end to the nooks and crannies that can be found. Approximately 2 miles east of La Parguera is the Bahia Fosforescente. The bioluminescent bay is filled with microscopic plankton that light up the water when disturbed.

Another anchorage close by (3 miles east) La Paguera is Bahia Montalva. The bay and its off lying reefs make for reasonable protection in most conditions.

Sometimes you will see a few sailboats anchored in the lee of Cayo Don Luis and Arrecife Enmedio. These are good daytime anchorages that can be used by those who want to continue on at night when Trade Wind conditions abate. Keep in mind when you anchor that when the Trade Wind drops at night, the katabatic winds will create a land breeze which will move your stern into shallower water.



CLUB NAUTICO DE LA PARGUERA

BAHIA DE GUANICA

17° 56.19N 66° 54.44W

Red nun, 1 nm south of the bay entrance



Figure 15. BAHIA DE GUANICA

This is an easy harbor to enter and offers great protection. However, while the town has some good restaurants, the harbor is more commercial than most cruising yachtsmen prefer and is most often skipped.

However, just about 2 nm to the east is the Cayos de Cana Gorda which is normally referred to as Gilligan's Island. The island is a state park and is administered by park rangers. There is a dock to tie your dinghy up to. The anchorage amidst the Cayos is quite good and you can get the breeze from the Trade Winds without the seaway. On the weekends it can get crowded as there is a ferry service from the mainland. There are actually a number of spots you can anchor in and each cruiser has their own favorite.

NOTE:

The Cayos de Cana Gorda extend out a distance from the point (Ballena). They are very low and hard to see from seaward. Coming in to starboard is Arrecife Coral Breakers, an extensive coral reef partly

bare at low water; mostly covered at high water. **PROCEED WITH CAUTION ON ENTERING.** Lighted Buoy #2 is located at 17° 55.20N 66° 54.60W. Pick it up and follow it in to # 3 & 4.

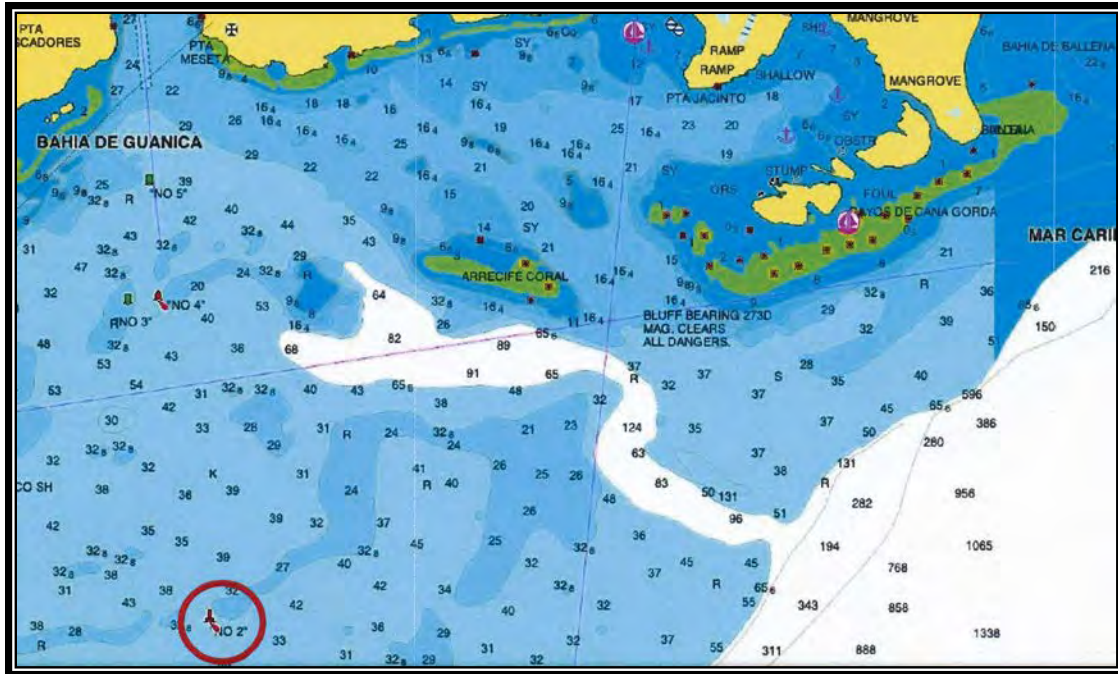


Figure 16. GILLIGAN'S ISLAND AT CAYOS DE CANA GORDA
(See # 2 entrance marker at lower left)

You can also choose to anchor just northwest of Punta Jacinto just off the public beach. I like the Cayos better as they are more private, especially during the weekdays, and they allow for more ventilation as well.

BAHIA DE GUAYANILLA

17° 57.86N 66° 45.77W

Just south of red nun #2 at entrance to bay

There is a small anchorage you can use at the west side of the bay that is suitable if you are just plain tired and need to stop. However, the area including the balance of the harbor to the east is industrial and has nothing to offer to the cruising sailor.

Best skipped; there are better stops to the west and the east.

BAHIA DE PONCE



NOTE:

Coming from the west you will pass Isla de Ratones at the west entrance to the Bahia de Ponce. They are 1 nm offshore. Cayo Arenas is north and east by $\frac{1}{2}$ nm with reefs and shoals all around it. Do not transit between the mainland and Cayo Arenas or Cayo Arenas and Isla Ratones; STAY SOUTH and avoid them.

Southwest of the entrance to the Ponce Yacht Club and the anchorage area is Isla de Cardona. It has a light on it, Fl W4s, 46ft high, 8M. It is located at 17° 57.40N 66° 38.10W and can be used at night to guide you through the entrance channel.

PONCE ANCHORAGE AREA

17° 57.89N 66° 37.35W

Just north of red nun #6 at center of harbor entrance

This harbor and this town are exceptional and should not be missed. The harbor is very well protected. The anchorage is outside of the Ponce Yacht and Fishing Club.

The club has slips available at times. They also have a dinghy dock that one can use for a small daily fee as well as showers and a restaurant. It is a very nice club and I found them very hospitable. Fuel is readily available at their

dock as well. They also have a marine railway and a travel lift rated at 70 tons. I found the work area clean and well organized.

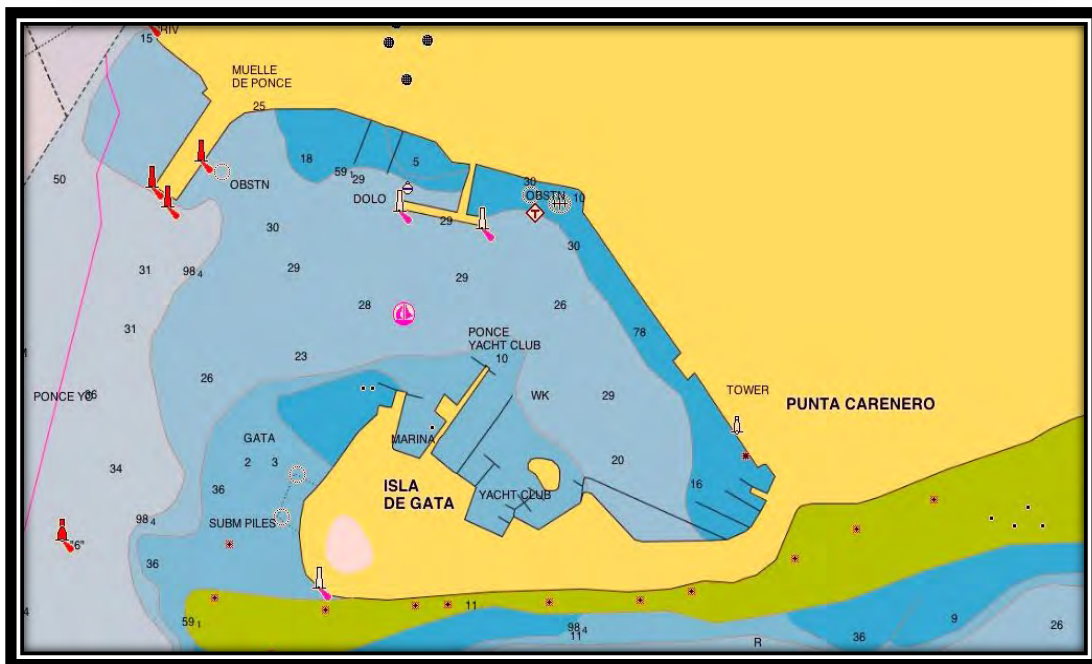


Figure 17. PONCE

CLEARING IN: If you are clearing in at Ponce, you can ask the Yacht Club if you can tie up at their fuel dock. On a weekday that normally will not be a problem. The club can help those who utilize its services such as fuel purchase or slip rental to call the authorities. If you are anchored out, wait for the authorities to come and then follow their instructions. Normally, instead of going to the boat, Immigration will ask you to bring everyone to shore. **Do not let anyone leave the boat whether anchored out or at the dock until you are instructed by Immigration.**

IF YOU WANT TO MAKE ARRANGMENTS WITH THE PONCE YACHT CLUB, YOU CAN EMAIL TO:

Sophia Orta or Candido Pou
clubnauticoponce@gmail.com
787 842 9003



PONCE YACHT AND FISHING CLUB, AND HARBOR

Anchoring room is sufficient but one needs to take heed that the average anchoring depth is 30ft. Holding is fair to good in a mud bottom but then only if you laid out enough scope to catch, and more so when it is blowing.

If you find the harbor too crowded or too noisy, which it can be on the weekends, you can always go out of the yacht club basin and north to anchor above the “Turning Basin” shown on most charts. Usually the area is empty as most anchor in the yacht club harbor.

PONCE HARBOR

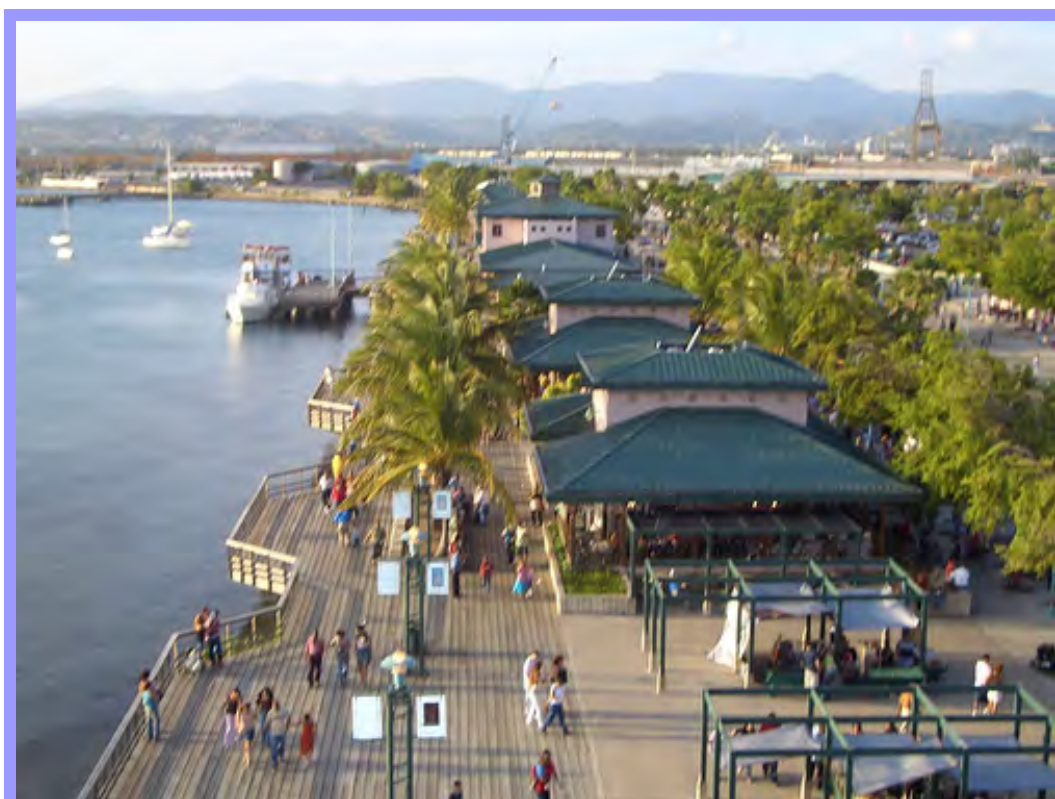
Ponce Harbor is either a long walk to town or a short taxi ride. In the more immediate area is a town beach for those so inclined as well as a mall (Plaza Caribe), supermarket, and a Sam’s Club store. The yacht club can call you a cab.



Ponce Yacht Club dock ~across from “Tablado La Guancha”

A small marina, Caribbean Images Marina, is adjacent to Tablago La Guancha. The owner, David Mansfield, has a limited number of slips. His contact number is 787-244-6283.

http://www.caribbeanimagespr.com/caribbeanimagespr.com/Marina_Home.html



Tablado La Guancha ~ *the boardwalk; with music, food and entertainment.*
A great deal of Music!!! On the weekends it can go LOUD to 3AM.

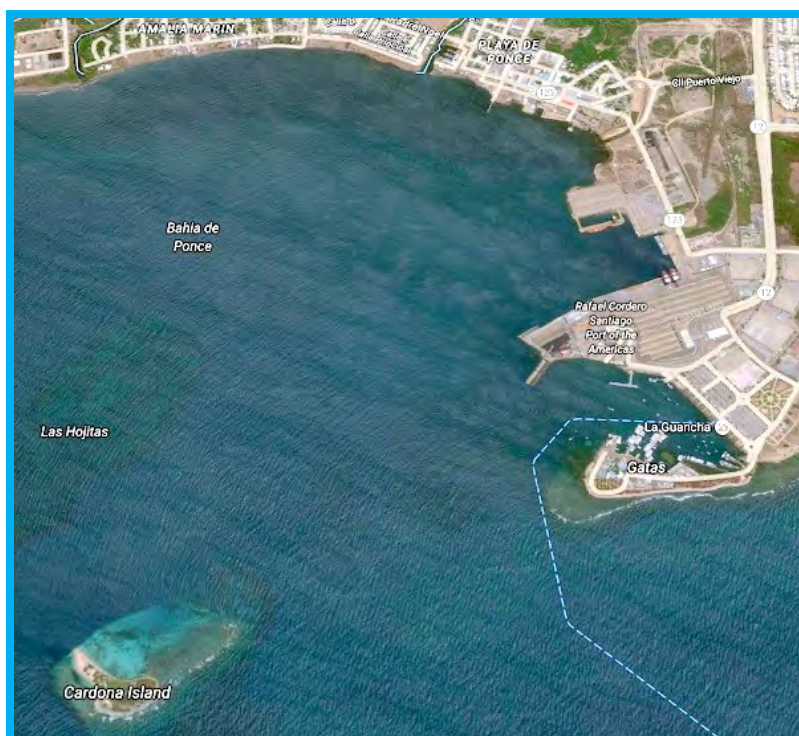


Figure 18. SHORT WALK TO TOWN FROM PONCE HARBOR



PLAZA DE LAS DELICIAS

The best “people watching” spot in



Ponce is the Plaza Las Delicias, which is town center in every sense of the word. Here you will find



a splendid park that often has a variety of outdoor exhibits. The week I was there, the exhibit featured their “very senior citizens”, explaining their contributions and honoring them.

Ponce has really nice free trolleys. The problem is they run only on demand, so that they do not run unless they have passengers. They have a number of different routes that run out from the town center in different directions.



PONCE FREE TROLLEYS

The old church, the Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadeloupe, is also located here as is the fire house which is truly a “sight to be seen” and photographed.



PONCE FIRE HOUSE ~ BUILT 1883



FIRE HOUSE WITH CATHEDRAL IN BACKGROUND

As you walk about Ponce there is just so much to see and do. Even the old hotel lobby is fascinating and I recommend you visit it.



FROM THE "OLD DAYS" OF PONCE ~ ELEGANT!

Architecture, sculpture and art are expressions of soul of which Ponce has no shortage!

The Art Gallery in Ponce is highly regarded and you will especially like it if you are drawn to classical European Art. Jose Campeche (first acclaimed Puerto Rican artist (1751-1809) ~ a freed slave) artwork can normally be seen as well.



"LADY ON HORSEBACK"

I think if you take the time to walk through Ponce and appreciate the architecture of some of the buildings you will sense the prosperity and fineness of this city. There is a great deal of restoration going on and what has been restored appears to have been done meticulously and with great care. The parks are exceptional.



TURN OF THE CENTURY VICTORIAN



GREAT PROSPERITY BROUGHT NEO CLASSICAL





When the façade of the municipal building looks this good
you know the city had to be doing well!





BEAUTY REQUIRES GREAT DESIGN AND ENGAGING DETAIL



THE MORE YOU LOOK, THE MORE YOU WILL SEE



As you walk through the parks and around Ponce you will find people very friendly, “muy amable” and very willing to speak to you. Do not be afraid to say *Buenos Dias* or *Buenas Tardes* and don’t forget to smile!



You can restock in Ponce. You can find a great diesel mechanic in Ponce. You can walk through the park and around the town; it is very safe. You can walk at the boardwalk by the harbor. Take the free trolley and stop to enjoy a really great lunch at any number of places to suit your pocket and your tastes. Ponce is an “easy entry” harbor with clearance facilities. You will find a Sam’s Club in Ponce if you want to reprovision on a large scale. There is also a large mall called, Plaze del Caribe where you will find a large number of stores.

PONCE IS A MUST STOP and SHOULD NOT BE MISSED!

ISLA CAJA DE MUERTOS (COFFIN ISLAND)

17° 53.60N 66° 31.30W

At the anchorage at the SW corner of the island

There is a light on the island located at the above coordinates. Fl W 30s, 297ft., 12M.



Figure 19. ISLA CAJA DE MUERTOS

This island lies approximately 6 ½ nm southeast of the entrance to Ponce. The island is high at 244ft and can be seen easily at a distance. This anchorage is traditionally used by cruising boats who want to make an early departure to head east before the trades come up. If the Trade Wind blew hard during the day, there can be a surge at the anchorage caused by seas working around the southwest tip of the island. Otherwise on light wind nights it is fine. The bottom is sand and the holding is excellent. Anchor in 10ft of water.

This anchorage can get crowded on weekends and holidays as day boats and ferries come over from the mainland.

BAHIA DE JAUCA

17° 57.65N 66° 21.47W

Just south of harbor entrance, 0.8 nm from anchorage; stay center of unmarked channel entering; avoid shoal at south tip of Cayo Mata

This anchorage is on the west side of Bahia de Rincon. It is not a bad anchorage except that late in the Trade Wind season it is open to south and southeasterly winds. If you are caught out in a stiff northeasterly or northerly and need to duck in, this is a good option.

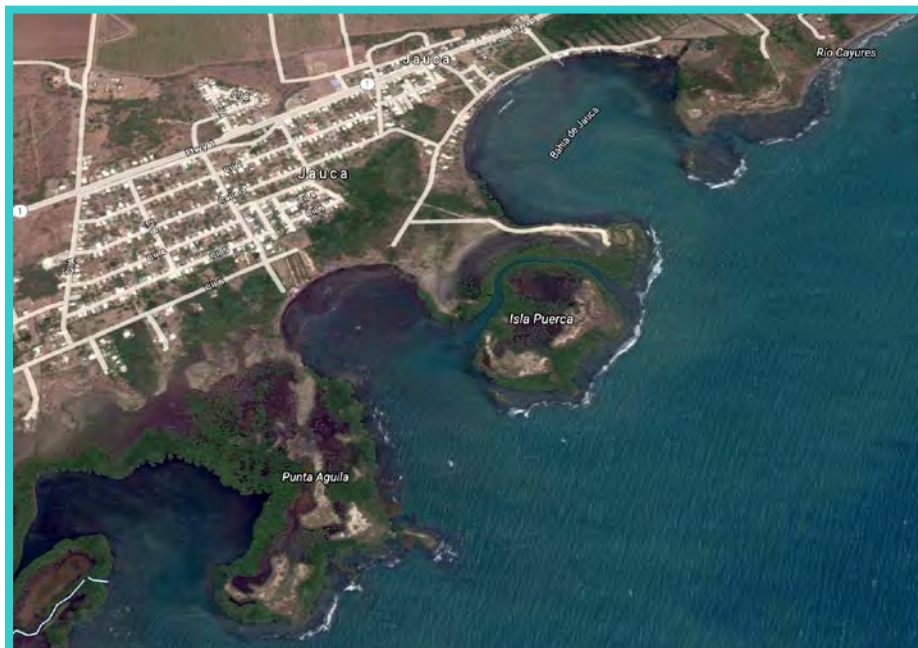


Figure 20. BAHIA DE JAUCA

SALINAS

17° 56.80N 66° 17.58W

Just south of entrance to anchorage

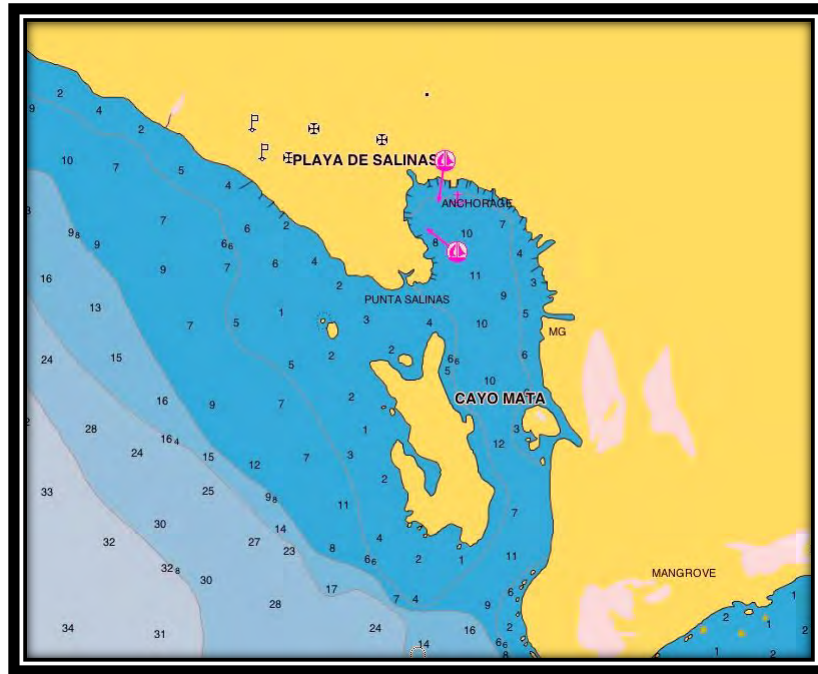


Figure 21. SALINAS



SALINAS ANCHORAGE IS AMPLE AND HOLDING IS GOOD IN MUD

At the head of the harbor you will find Marina Salinas. They offer fuel, water and ice, laundry and have a very popular restaurant. There are a number of good restaurants in the immediate area and all are priced reasonably. They can get very crowded especially on weekends and holidays. Puerto Ricans like to eat out and celebrate and Salinas is known for their restaurants.



RESTAURANT AT MARINA DE SALINAS

There are a few stores in the area of the marina. If you decide to go to town, it is about a mile walk west along the road.

Salinas has always been known as a legendary fishing area and pays tribute to its fishermen by the central placement of the sculpture below at the entrance to the fishing village.



SALINAS TRIBUTE TO ITS FISHING HERITAGE

To get a jump on the wind heading east, you can exit the harbor and anchor behind Cayos de Barca (**17° 55.12N 66° 14.05W**) for the night; and then get an early start in the morning by exiting east through the Boca Del Infierno which is an easy out even in the darkness of early morning.

Across from the restaurant is a cruisers' bar and restaurant owned by Gene B. Lassus. He is an SSCA authorized cruising station host and you will find him very helpful. The bar is called Sal Pa Dentro Restaurant. Gene can be reached at 787-409-2100 or salpadentroinsalinas@gmail.com.

BAHIA DE JOBOS

17° 54.69N 66° 12.98W

Just southeast of entrance between Cayos de Barca and Cayos Caribes.

There are a number of ways to work your way into this anchorage. The one above is the one most often used. While it is unmarked it is straightforward.

This area is largely mangrove swamps and the anchorages, in particular those to the west of Cayo Puerca, are normally used in hurricanes.

You can also go up to the northeastern side of the harbor and anchor in a number of well protected spots. These anchorages are largely for those who do not need to go ashore and simply want a protected, peaceful anchorage. Further to the south, as indicated prior you can anchor behind Cayos de Barca to allow for an early morning departure. If you find this anchorage too rolly because the Trade Wind was strong during the day, you can shift across to the SW tip of Cayos Caribes and look for a lee.

At the southwestern tip of Punta Pozuelo is a small marina, depths of 6-7ft.



CLUB NAUTICO DE GUAYAMA
Email: socio.cng@gmail.com
787 866 3162 Ivan Rodriguez

LAS MAREAS

17° 55.76N 66° 9.65W

This is a commercial harbor with *no* facilities for a cruising boat. **Avoid.**

PUERTO PATILLAS

17° 57.54N 66° 0.16W

1 nm SW of entrance to anchorage

Nothing much here except for a reasonable overnight anchorage in 10ft of water or less if you so wish. There are a number of spots and you can hunt around until you find one that you like. Keep away from the coral reef west of Point Viento as you enter; stay to your port until you have cleared it.

CRUISING PUERTO RICO: EAST COAST

COAST SEQUENCE:
South, EAST, North, West

The east coast of Puerto Rico has a number of attractions for cruising boats. Facilities are exceptional and more than few in number. There are ample slips storage, land storage, haul out facilities, parts stores, and technical services for repair and upgrade. Some cruising boats now choose Puerto Rico to store their boats for hurricane season. It takes some extra preparation but it is being done. There are no guarantees in case of a direct hit from a hurricane, but if you are in the northern part of the Caribbean and want to fly home, it is something that you can consider. You may need to advise your insurance company and get their approval; check with them.

PUERTO YABUCOA

18° 2.43N 65° 48.41W

At channel entrance markers

This is a commercial port and should not be considered.

PALMAS DEL MAR

18° 4.59N 65° 47.74W

At entrance to outer harbor



PALMAS DEL MAR MARINA
Juan Boschetti, Marina Administrator
787 656 7300
theyachtclubllc@gmail.com
theyachtclubmarina.com



The entry to the outer harbor is straightforward; just be sure you are lined up and stay to the center. When you enter, the boat yard, if that is your destination, is to port. The boat yard is a very clean operation and has a 70 ton marine hoist. The marina has an ample number of slips that can accommodate virtually any size yacht. The marina can assist

with customs and immigration clearance although this is not an official port of entry.



Figure 22. PALMAS DEL MAR ~ OUTER AND INNER HARBOR



Figure 23. ANOTHER VIEW OF PALMAS DE MAR



THE BOATYARD PART OF THIS COMPLEX IS AN ACTIVE PLACE WITH GOOD FACILITIES.



One of the nice things about the Varadero@ Palmas marina and boat yard, if you are proceeding east on the south shore, is that it is just a few miles north of the southern tip of Puerto Rico.

As this marina is a community of homes and condominiums, inside the grounds you will find a number of restaurants as well as a casino and a small supermarket where you can pick up provisions.

ROOSEVELT ROADS

18° 12.31N 65° 36.96W

Just SE of entrance to the bay

This is a very large facility which was once a major U.S. military installation. It played a large role as a naval base during World War II. The facility is enormous and has a marina that was used by naval and other military personnel as well as road infrastructure and homes.

As of this writing, the property is being auctioned off by the U.S. government in two separate parcels. There are many possible outcomes for

the use of the area and there is no shortage of gossip in the area as to who has plans to do what.

At this time there is no reason for a cruising boat to call at this harbor unless you are simply nosy and want to poke around.

NOTE: On the way up to Roosevelt Roads coming from the south, you will pass Cayo Santiago which is also known as “Monkey Island”. There are hundreds of monkeys of the rhesus variety running around free. The monkeys are monitored and are the subject of various research projects. You may not land here but while you can anchor for the day, most times the anchorage is quite rolly.

NOTE

As you continue north, you can leave Isla Pinos to port or to starboard. If you choose to pass between Isla Pinos and the mainland, via the Pasaje Medio Mundo, take note that the current can be with you or against you by up to 2 knots. It is quite easy at the north end of the passage to relax your guard and have the current push you into the reef which juts out. TAKE CARE!

CEIBA

PUERTO DEL REY MARINA

18° 17.45N 65° 37.74W

Just south of red entrance markers

<http://www.puertodelrey.com/>



**PUERTO
DEL REY**

PUERTO DEL REY Marina

- Deep water slips to 200' LOA
- Travelifts up to 165 tons
- Dry Stack to 45' LOA
- Land Storage including hurricane concrete tie downs
- Free water, Wi Fi, Cable TV

Tel.: 1-787-860-1000
Fax: 1-787-863-5253

marina@puertodelrey.com
 www.puertodelrey.com

Highway 3, Km. 51.4, Fajardo, P.R.



This marina facility has one word to describe it ~ LARGE, *very* large. It has everything a marina should have; you will find slips, Wi-Fi, haul out for repair service and for hurricane season as well.

FAJARDO

Acknowledgement:

Bill Wraps is a fishing charter boat captain who keeps his boat at Sea Lovers Marina in Fajardo. He is available to take you fishing for any kind of fish or for a trip snorkeling or Scuba diving. He spent an entire day of his own time, escorting me around Fajardo to all the marinas and helping me understand the facilities. He is an extraordinary person without whose help this guide would be less valuable.

www.billwrapsfishing.com

787 364 4216

ISLETA MARINA

18° 20.30N 65° 37.35 W

Just west of entrance to the marina

To enter Isleta Marina from offshore, it is best to come in from the north. There is no entrance from the east and from the south there are confusing reefs that present a problem. The anchoring area is to the SW of the marina.



ISLETA MARINA

You cannot mistake the area because the apartment buildings can be seen from a great distance. As you can see in the upper right, boats anchor to the SW of the marina as well as tie up in the marina slips. The marina has good services and offers all the things that cruisers can ask for, ranging from Wi-Fi to haul out facilities. You can dinghy over to the mainland or you can take the marina ferry by paying a small daily fee.

Because this facility is about ½ mile offshore and has a protected anchorage, it is a favorite of cruising boats and you will not have any difficulty finding other cruisers with whom to socialize.



ISLETA MARINA ~ ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

If it has a shortcoming, it would be that if you use your own dinghy to go to the mainland, ½ nm to the west, you will have the afternoon trades in your face if you come back to your boat before dark.

If you have ever done a mile to windward with a boat loaded down with provisions and your wife telling you that you are going either too fast or too slow, then you understand what the point is.



**WHEN YOU SEE THE BIG ONE COMING, TURN AROUND QUICK
SO SHE WON'T GET WET!**

NOTE:

From the west side of Isleta Marina there is a protected passage behind Cayo Ahogado to the south that can take you nearly all the way to Isla Pineros. The passage behind the reefs is not marked but if you stay in 10ft or more of water you can have a nice sail, south or north as may be the case.

FAJARDO: MAINLAND MARINAS (south to north)



Figure 24. FAJARDO – BIRD’S EYE VIEW



Photo courtesy of laregata.com

OVERVIEW

Sunbay Marina

18° 20.24N 65° 37.85W

Just south of marina entrance

<http://www.sunbaymarina.com/>

1sunbaymarina@aol.com

787 863 0313

Olga Perez, SSCA cruising station host



Photo courtesy of laregatapr.com

Ample slips, neat and clean, good security and all the amenities that you could ask for. This is the SSCA host marina in the area for those cruisers who are SSCA members. They also have a dinghy dock which is available for those that are anchored out.

Villa Marina

18° 20.71N 65° 38.11W

Just NE of marina entrance

<http://www.villamarinapr.com/>



Photo courtesy of laregatapr.com

This is a much protected marina that has all the amenities, a swimming pool and a haul out facility. There is also a very nice restaurant on site.

Puerto Chico Marina

18° 20.77N 65° 38.02W

At south side of marina entrance

Marinapuertochico.com

787 863 0834

Puerto Chico marina has ample slips and all amenities including fuel, water and a small bar/restaurant.



Photo courtesy of laregatapr.com

Note: “Sea Lovers” Marina is comprised of floats only. It does not cater to transient boats.

NOTE: The marina just to the southwest of Puerto Chico is Sea Lovers Marina which looks rather like an extension of Puerto Chico Marina; however it is its own facility. They do not cater to transient vessels; but if you plan to be in Fajardo for a while and are looking for the least cost marina, you might inquire. It is a bit rag-tag, but the price follows its casual air.

FAJARDO: MARINE PARTS AND SUPPLIES

As a town, Fajardo has no shortage of marine parts, supplies and chandlery.

Most of the marinas have some small type of convenience store available either in, or close by to, the marina for your immediate needs.

There are major engine franchise dealers throughout Fajardo and whatever they do not have in stock can be accessed and flown in quickly.

There are marine supply stores within a short taxi ride.

The Skipper Shop and the Marine Supply Store are across the street from each other at the Isidra Shopping Center. Both have a good selection of inventory.



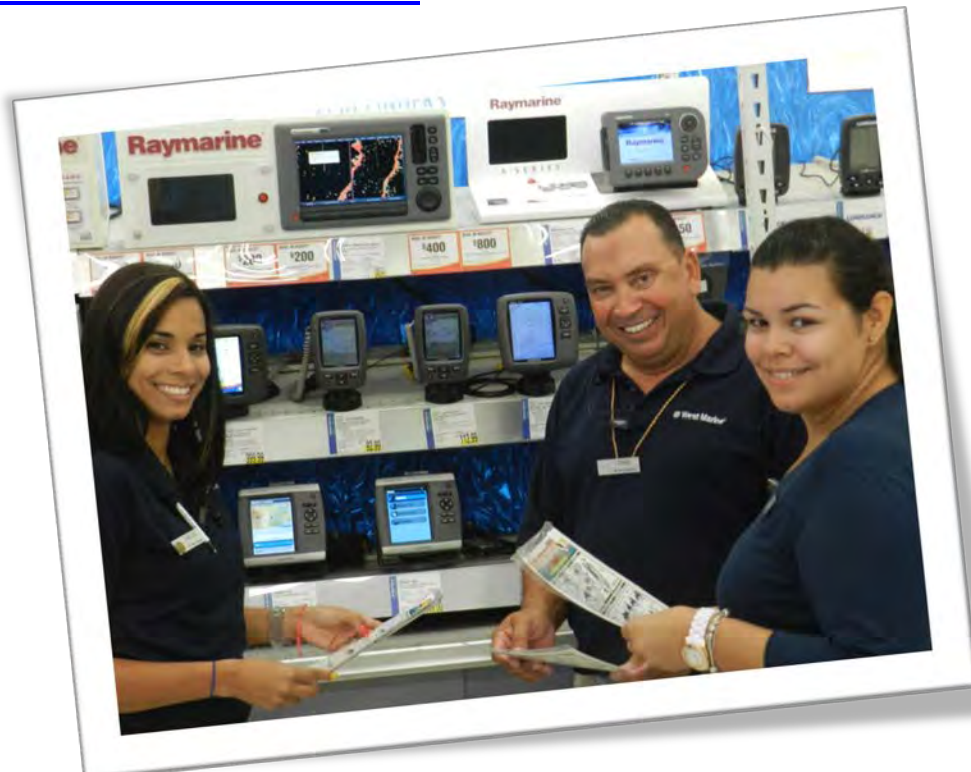
The West Marine Store is located just west of the town on Highway 53. It is a good stop because it is across the street from a Pueblo supermarket as well as a Wal-Mart.



Phone: 787-801-2700

Estela Menponis, Asst. Mgr.

Mgr00544@westmarinestores.com



On the day that I visited the store, I found the array of products to be impressive; however, even more impressive was how helpful and pleasant the staff was (before they knew why I was there).

LAS CROABAS

18° 21.80N 65° 37.28 W

Entrance to inlet

Just about a nautical mile north of the Puerto Chico Marina is the small inlet known as Las Croabas. To enter this basin you must have a shoal draft boat that draws 6ft or less and LESS. However, it is unlikely you will find an anchoring space in his inlet.



LAS CROABAS with boatyard in background

The fishing village is small but there are a few restaurants with reasonable prices and good food.

EL YUNQUE NATIONAL PARK

For most cruising boats, it would be a mistake to pass up a visit to El Yunque National Forest, which is a tropical rain forest with some very high mountain peaks (at least for the Caribbean).

El Yunque is the only tropical rain forest in the US National Forest system. It encompasses over 28,000 acres (44 square miles) of land and is made up of waterfalls and rivers with very lush foliage due to rainfall which can exceed 200 inches per year in certain parts. It's estimated that more than one hundred billion gallons of rainwater fall on the forest annually.

The source of all that water and the *raison d'être* of the rain forest on the windward side of the Luquillo mountains is a phenomenon with which cruisers are intimately acquainted when the (Trade) Wind meet mountains.

But before you get the idea that it may be an arduous trip, the park is well organized and managed and there are many ways to see it.



Figure 25. EL YUNQUE NATIONAL FOREST

The park's main entrance, El Portal, is less than 30 kilometers from Fajardo via two main highways. There are so many ways you can make this trip. For example, the park has a "rent a ranger" program for schools and "other groups" for guided tours and/or orientation sessions at El Portal (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/elyunque>) .

The important thing is that you do not miss it. You can do it by yourself, as the trails are very well marked or you can choose from a variety of guides.



Source: www.elyunque.com



VISTAS



WATERFALLS



"Who ARE all these people looking at us?"

EAST END ISLANDS

CAYOS ICACOS

CAYOS LOBOS

(Not to be confused with Cayo Lobo off the west end of Isla de Culebra)

ISLA PALOMINOS

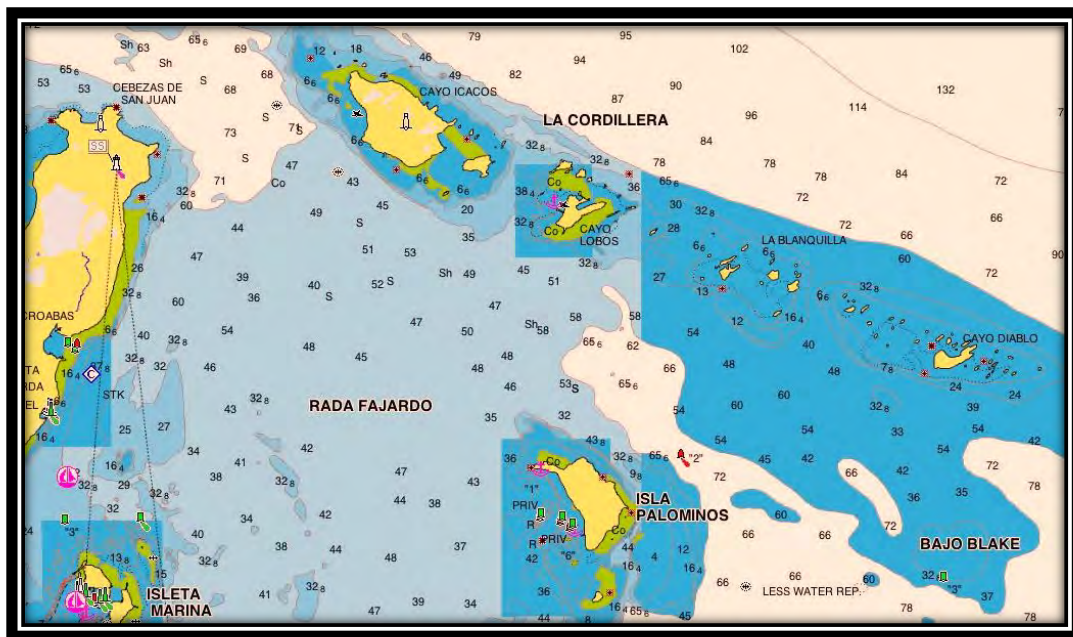


Figure 26. CAYOS ICACOS, LOBOS, AND PALOMINOS

NOTE: All of these Cays are off the northeast corner of Puerto Rico and are, at best, day stops. The prevailing Trade Wind, and particularly those out of the northeast, as well as “northers” that come down from North America early in the Trade Wind season, make them untenable for overnight anchorages.

There is an anchorage that can serve at the NW corner of Isla Palominos. But except in VERY settled weather, you should not consider staying overnight. There are moorings that you can use. From here you can take your dingy ½ nm south to visit Palominitos Island which is really beautiful.

You will see a few power boats anchored off the beach. There are shoals all around and I do not recommend you try to anchor here with a sailboat.



PALOMINITOS ISLAND

CULEBRA and ISLA CULEBRITA

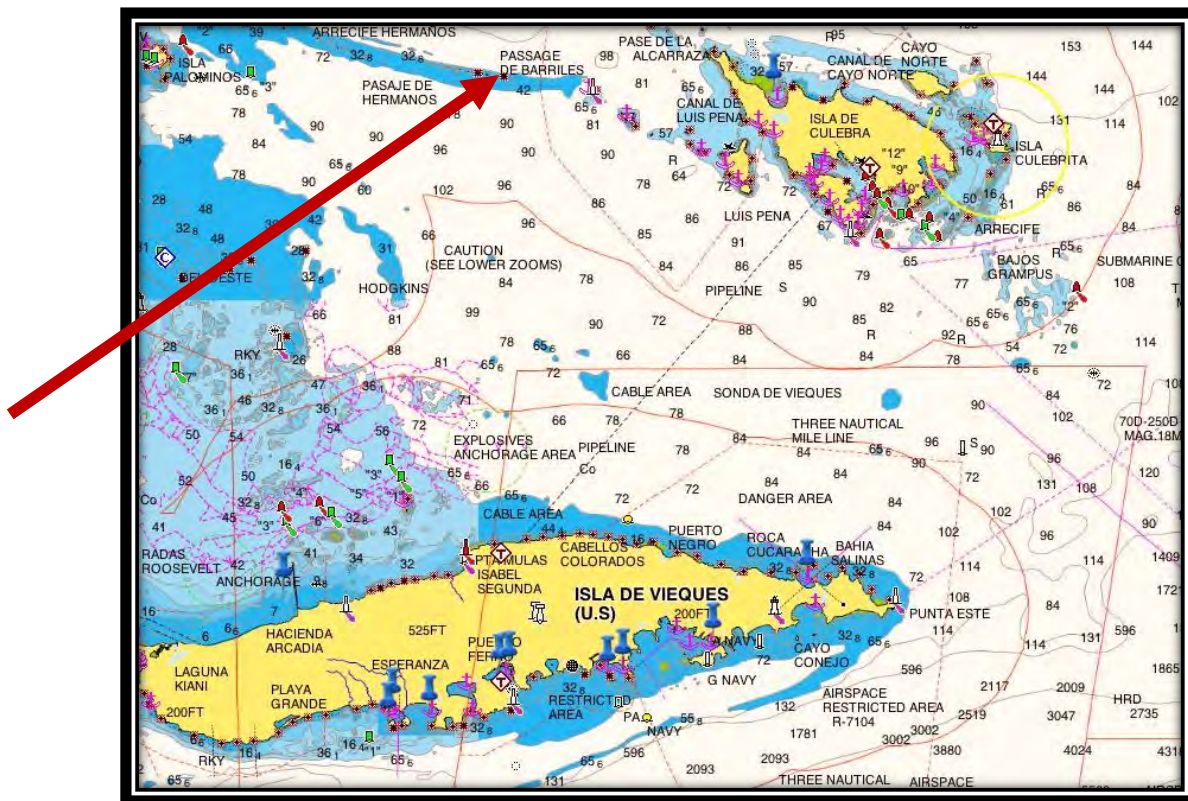


Figure 27. CULEBRA, CULEBRITA, AND VIEQUES

YOU WILL FIND BOTH ISLANDS SAFE AND INTERESTING

NOTE:

If you are heading east and coming from the NE corner of Puerto Rico en route to Culebra, your course may often be made difficult if the wind is out of the NE and you may be tempted to bear off to Vieques. You can use “Barril Passage” (Passaje de Barriles) to reduce sea way.

From Cayo Diablo east through “Brothers Reef” (Arrecife Hermanos) on through Barriles, the distance is only about 8 nm. However, when the wind is blowing out of the NE hard and the seas are up, you will be happy to hide underneath this protection headed eastwards.

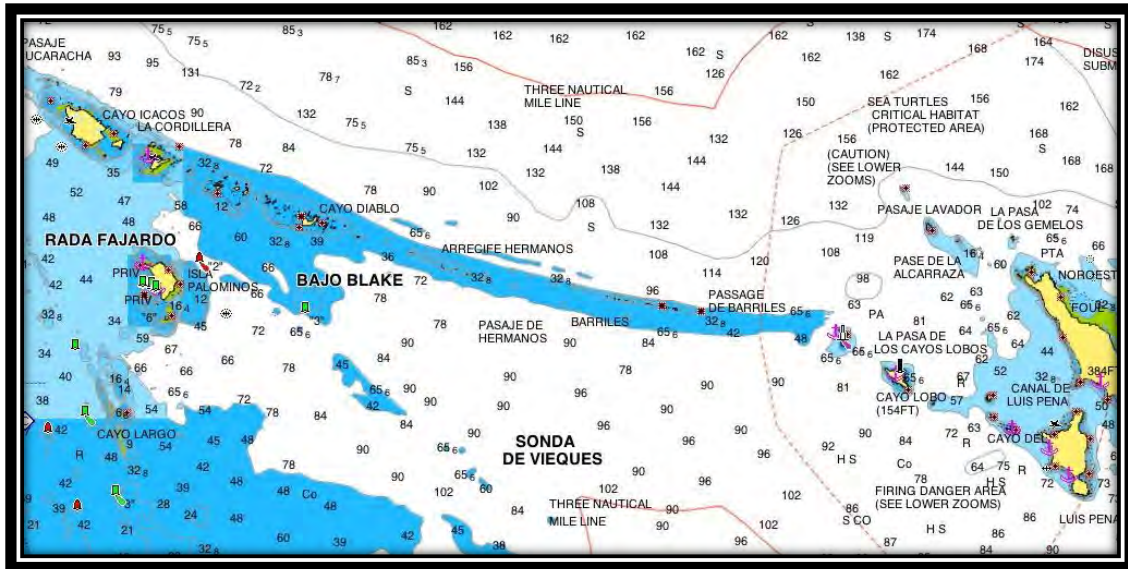


Figure 28. CAYO DIABLO TO BARRILES VIA ARRECIFE HERMANOS

FOLLOW EAST UNDER THE REEFS FOR PROTECTION FROM SEAWAY.

THE PASSAGE ISLANDS (SPANISH VIRGIN ISLANDS)

Between the east side of Culebra and the west side of St. Thomas is the VIRGIN PASSAGE. It is that body of water that connects the Puerto Rican east islands to the Virgin Island chain (American and British). As a result the islands east of Puerto Rico that are part of Puerto Rico have been referred to as the Passage Islands and many charts will show them that way.

However, Vieques and Culebra are actually closer to St. Thomas than St. Croix and in many ways can be considered part of the Virgin Islands. As a result, in the not too distant past, their name was changed to the Spanish Virgin Islands. The ostensible reason for the change was to encourage more tourism. I am sure someone much brighter than I made this change to alter the perception from that of a few islands that the U.S. military used for target practice to that of the tropical paradise we think of when we envision the Virgin Islands.

I think the name does them a disservice because they are greater than what their current name implies. For cruising sailors they are a veritable pristine paradise with virgin beaches and safe anchorages; even free moorings in many places.

Cruising is something that we all get to define for ourselves. Today, many times cruising is defined as going from one high cost mooring and one expensive chain restaurant to the next. If you are one who envisions cruising to be a quiet anchorage that is secure and safe with vistas that will touch your soul; the islands to the east of Puerto Rico, call them whatever you choose, are your destination.

Many who cruise them join a club that promises to keep them a secret. That way they can stay under visited and under developed. Before you rush east to “the Caribbean”, spend time in Vieques and Culebra and when you finish your cruise, let me know what you choose to call these islands if you can find sufficient superlatives.

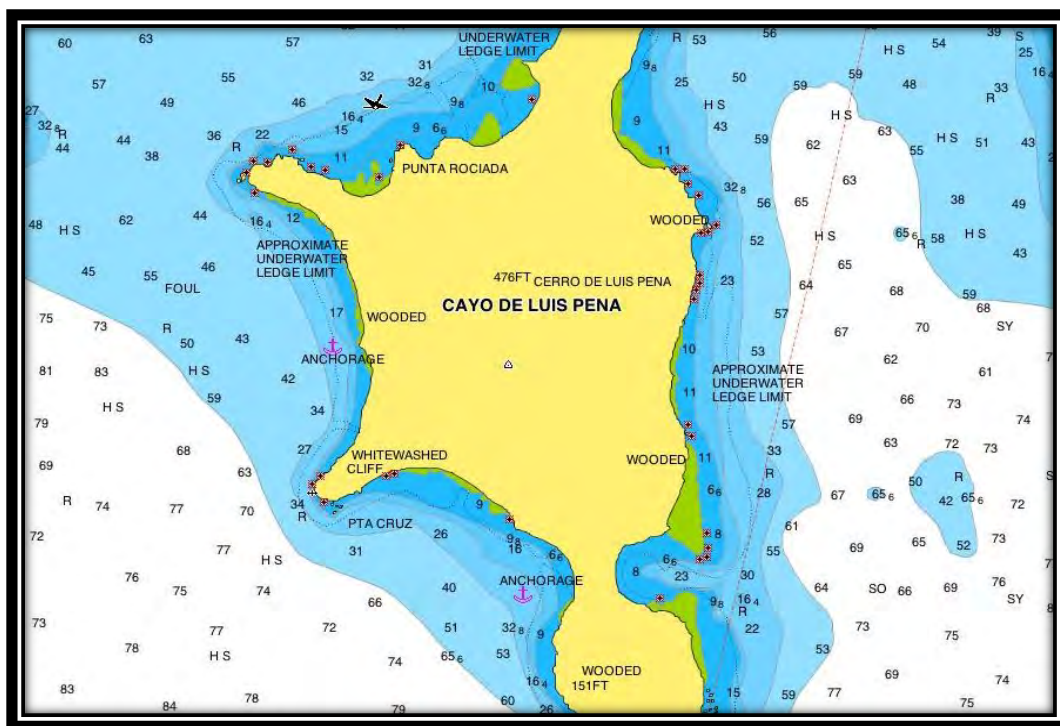
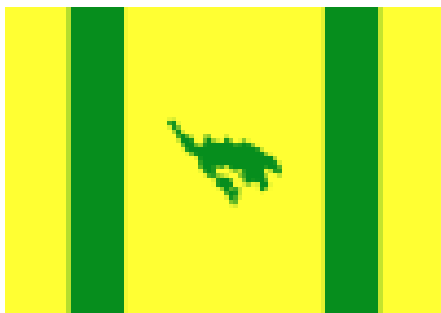


Figure 30. CAYO DE LUIS PENA

CULEBRA



**Culebra Flag
and Coat of Arms**

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Captain Bill Penfield was most helpful to my understanding of this enchanting area. He spent an entire day with me and we roamed far and wide while he gave me all the information that I wanted about Culebra and the surrounding islands and cays.

He is an excellent contact and also a licensed Captain who can take you out on his catamaran fishing, whale watching, or to the best snorkel sites. He is an extremely personable fellow and I recommend you visit with him.



ivijivi@yahoo.com
culebracatamaran.com

787-215-3809 (he prefers text or voice mail)

The island of Culebra and its smaller sister, Culebrita, never developed into a cruising mecca as they were “off limits” for so many years because they were designated a danger zone due to military uses.

Culebra is approximately 7 miles long by 3 miles wide. On the island you will find a small, very laid back local population. Culebra and Culebrita have some excellent beaches. There is local and very inexpensive ferry service from Fajardo to Culebra; and a general aviation airport, Benjamin Rivera Noriega Airport (CPX), as well.

Coming from the east the most accessible anchorage is Bahia de Sardinias. It is also the location of the ferry dock as well as the site of the lift bridge.

The bridge no longer functions but it has recently been repainted and looks terrific. The canal on the inside part of the bay has a small restaurant where you can sit while people and boat watching. It is an interesting spot.



Figure 31. ISLA DE CULEBRA AND SATELLITE CAYS



Figure 32. Bahia de Sardinas



MAMACITA'S RESTAURANT near the
now non-lifting lift bridge at Bahia de Sardinas



This little guy was there at water's edge watching me as I passed through in a small boat. He didn't ask for a toll!



Don't miss this place to take in the local flavor~
DINGHY DOCK RESTAURANT



Figure 33. BAHIA DE SARDINAS

You cannot enter Ensenada Honda via the lagoon. To access Ensenada Honda you must enter from the SW side of the island via one of the canals. (See “Access to Ensenada Honda”.)

The anchorage at Bahia de Sardinas is easy to get to but it is not a great anchorage and is not preferred by the cruising community. Sometimes there you will also encounter a swell due to seas working around the NE point of the island. The ferry dock is also here and the ferry traffic causes wakes. It is one of those anchorages that, while reasonably protected, just does not have any compelling point that would entice you, especially with Ensenada Honda so close.

TO THE NORTH of Bahia de Sardinas, there are several other anchorages up by Point Tamarindo, but if the wind is out of the NE expect to roll.

TO THE SOUTH OF Bahia de Sardinas, just beyond the tip of the island there is Ensenada Malena which can make for a nice DAY ANCHORAGE should you want to go exploring. YOU CANNOT MAKE YOUR WAY north into ENSENADA DAKITY except by dinghy.



FERRY DOCK AT BAHIA DE SARDINAS

The favorite anchorage by far is “inside” Culebra in Ensenada Honda.

This anchorage is protected from all directions, easy to anchor in with good holding in a largely sand bottom. Everyone has their favorite spot but you will see most boats in the NW part of the harbor. Poke around until you find what you are looking for. More company, less company. Stronger breeze, less breeze, and so forth. Some of the areas even have free moorings for your use.

If you want to get away from the crowd, the southwestern anchorage of ENSENADA DAKITY, even with its practical caveats, is by far the favored one amongst cruisers. The less draft you have, the further south in this anchorage you can venture.

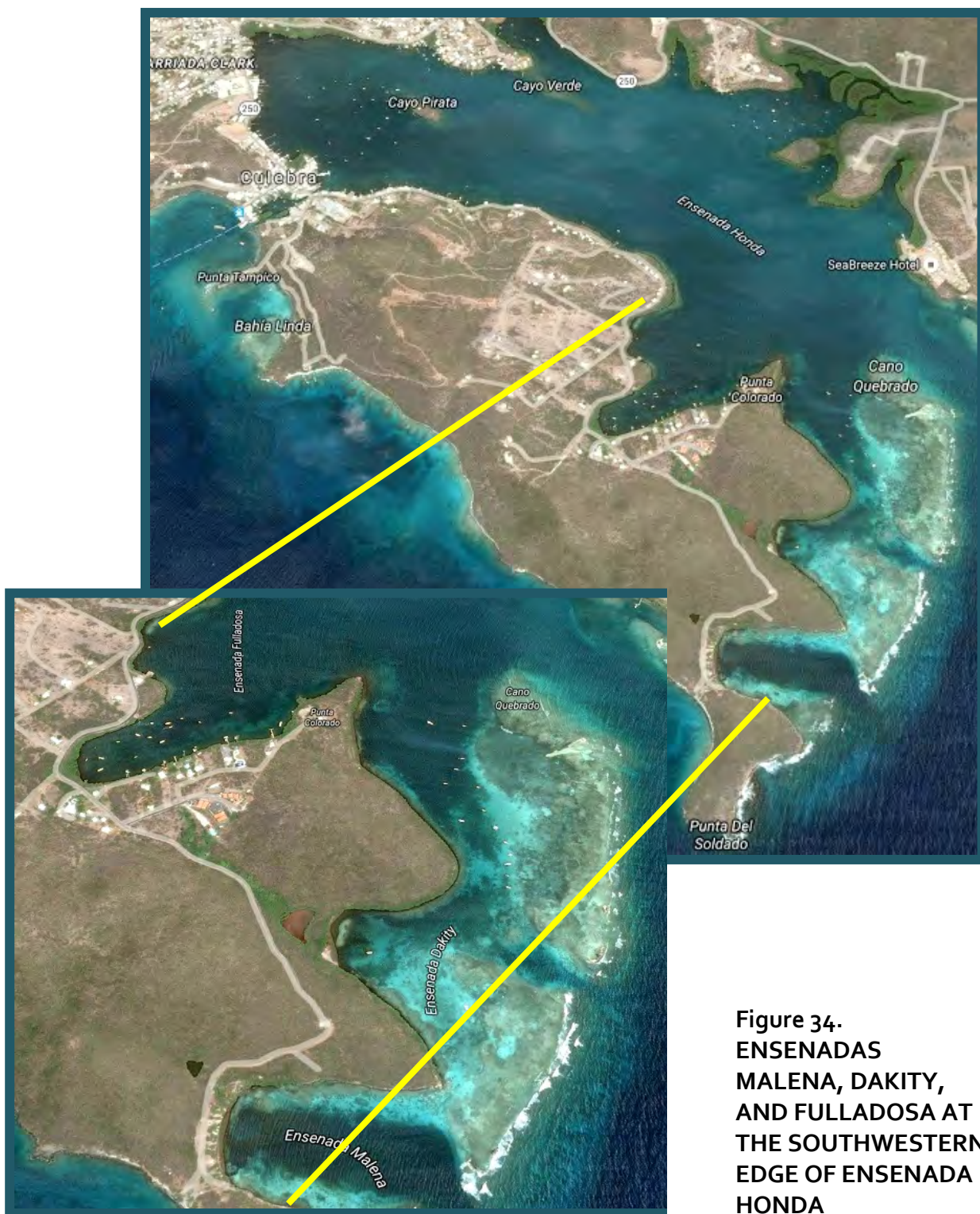


Figure 34.
ENSENADAS
MALENA, DAKITY,
AND FULLADOSA AT
THE SOUTHWESTERN
EDGE OF ENSENADA
HONDA



ENSENADA HONDA, NORIEGA AIRPORT IN FOREGROUND



CAYO PIRATA AT THE CENTER OF THE BAY



Figure 35. ENSENADA HONDA

There is a town, Town of Dewey, which everyone, including the locals, refers to as Culebra. Dock where you can tie up your dinghy free. If you need to clear in, the Customs office is a short walk from the town dock in Ensenada Honda. All around the bay you will find docks for your dinghy and a variety of restaurants as well as access to water and fuel. From Wi-Fi to laundry to supermarket and bank, everything is available on the island,



Figure 36. Cayo Pirata is the focal point of Ensenada Honda

albeit in Lilliputian scale in some cases. You will find the people friendly and more than willing to help. Try to keep in mind that nothing moves very quick or fast here. Avoid being in any kind of a rush and your enjoyment will multiply.

ACCESS TO ENSENADA HONDA

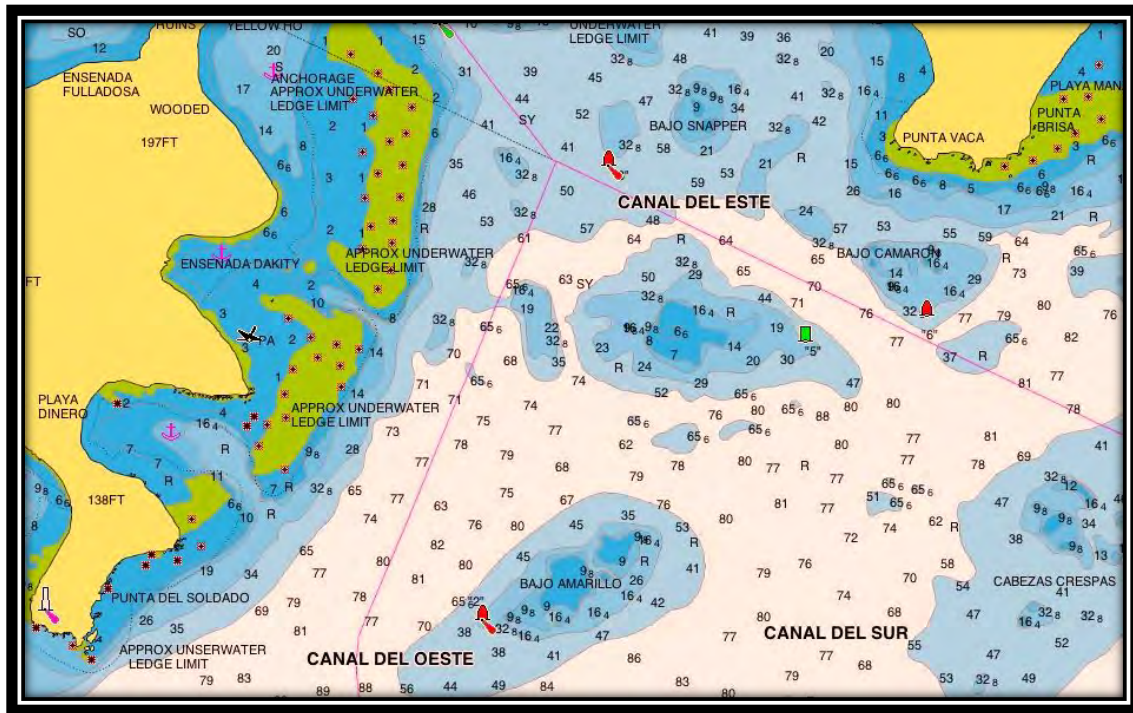


Figure 37. ENTRY CHANNELS INTO ENSENADA HONDA

It is not difficult to enter into this bay. However, if you are coming from the east, you must be very careful of Arrecife Culebrita (**DO NOT PASS NORTH OF R "2"**). From the west or from the south there are also obstructions but these can be cleared by following one of the "Canal" entrances.

Unless you are very familiar with the area it is best NOT to attempt an entrance at night.

Depending on your approach course, the object is to arrive at waypoint **18° 17.50N 65° 16.49W**. Once you are there you can line up and pass between the red and green markers. Line up with the red nun located at **18° 17.37N 65° 16.30W** as you proceed on a NW heading to be sure to leave the reef clear at the entrance on either side. If you see that your depth sounder is reading less than 5 fathoms, you know you are too far to one side or the other. It is easier than it sounds, just that you must take reasonable

precautions and watch for current that can move you around (**Currents can exceed 2 knots**).



Anchored and on moorings ~ Ensenada Honda

FLAMENCO BEACH BAHIA FLAMENCO

18° 20.30N 65° 18.92W

At entrance to the bay

This beach located at the NW corner of Isla Culebra is said to be the most beautiful on the island. Indeed, one of the most beautiful beaches in the Western Hemisphere. It has a white sand beach that can measure up to any in the Caribbean.

A Cruising Guide to Puerto Rico 2.0

ISLA CULEBRITA

18° 19.55N 65° 14.75W

Just NW of Cayo Botella at NW corner of Isla Culebrita

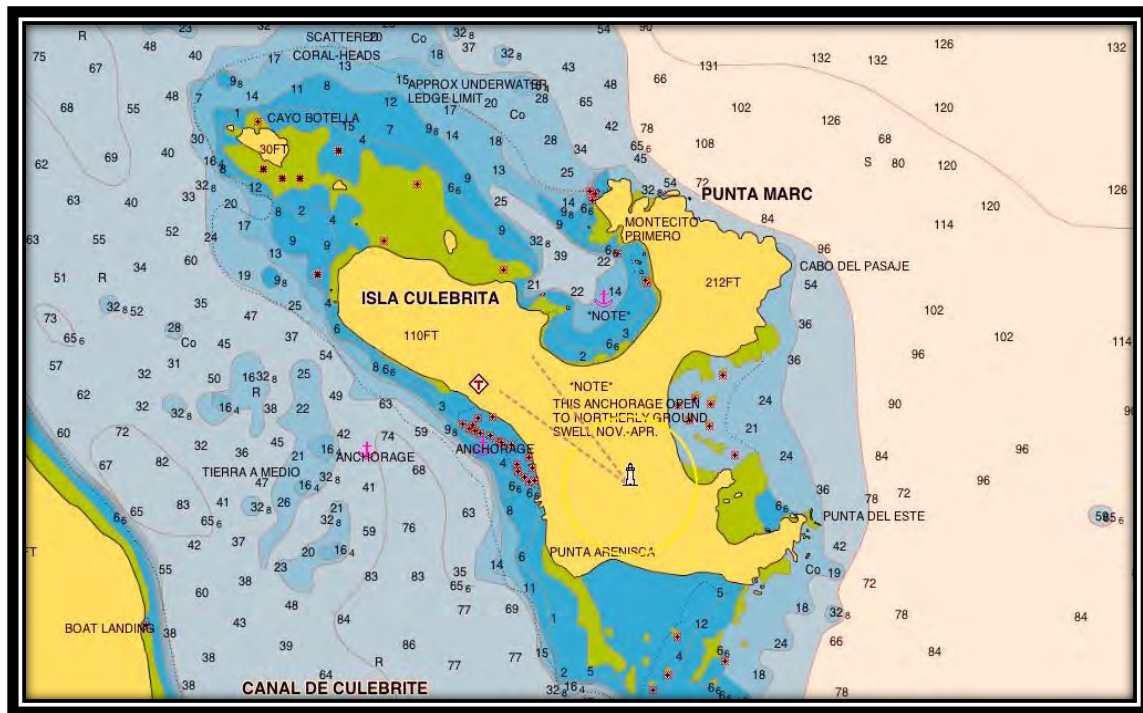


Figure 39. ISLA CULEBRITA

Isla Culebrita is part of the multi island Culebra National Wildlife Refuge administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service primarily for migratory sea birds and endangered sea turtles. This is one of the oldest wildlife refuges in the national system as it was established by Teddy Roosevelt in 1909.

The island is ringed with beaches. Cruisers who spend the day here usually hike up the trail to visit the old lighthouse which sits up more than 300ft above sea level.

The bay and anchorage is an easy entry, PROVIDED YOU STAY IN THE CENTER OF THE CHANNEL BETWEEN THE REEFS. There are free moorings for your use. Keep in mind that this anchorage is open to the northeast and if it is blowing hard from that direction or there is a norther, this anchorage will be untenable. Do NOT anchor here or moor here overnight unless you are CERTAIN of settled weather.



LIGHTHOUSE AT CULEBRITA



This picture does not do justice to the beauty of the anchorage at Culebrita. Look for settled weather and spend the day there. ENJOY!

ISLA VIEQUES

18° 06.05N 65° 34.84W

Off Punta Boca Quebrada at west end of island

18° 08.03N 65° 15.85W

Off Punta Este at east end of island

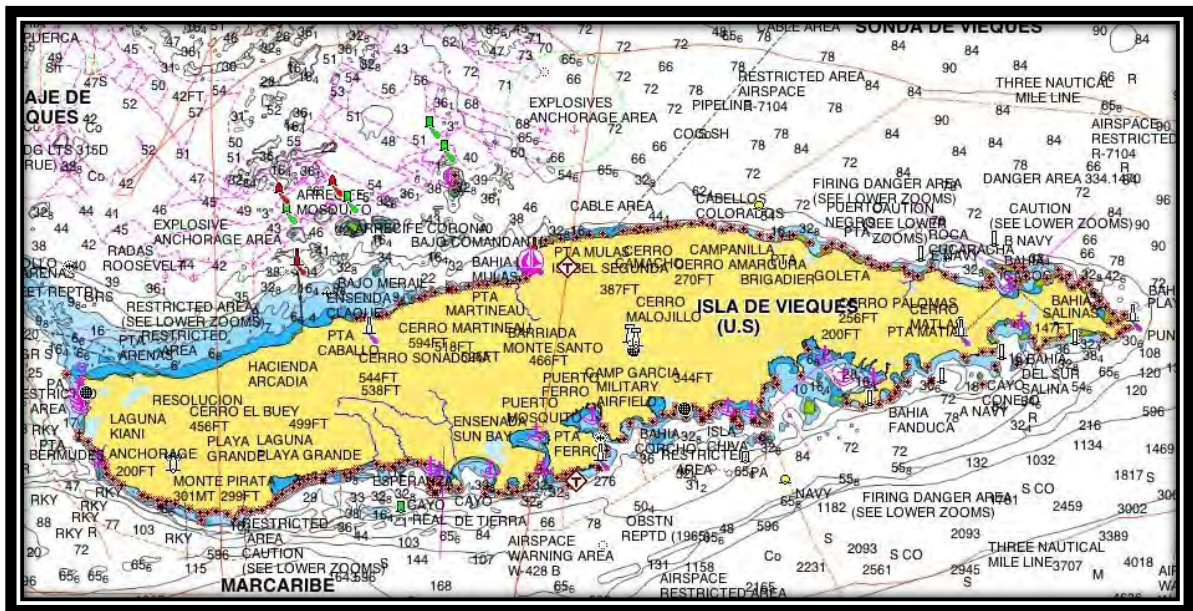


Figure 40. VIEQUES

Vieques is 18 miles long and 3-4 miles wide. All of the really good anchorages are on the south shore although there is an exception or two.



Figure 41. VIEQUES TO CULEBRA



Figure 42. VIEQUES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The work that I did to create this guide, with reference to this section on Vieques would not have been possible without Angie Adams. She is a **Viequense**, born and reared, and lives on Vieques. She knows every square foot of it and all the people on it. She is knowledgeable, personable and if you choose to hire her to take you around for a ½ day or full day you will not regret it. You can write her at: vqstours@gmail.com or call her at: 787 397 2048. She prefers text messages. **DON'T MISS VIEQUES ~ DON'T MISS ANGIE!**



THE ISLAND

Vieques is an EXTRAORDINARY place in EVERY sense of the word. It was avoided by yachtsmen for many years due to the U.S. military installation and gunnery practice. The installation is no longer there and as a result there is no “target practice” ongoing.

Instead many parts have been designated park lands and are under the jurisdiction of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, patrolled by park rangers.

The areas below ringed in green are US Fish and Wildlife areas and under their jurisdiction.

There are free moorings throughout the anchorages ~ USE THEM!



Figure 43. VIEQUES AREAS UNDER US FISH & WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

There are no recent reported incidences of crime against cruising boats and with all of the wonderful bays on the south side of the island, this is a cruiser's paradise. *Why* there are not more boats here is related to how much the Greater Antilles has been overlooked in the rush to get to the islands out east (Lesser Antilles).



THERE ARE MANY, MANY MILES OF BEACHES LIKE THIS ON VIEQUES

Isabel Segunda is the main town on Vieques and in settled weather you can anchor there. The town has what is necessary to support your needs from a small supermarket to rental cars, fuel etc. Antonio Rivera Rodriguez Airport (VQS) is perhaps three miles west of town.



HARBOR at ISABEL SEGUNDA and FERRY DOCK



There is much to see throughout the island. Diving and snorkeling are wonderful. There are even bioluminescent bays which at night, with the least disturbance to the water, literally light up.

SPECIAL NOTE: It was reported that there was a shark attack in this bay recently. Shark attacks in the Caribbean are almost rarer than winning a national lottery. However, the woman that was bitten was swimming at night. Swimming in the Caribbean at night is always questionable and should be avoided except in areas where you are certain it is safe. The bioluminescent bay was not the reason for the attack; it was due to a juvenile shark that was startled or it confused the woman's leg with a food source.

The beaches on the south coast towards the west side of the island are very calm and protected. You can explore those beaches for the famous colored Vieques Starfish and pick them up by the handful. They are truly beautiful. Remember, they are living animals; you need to put them back where you found them.



THE STARS COME OUT ON VIEQUES BEACHES

I very much recommend that when you visit Vieques that you put aside some time to thoroughly explore the island. There is so much to see.

Consider the Ceiba trees that are said to be 300 years old. Their trunks and root formations are so large that when you stand in front of them you will find it hard to believe that they grew that large. It really is hard to grasp the enormity of this tree until you stand next to it.



CEIBA TREE ~ 300+ YEARS OLD



AFTER VIEWING THE TREES YOU CAN CONTEMPLATE THE ROCKS...



I asked the guide how they got there. She said that no one knows! I said, “Perhaps they are *petrified whales*.” She said, “You have been out in the sun too long; let’s go to lunch!”



HARBOR AT PUERTO REAL BAY~ESPERANZA



Seems like on Vieques, no matter where you look you will find something beautiful to behold.

VIEQUES ~ NORTH COAST

ISABEL SEGUNDA

18° 09.13N 65° 27.08W

Just outside of bay (Mulas)

This is not a tenable anchorage for cruising boats. It is where the ferry from Fajardo comes in. Close by is a small landing strip for the small air craft that fly to Culebra and San Juan as well as to St. Thomas.

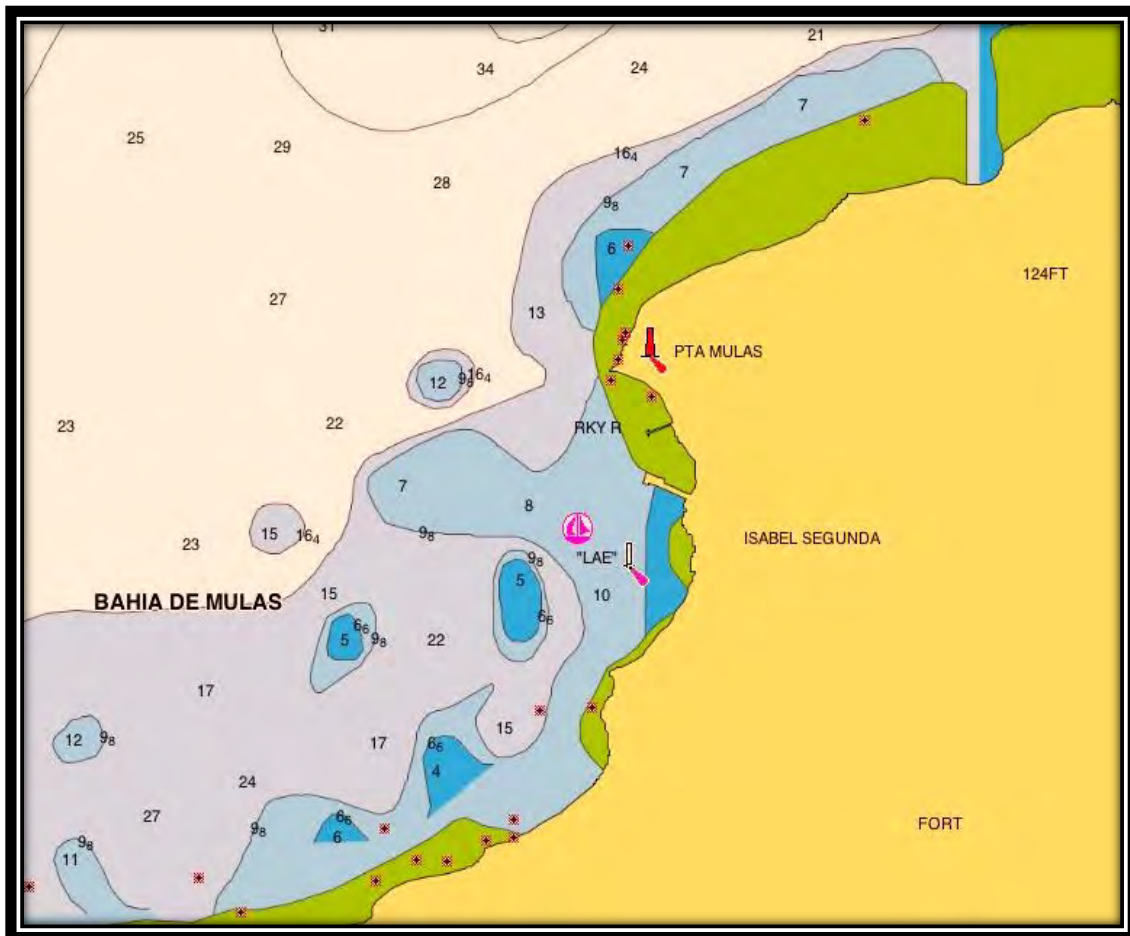


Figure 44. ISABEL SEGUNDA

MILE LONG BREAKWATER

18° 08.48N 65° 30.98W

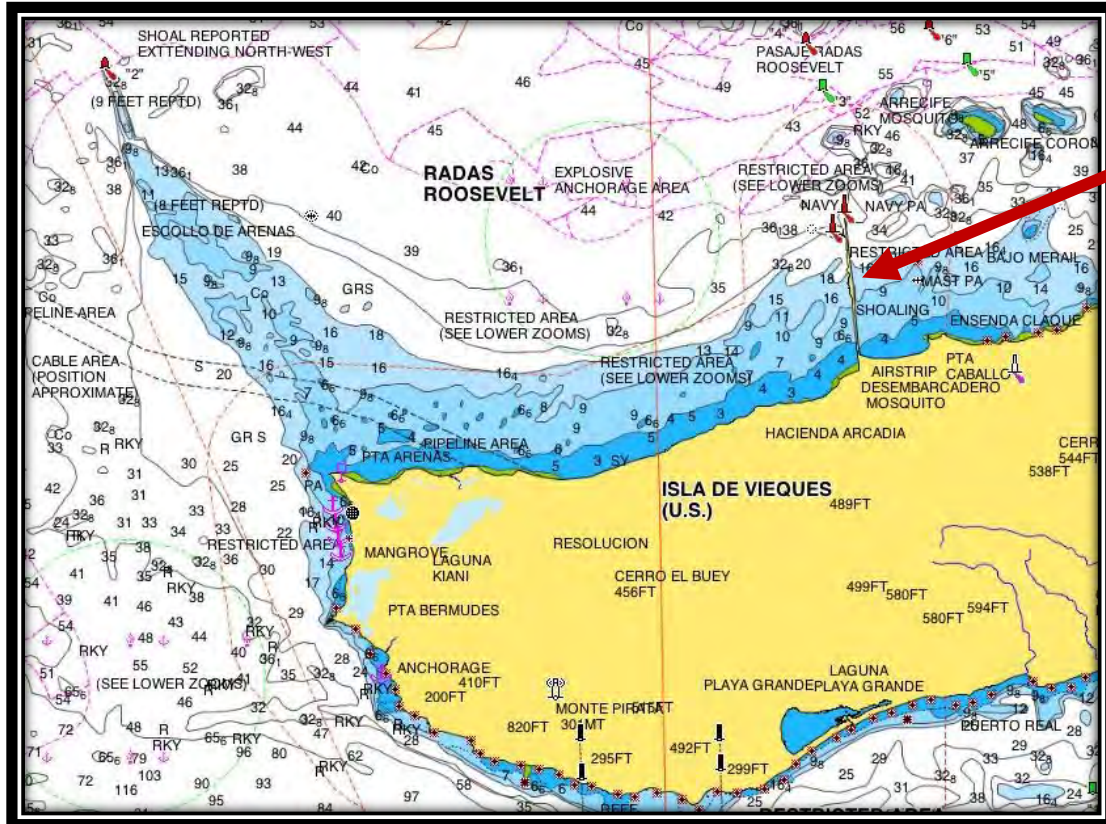


Figure 45. MILE LONG BREAKWATER JUTS OUT TO THE NORTH 1 NM

It is hard to imagine until you see it, but this extremely large breakwater extends out a full one nautical mile from shore (see toward UPPER RIGHT in chart above). While there are no great anchorages on the north shore, if the wind is prevailing from the NE to E, one could anchor behind the lee of this jetty safely.

If you find yourself in that area, note that at the northwestern end of Vieques, there is a shoal that extends more than 3 nm to the NW marked by a nun at its most NW point. It is best to not cross this shoal for a variety of reasons, the foremost of which is that in heavy weather it is dangerous.

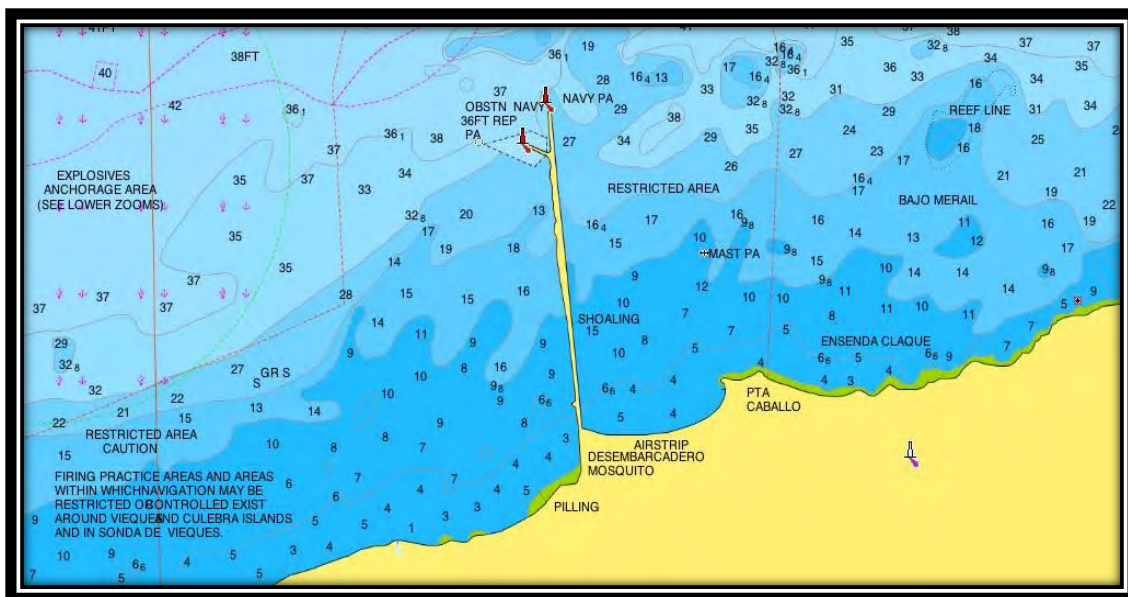


Figure 46. THE BREAKWATER

BAHIA ICACOS

18° 09.10N 65° 8.72W

Just west of entrance to the bay

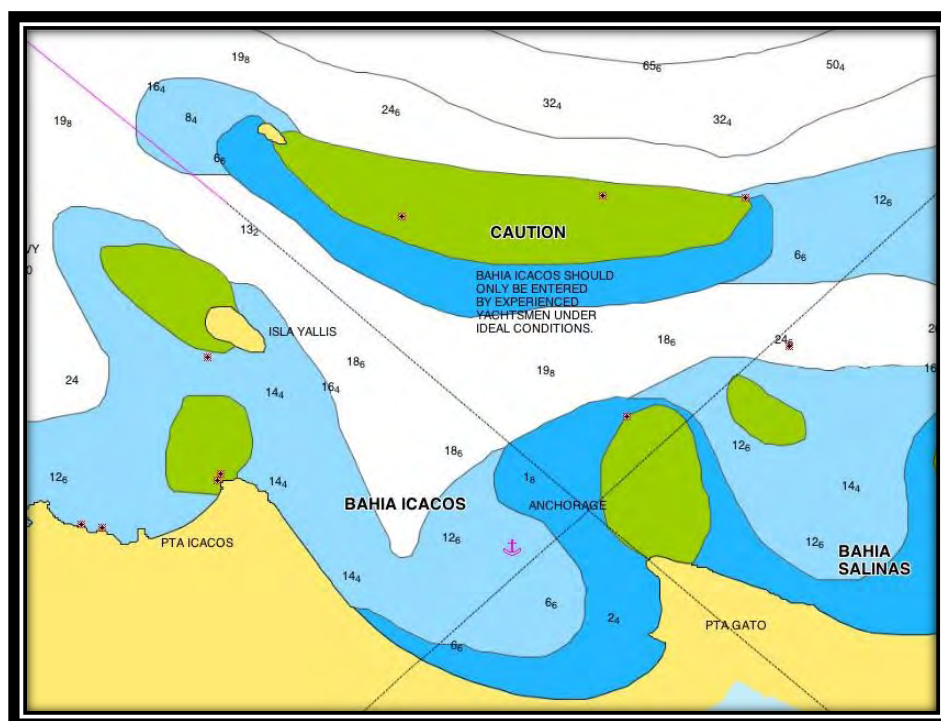


Figure 47. BAHIA ICACOS, REFERRED TO LOCALLY AS "GREEN BEACH"

The entrance to this bay is fringed with reefs but they are easy to see so that a reasonably experienced cruiser would not have any trouble entering. However, this is not the place to be early in the Trade Wind season when the wind is north of east. When the wind, late in the season, goes south of east, then this bay becomes something to consider.

VIEQUES ~ WEST AND SOUTH COASTS

West to East

WEST COAST

18° 06.72N 65° 34.72W

Just west of anchorages

If you choose to anchor here, the nicest beaches are located just to the north of Point Bermudes, which is about half way down the coast from Punta Arenas at the NE corner.



Figure 48. West coast of Vieques

Remember, if you are coming from the east along the north coast of Vieques, to give the reef off the NE corner a very wide berth as it breaks in weather and in some spots there is insufficient depth.

There is a great deal of rock on the bottom along the west coast, so you have to be sure to set your anchor. If a norther comes down, this is not the place to be as you will roll. Move to the south shore.

You will find the area safe.

Esperanza is a pretty little place and spending time here is easy. The town has its share of restaurants and bars and you will have no trouble finding cruisers and locals alike to socialize with.



Figure 49. VIEQUES WEST COAST WITH ANCHORAGES

SOUTH COAST (west to east)

NOTE: The south coast of Vieques is very much like the south coast of all the islands in the Greater Antilles during the early part (December through March) of the Trade Wind season. It offers more protection against strong Trade Winds and northers that come that way from North America.

ESPERANZA

18° 05.21N 65° 28.21W

The town of Esperanza offers a “double anchorage” separated by a thin stretch of shallow water (5ft or less).

Esperanza is not going to be your “re-provision stop”. However, there is enough available to fill out what you need. You will find the locals extremely pleasant and very laid back.

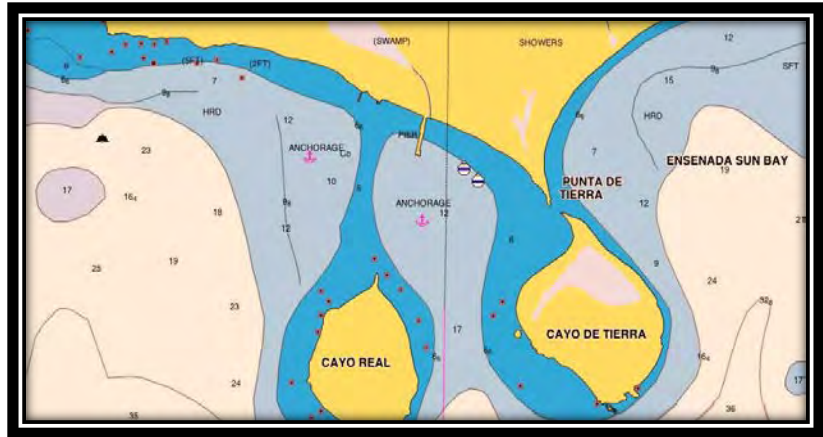


Figure 50. ESPERANZA

You can anchor in either anchorage; however, the bottom is rocky and anchoring can be difficult. *Remember not to cross the shallow spot that runs from Cayo Real north.*

There is a town dock and you can anchor with good protection. There may even be a mooring that you can use. The town dock can be used to land your dinghy.



Figure 51. ESPERANZA, FROM CAYOS TO PUERTO FERRO

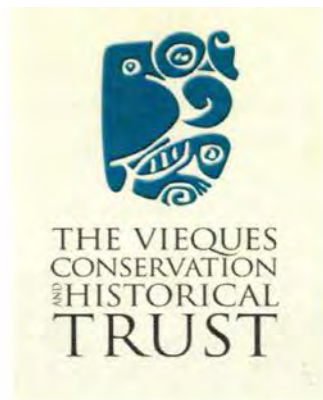


MALECON (BOARDWALK) AT ESPERANZA

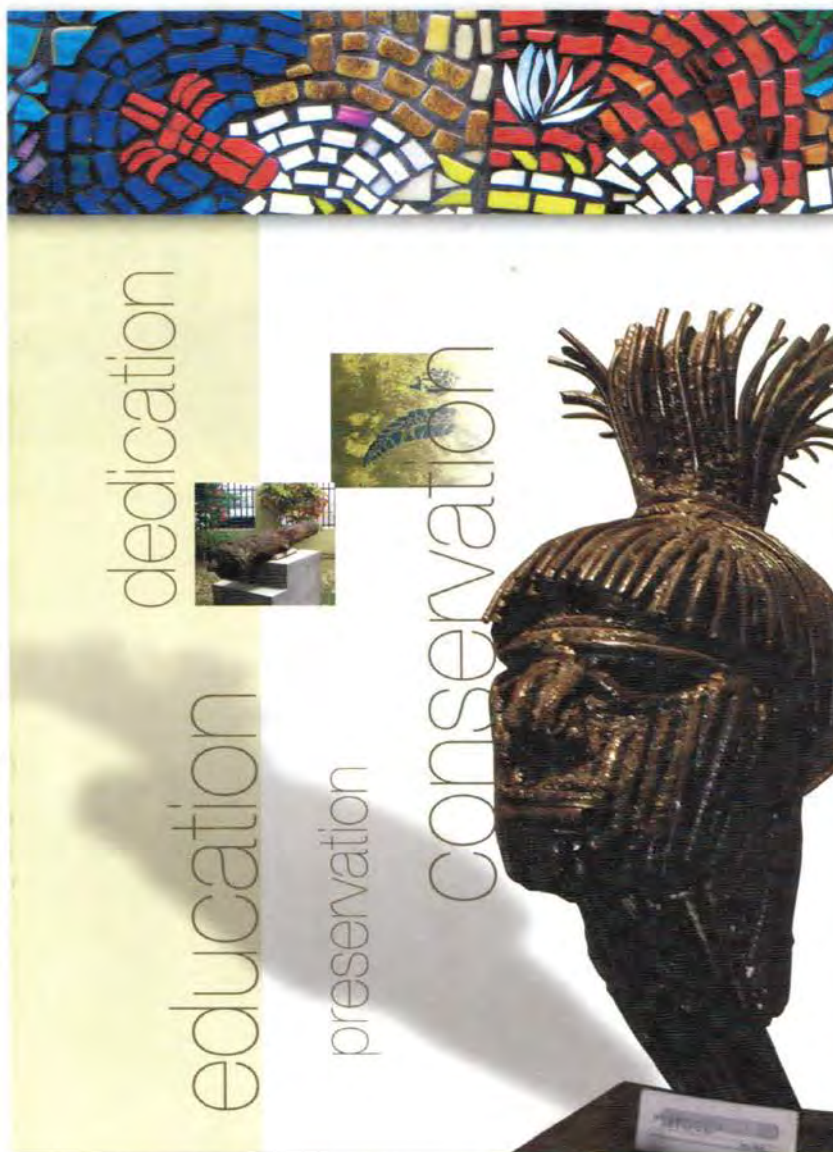


DUFFY'S

There are a number of restaurants worthy of your consideration including those that are instantly recognizable by cruisers, as so many of us gather there. Duffy's is the kind of place where you can simply relax, get a good meal and meet other cruisers as well as locals.



Right next door to Duffy's is the Vieques Conservation Historical Trust which you may want to visit. They will give you free information on the island, much of its history and what is being done to preserve it.



ENSENADA SUN BAY

18° 05.17 N 65° 27.66 W

Just south of entrance to bay

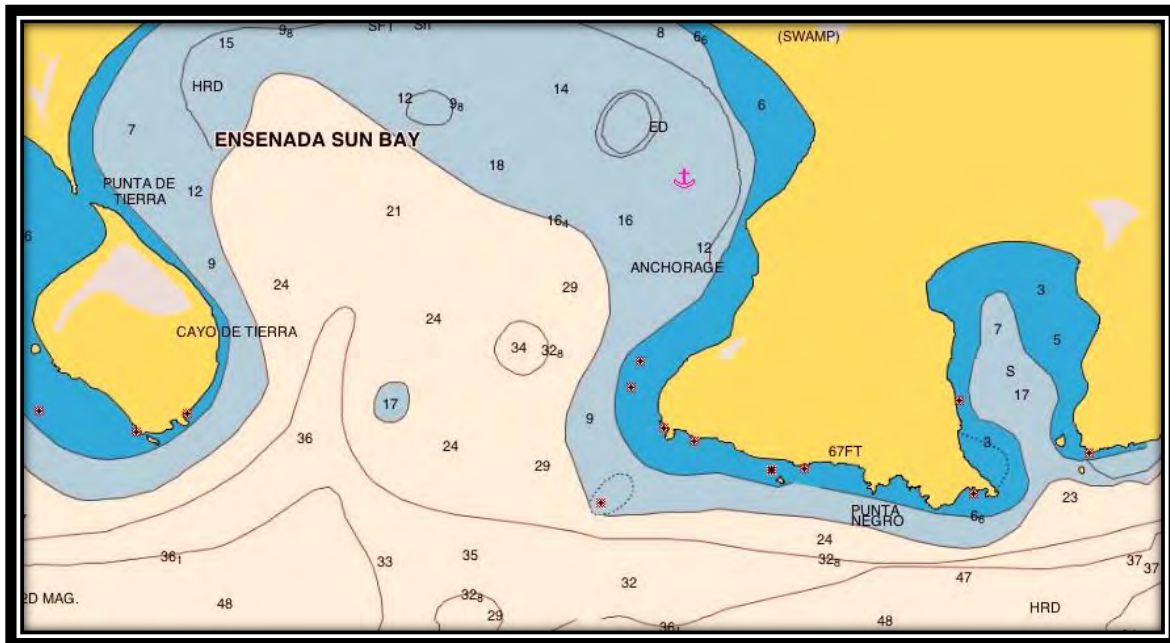


Figure 52. SUN BAY



Sun Bay (moorings)

This is a very nice bay with moorings available at no charge. The favored anchorage is to the east side. Many cruisers use this bay to anchor and dinghy over to Esperanza.

PUERTO MOSQUITO

18° 05.35 65° 26.47 W

Just south of entrance to bay



Figure 53. PUERTO MOSQUITO, A PHOSFORESCENT BAY

The entrance to the bay at its narrowest point is about 6ft deep.

At an exceptionally low tide it can be a bit less. This is an extremely well protected anchorage, especially if it is blowing hard. I prefer Sun Bay to the west, but the attraction of this anchorage is that it is another of Vieques' bioluminescent bays. Do not enter THE INNER BAY, except in a dingy and then only under oar power.

The Mosquito Biobay is renowned for the density of bioluminescent plankton in its waters so you have only to drag your hand through the water to create your own personal light show, more impressive than the track of a Star Wars light saber.

Many cruisers like to jump off their boat at night and see the water light up and move. As mentioned prior, recently a swimmer was bitten by a shark who mistook her ankle for its food supply. While shark attacks are extremely rare throughout the Caribbean, nighttime swimming can always pose the threat of confusing a shark or barracuda.

Just to the west of Mosquito Bay is a small cove inset from Punta Negro. This is a small inlet with easy access but without much acclaim.

PUERTO FERRO

18° 05.94N 65° 25.13W

Just SE of entrance to bay

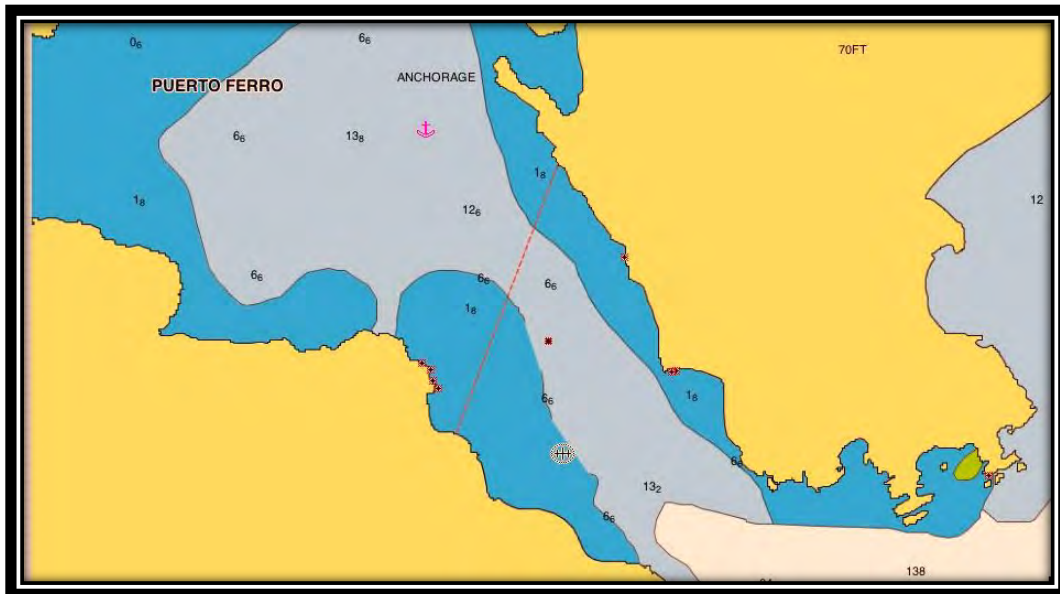


Figure 54. PUERTO FERRO

Puerto Ferro is another bioluminescent inlet. The entrance to the cove is marked by limestone formations some of which have become caves.



The coastline at Puerto Ferro and adjacent coves and inlets is limestone and provides for a very dramatic and intriguing view.

Entrance to the cove is straightforward. On the way through the narrow entrance you will encounter an area where the

depth is a few inches under 7ft. The anchorage area is towards the east side of the center. It is a very well protected inlet.



ENTRANCE TO PUERTO FERRO LOOKS NARROWER THAN IT REALLY IS



Figure 55. PUERTO RICO SOUTH, FROM ESPERANZA EAST



Figure 56. BAHIA DE LA CHIVA – ONE VIEW

BAHIA DE LA CHIVA

18° 06.29N 65° 23.38W

Just south of west entrance to bay

18° 06.33N 65° 22.77W

Just south of east entrance to bay

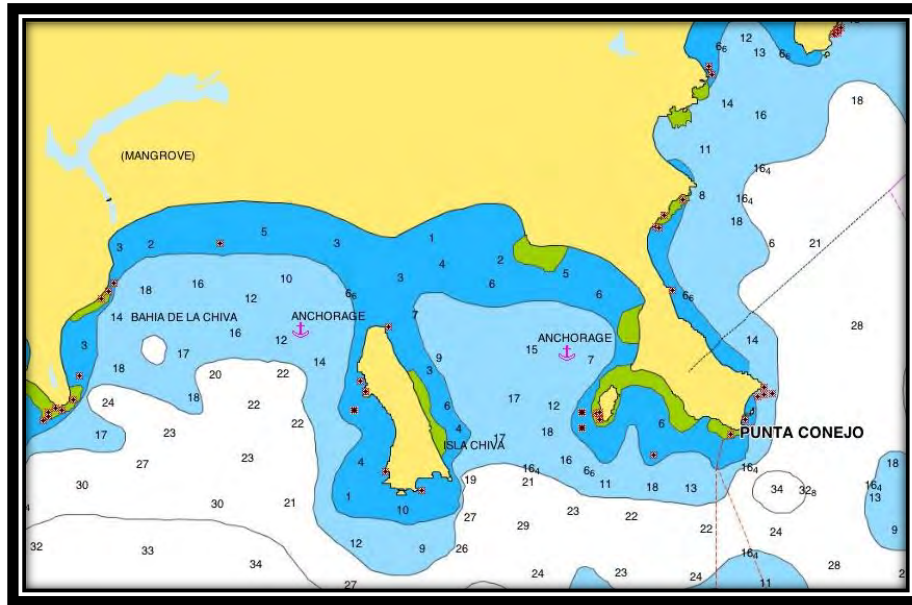


Figure 57. BAHIA DE LA CHIVA (GOAT BAY)

Actually it should be called Bahia de La Chivas or Goats Bay because it is a double bay. You can anchor to the west or the east but you cannot pass east or west between Isla Chiva and the mainland for lack of depth except in a dinghy.

The better of the two anchorages is to the east and to get to it you must enter from the east side.

The challenge of the east side anchorage is that to access it you must be very careful of the shoal directly to its southeast. Otherwise it is clear except that you must *not* cut the eastern point of the entrance too close. The beaches here are uncrowded and pristine. **VERY NICE ANCHORAGE!**

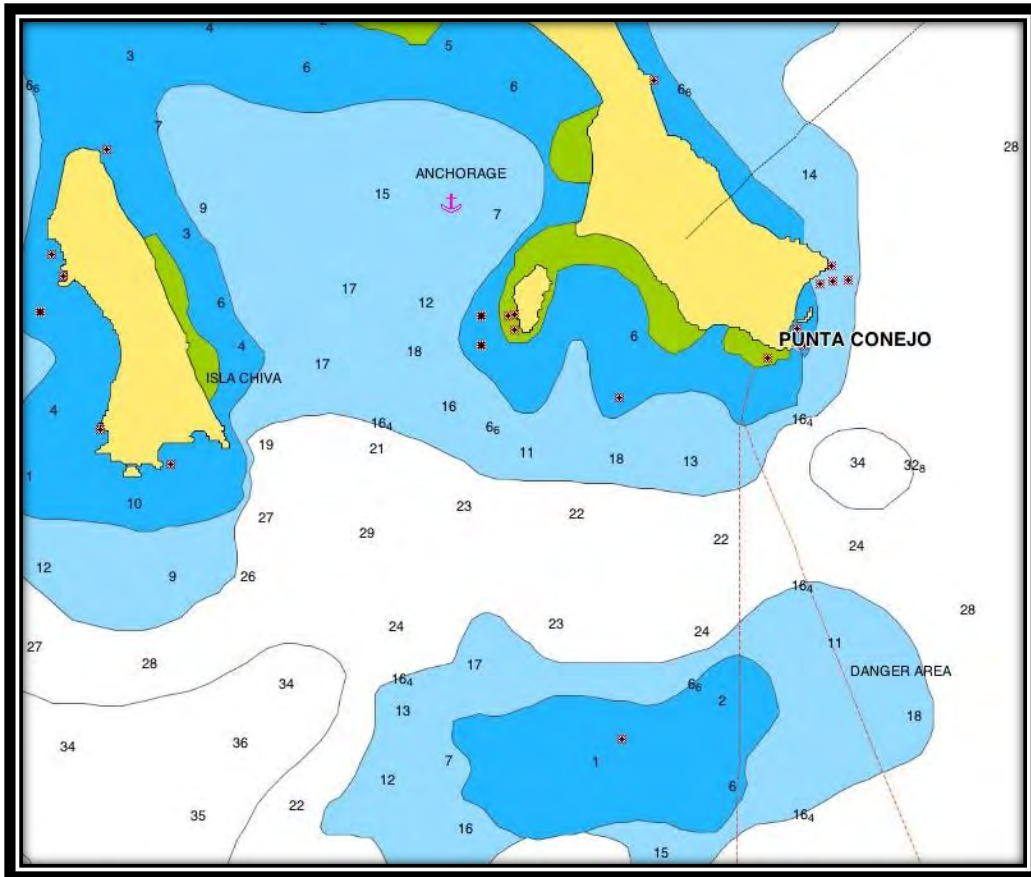


Figure 58. BAHIA DE LA CHIVA ~ EAST SIDE



ENSENADA HONDA

18° 06.52N 65° 21.39 W

Just south of east entrance to bay

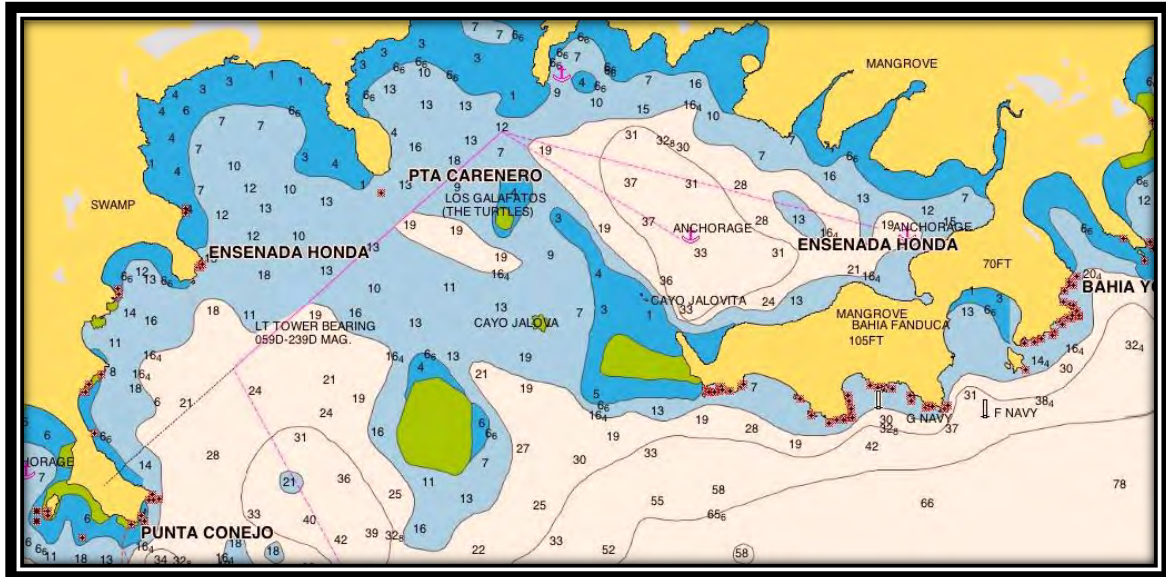


Figure 59. ENSENADA HONDA

You can see from the above chart that the anchorage is at the east side of the bay. The coordinates listed provide for an entrance at the east side; however, you can also enter further west. The impediments to the anchorage are Cayo Jalovita and Los Galafatos, but since they are easily seen neither will be a problem.



Figure 6o. AERIAL VIEW OF ENSENADA HONDA

The anchorage is quite snug as Figure 59 indicates.

The anchorage at Ensenada Honda is secure in all weather conditions.

The outer anchorage carries 30ft depths. As you approach the inner anchorage the depth will drop to 15ft and less. Stay too far out and you must use a great deal of scope. Get too close in and you have insects and lack of breeze to contend with. Find the happy medium.

This bay provides endless gunk holing opportunities. It is remote and tranquil. At night, when the wind drops as it often does, you can hear a symphony of wildlife while you gaze at sunset in the western sky. Its beauty defies description; you will have to see for yourself. The area is safe.



SUNSET AT ENSENADA HONDA

BAHIA YOYE AND BAHIA JALOVA

NOTE:

THE SMALL INLETS OF BAHIA YOYE AND BAHIA JALOVA DO NOT OFFER SUFFICIENT PROTECTION FROM THE TRADE WINDS TO BE WORTHY OF REVIEW HERE. IF THE WEATHER IS SETTLED AND YOU HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO DO, YOU CAN GO SEE FOR YOURSELF.

18° 07.06N 65° 19.88W

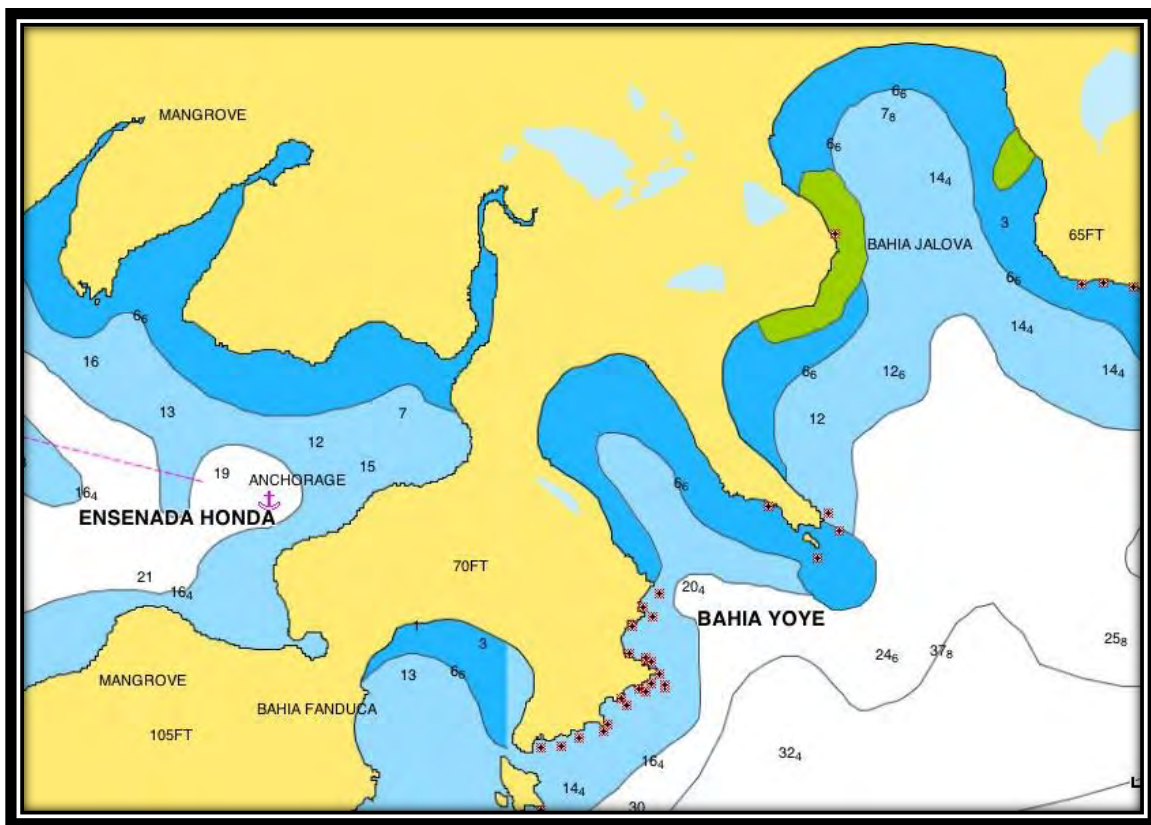


Figure 61. BAHIA YOYE AND BAYIA JALOVA

BAHIA SALINA DEL SUR

18° 07.24N 65° 18.03W

Just south of entrance at Roca Alcatraz

This is a wild and remote anchorage at the southeastern end of Vieques where the Trade Wind will keep you cool at night. However, there are signs about unexploded bombs and other evidence of the US military having been here.

You can work your way into this bay from the east or from the west. If you come in from the east and leave Roca Alcatraz to port, you must be careful of a “low spot”, less than 6ft, that will be directly in front of your bow. You can enter from the west, leaving Cayo Conejo to port and head up into the anchorage area unimpeded.

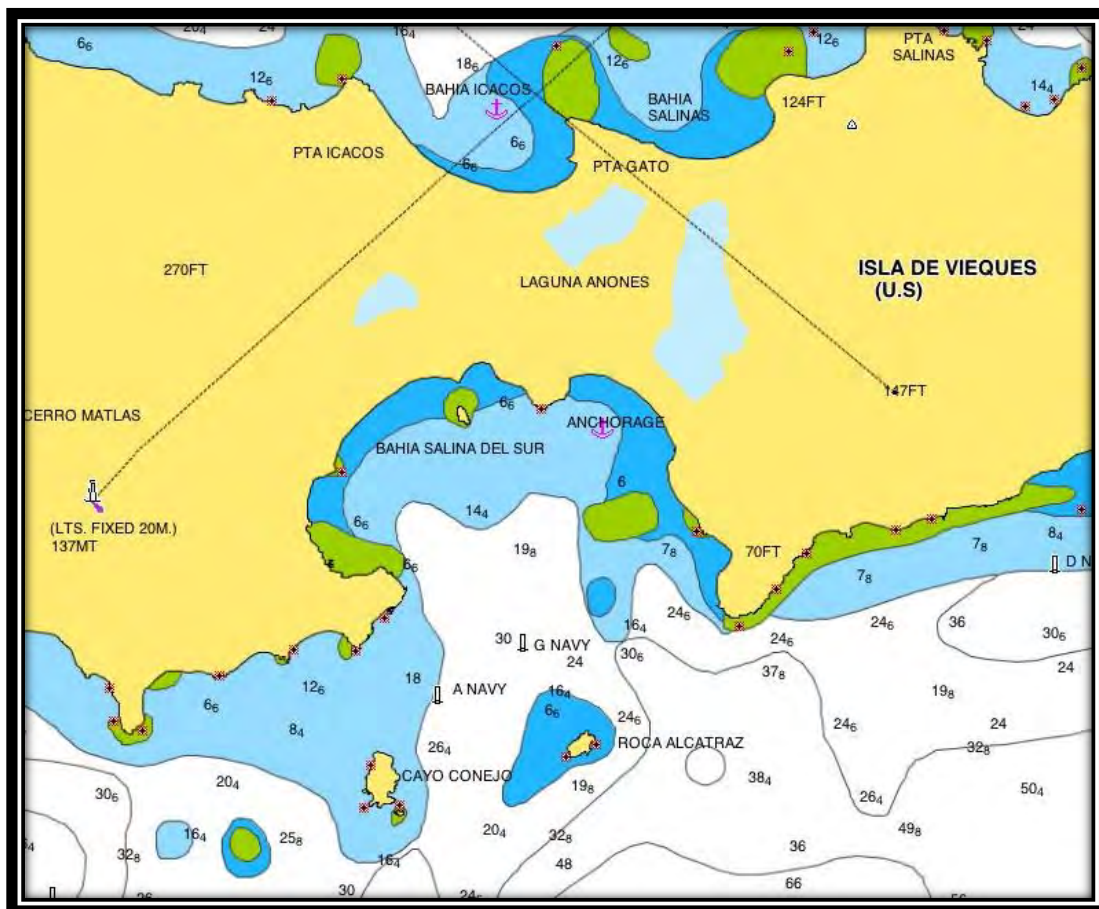


Figure 62. BAHIA SALINA DEL SUR

The way I see it, this is a wonderful and unexpected anchorage. However, I like going a bit more west as I feel this area is not yet fully ready for cruising boats as the signs in the area, like the following, well illustrate.



CRUISING PUERTO RICO: NORTH COAST (WEST TO EAST)

COAST SEQUENCE:
South, East, NORTH, West

NOTE: This coast borders the Atlantic Ocean as well as the Puerto Rico Trench. When the Trade Wind blows hard and/or northers come down from North America early in the Trade Wind season (December ~ March), this coast can be challenging and sometimes even dangerous.

From Figure 59 one can clearly see that the Puerto Rico Trench borders the Atlantic Coast of Puerto Rico. When the Trade Wind blows hard, and water passes over the trench, it makes for extremely rough seas.

Avoid the Atlantic coast of Puerto Rico except in settled weather!

We can measure the Puerto Rican north coast, as the crow flies, at about 90 nm (not including the islands at both ends). The entrance to San Juan harbor is approximately 30 nm west of the east coast of PR. From the west coast it is approximately 60 nm. If San Juan is your destination, be sure that you have checked the weather carefully.

Keep in mind that you are on a lee shore and that with the exception of San Juan and possibly the breakwater at Arecibo, there are *no harbors of refuge*.

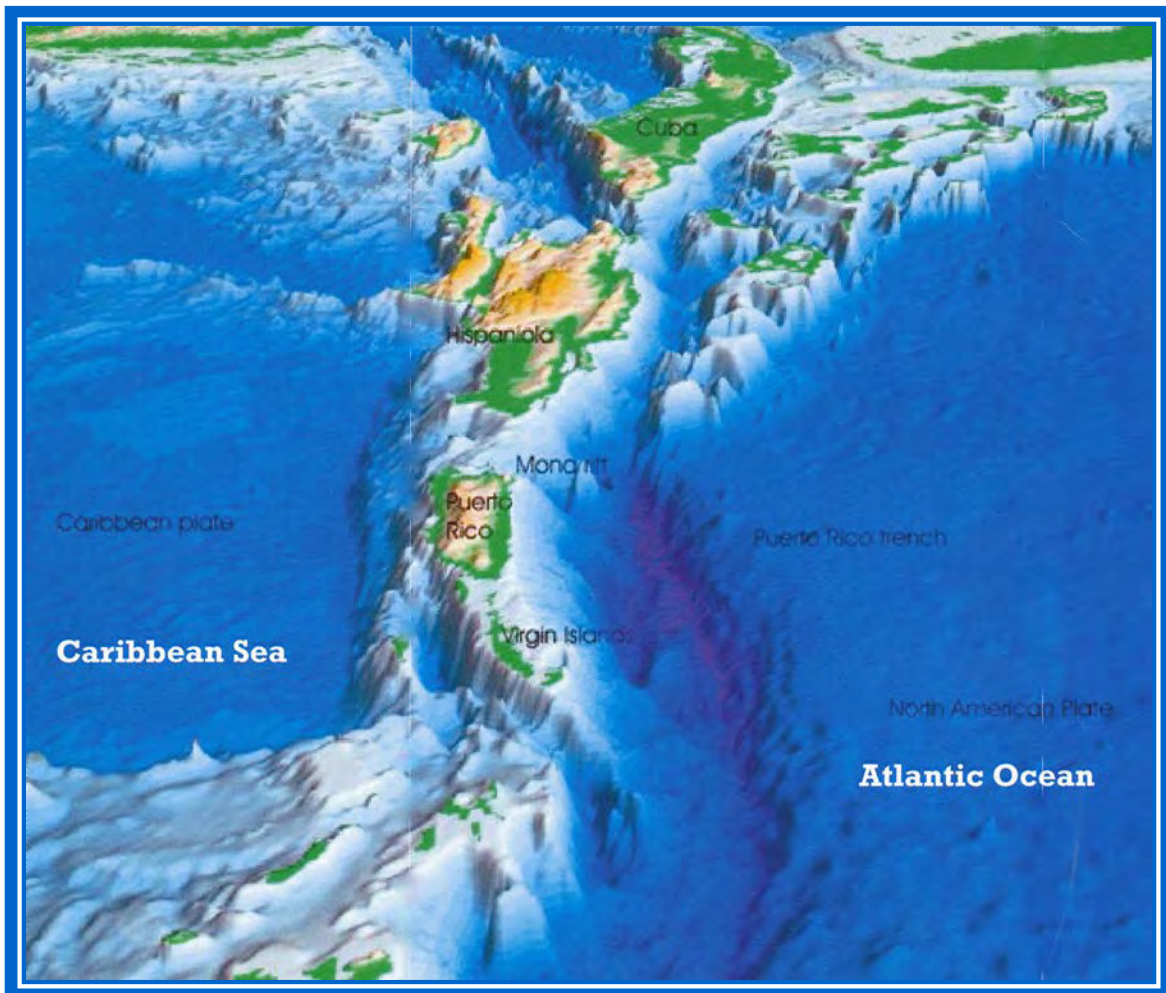


Figure 63. ALIGNMENT OF THE PUERTO RICO TRENCH WITH THE GREATER ANTILLES

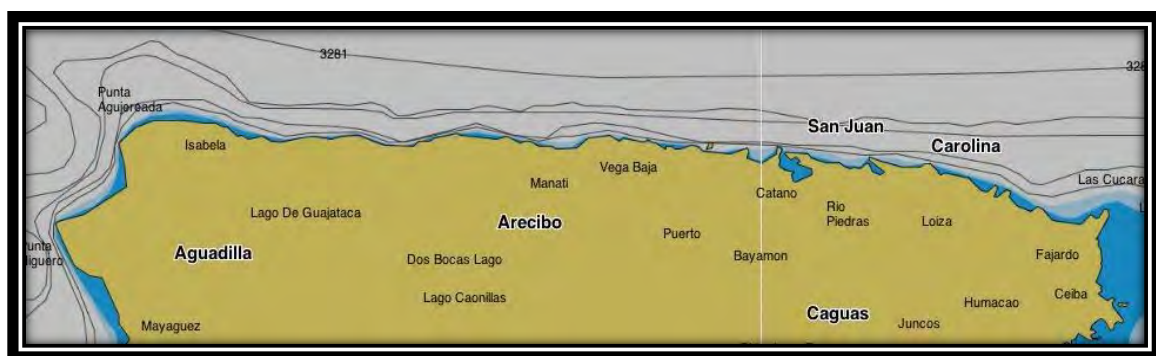


Figure 64. NORTH (ATLANTIC) COAST OF PUERTO RICO

ARECIBO (west end of North Coast)

18° 28.75N 66° 42.43 W

Just west of breakwater

Arecibo is not the best anchorage for cruising boats but if you need to get out of rough weather you can get in behind the massive breakwater and anchor. It can be used to stop in prevailing Trade Wind conditions and even then you will sometimes find that the sea will work around the breakwater and that your boat will roll.

After recent dredging, the draft is 6-8ft through the cut and into the Arecibo Yacht Club facility (787-878-8465). William Estremera is a member as well as the area coordinator for the U.S. Coast Guard Power Squadron. You can inquire directly to him any questions you may have at:

Phone: 787 232 5252

Email: westremera@gmail.com

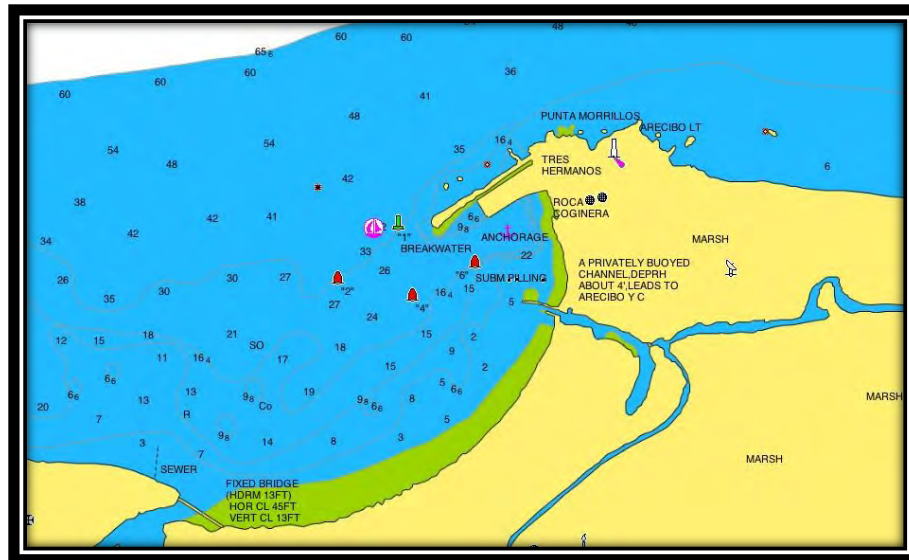


Figure 65. ARECIBO

Arecibo is about 25 nm east of the western edge of Puerto Rico.

This is an old colonial town filled with beautiful architecture. The old Cathedral can compete with any on the island. There are museums and the town is filled with culture. In many respects Arecibo is to the north coast what Ponce is to the south coast. The town is well worth the time to visit.



There is a very large breakwater of over 1,000 feet in length that offers protection from the northeast.



If you can pass over the 6ft entrance “delta”, the club inside is quite protected.



Figure 66. ARECIBO HARBOR – BIRD’S EYE VIEW



ARECIBO ~ Picture Perfect!

PUERTO PALMAS ATLAS

18° 29.37N 66° 33.94W

Just north of anchorage

This is a “nook” along the coast. There is nothing ashore that would attract a cruising boat and the protection afforded by the anchorage is very poor. No need to stop here except in an emergency!

SAN JUAN

18° 28.57N 66° 07.66 W

Just north of harbor entrance

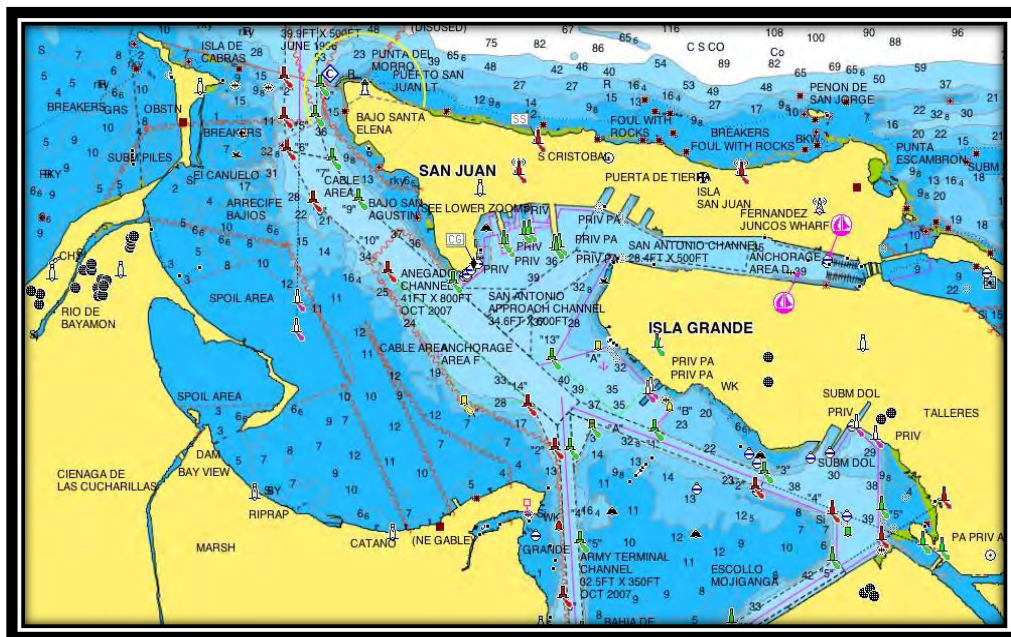


Figure 67. SAN JUAN HARBOR

This harbor is an easy entrance in normal conditions. The entrance is well marked and San Juan is a major commercial ship harbor. However, because of its location on the north shore of Puerto Rico, in heavy Trade Winds or a norther, seas can be feisty at the entrance, requiring you to “feel your way” in. There is plenty of space and the depths at the entrance are generous. What you want to do is to keep your stern square to the waves on entering even if it means “crabbing” on the way in until you clear the entrance and can make up under the lee.

San Juan is an amazing place and whether you come by boat or leave your boat in a harbor at the east, south or west sides of the island, you **MUST** visit it or you will miss the heart and soul of Puerto Rico.

Some people manage to see in a few days what could easily take more than a month when visiting San Juan. The area around the harbor is filled with attractions and when you have seen them you still have Old San Juan and the surrounding area.

As you come into the harbor, when you reach Buoy #11 you need to turn to port (after the buoy) and follow the San Antonio channel in. Once you enter into this branch of the harbor, you follow it through its natural course to the east. It measures about 1.5 miles and terminates at the Club Nautico de San Juan to port and San Juan Bay Marina to starboard. The anchorage field is just west of these two facilities and measures about 600ft x 600ft. Depths are over 30ft and you must be careful when you anchor to allow for sufficient swing room without interfering with any of the boats berthed at the sides of the wharf.

The marina is well equipped and offers transient dockage, fuel and repairs, as well as haul out facilities that can take boats to 60 tons. Contact Maritza Carde at: mcarde@sjbaymarina.com or call 787 721 8062, X221 or 224.

An aerial photograph of San Juan Bay Marina. The marina is filled with numerous white sailboats and yachts docked at long piers. To the left of the marina is a large airport tarmac. In the background, the historic Old San Juan is visible on a hill. A central yellow-bordered box contains the marina's logo, website, and contact information. Below the box, text details dockage, electricity, and facilities.

San Juan Bay Marina
Yachting Center

www.sjbaymarina.com
Tel: (787) 721 8062
Fax: (787) 721 3127
Monitor Channel 16

DOCKAGE:
120 Slips - LOA 250 ft. up to 35 ft Draft

ELECTRICITY:
110V - 220V, 100AMP, 3 Phase Service

FACILITIES:
24 hr. Gated Security • Haul Out up to 60 tons • Convenient in slip Fuel Service
Wi-Fi Internet Access • Satellite TV • Phone Service
Yacht Provisioning • Restaurant • Laundry • Marine Store • Tackle Shop
US Customs & Immigration • Port of Entry • Parking Facilities

San Juan Bay Marina



At the north side of the channel is Club Nautico de San Juan.

www.nauticodesanjuan.com

Club administrator: Frances Toro

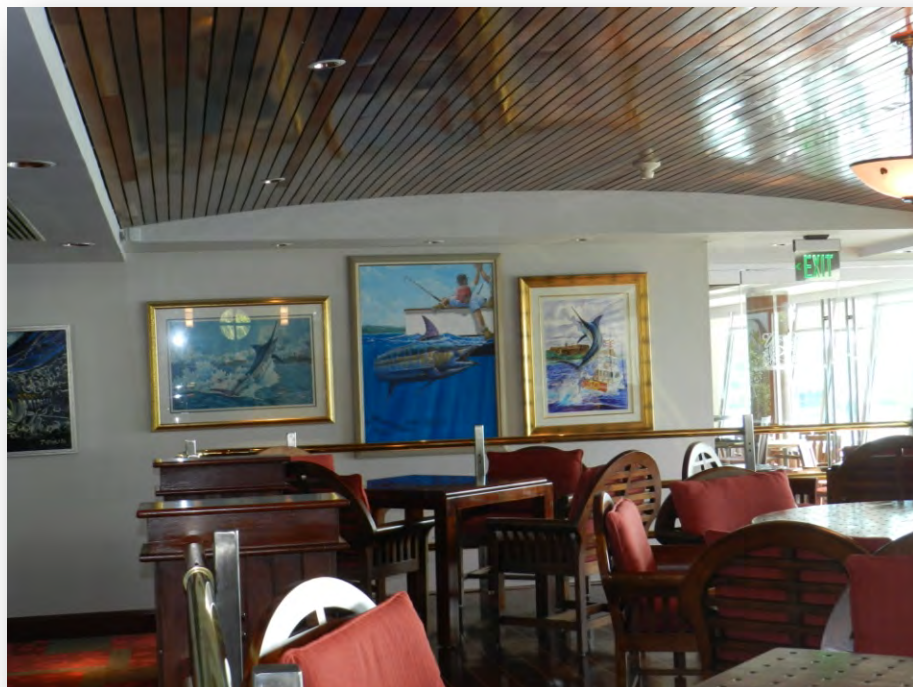
787 722 0177 X229

Email: frances@nauticodessanjuan.com



In this photo you can see the San Juan Bay Marina to the left and Club Nautico de San Juan to the right. Looking north are some boats anchored in the designated anchorage area.

Club Nautico de San Juan was founded in 1930. It is justly famous worldwide for its events but even more so for its hospitality. They welcome cruising boats and will provide a slip if they have one available. Water and fuel is available.



You will find the bar and restaurant facility at the yacht club attractive and very well maintained.

Both the San Juan Bay Marina and the Club Nautico are located convenient to everything you can think of that you may need from re-provisioning centers to marine parts and supplies. There is a West Marine Store; a 5 minute cab ride away.

WEST MARINE
197 Calle Federico Costa
San Juan PR 00918-1307
787-777-0814
Edwin Velez
Mgr00574@westmarinestores.com

Both the marina and the club are located in San Juan just a 10 minute cab ride from San Juan's Luis Munoz Marin International Airport (SJU).

There is much to see and do in this part of Puerto Rico, but the key attraction in this area, other than the availability of shopping, is Old San Juan. There is so much in Old San Juan that a guide book dedicated solely to its discussion would not do it justice.



Figure 68. OLD SAN JUAN

Many first time visitors are confused as to the difference between El Morro, La Fortaleza and El Castillo San Cristobal. The three were built at different times and served different purposes.

Castillo San Felipe del Morro

El Morro means promontory and it was designed to guard San Juan Bay from invaders who would come by sea. It is a World Heritage Site. If you like naval battles there is a long history behind this fort and you can walk through the impressive grounds on which it was built. It is truly fortified, an impressive first line of defense.

El Morro is clearly a promontory. To arrive into San Juan Bay by sea you must of necessity pass it. As I walk through the grounds of this fort, I cannot help but imagine what it must have been like with the sound and

smoke of canons firing from the fort and from the sea. The views from El Morro are spectacular.



EL MORRO

LA FORTALEZA

Fortaleza means fortress in Spanish and thus La Fortaleza is often confused with El Morro. It was built in the mid 16th century to defend the *harbor* of San Juan as opposed to El Morro which was built to defend the entrance of San Juan Bay.

La Fortaleza was completed just a few years before El Morro was constructed. It is also known as the Palacio de Santa Catalina and serves as the official residence of the Governor of Puerto Rico. If that were not enough, it is also a World Heritage Site.



LA FORTALEZA (PALACIO DE SANTA CATALINA)



At the end of the street you can see the façade of La Fortaleza. If you like architecture, the street above, which is the approach to The Fortress, will make your head spin.



EI CAPITOLIO DE PUERTO RICO

The Capitol of Puerto Rico is on the islet of San Juan just outside the walls of the Old City. The building houses both the House of Representatives as well as the Senate.

Its architecture is Classical Revival and was built in 1929.

As you walk through Old San Juan you will have to decide, depending on your available time and your taste, what you want to see. Old San Juan is a very compact area and you can be deceived easily into believing it can be gone through quickly. At the bare minimum one would need two very full days to “see” Old San Juan but a full week would be far better. If you want to come to understand Latino culture, and Puerto Rican culture in particular, Old San Juan is the place to do it. It is like graduate school at a large university. You need only decide what you want to learn and you will find it in Old San Juan in so many different ways.

Remember, Puerto Ricans have been described as “amongst the happiest people in the world” and as you spend time in Old San Juan you will quickly come to see why.

The daylife and the nightlife are full of color and excitement. If you are a bit “peaked” you can decide just to sit and watch the show go by.



SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO COMES TO LIFE AT NIGHT

During the day everywhere you walk you will be entertained by sounds and sights. The colors are typically Caribbean and they are filled with life. Buildings become a canvas where painting and architecture take on a life of their own.



As you walk through the streets take the time to absorb the detail and the use of the colors that show up in the sky and the produce of Puerto Rico; they reflect life!



Sometimes you can just sit and watch the people who are watching people.



SOMETIMES IF YOU WATCH TOO LONG YOU SEE DOUBLE!



IT IS REALLY SO SOCIABLE THAT EVEN THE CATS TAKE TIME TO STOP AND TALK.



FOR THAT MATTER, EVEN THE CHAIRS SEEM TO WANT TO GET TOGETHER

I think the point is that everywhere you go you will find something colorful and interesting to see.

Down at the southern tip of the waterfront in Old San Juan, you will find the “Paseo La Princesa”. It is a beautiful place to walk alongside the old fort walls.





THIS IS SURELY A WALK FOR LOVERS

From the top of the walkway to where it terminates at the Puerto Rican Tourism building is a wonderful walk. There are small stalls to buy local

souvenirs as well as public bathrooms (clean). At the end of the walkway (about 30 minutes leisurely), you will come to the “Raices Fountain” -- the Fountain of Roots.



'RAICES" FOUNTAIN

All along the way, and at the Fountain where you can sit and take a break, you look into San Juan Harbor and at beautiful views every way you turn.



There are so many things that you can do in this town that the list would be impossible to assemble here; however there are a few suggestions I have that may be of interest.

On Saturdays, there is a small but very interesting organic food and crafts market that you can find from 8 AM to 1 PM at Plaza del Mercado on Norzagaray Street. You might want to buy a bar of soap or get a foot massage, but if you did nothing more than come to visit, I think you will enjoy it and find it interesting.

When you are finished, walk up (east) on Norzagaray Street to the Gallery Inn Guesthouse. Perhaps they will have a small piano concert that day or you may just enjoy a glass of wine. However, the ambiance is amazing and as you walk through each room it will leave you filled with wonderment.



SATURDAY MARKET AT PLAZA DEL MERCADO



**GALLERY INN
GATEHOUSE**



Home to the artist Jan D'Esopo since 1961, each room of the Gallery Inn Gatehouse is a work of art in and of itself. The views from the rooftop to the sea are breathtaking and should not be missed!

In the center of town, you can find the Cathedral of San Juan Bautista. While its façade is humble, its interior will amaze you. Its construction was started in 1521 and it is the second oldest cathedral in the Americas; the oldest of which is in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.



A SHORT WALK FROM THE CATHEDRAL YOU WILL FIND THE CAPILLA DEL CRISTO



CAPILLA DEL CRISTO

Between 1634 and 1638, this chapel dedicated to Santa Catalina was built at the top of Del Cristo Street.

Next to La Capilla you will find el Parque de las Palomas which is a ‘pigeon park’ where you can feed hundreds of birds that know this is their feeding place.

The view of the bay from here is magnificent.

A few yards down the block are two cafes and you can sit and look at the Capilla while sipping your favorite drink.



PIGEON PARK ~ PLAZA DE LAS PALOMAS

Walk down the street a bit more and you will find one of my favorite restaurants. It is literally a hole in the wall but once inside you will love it. The prices are moderate, the food plentiful and local, and the interior of the restaurant is very interesting.

It is CAFÉ EL PUNTO and the owner is Alejandro Jeffs. He works hard and you will see him moving around making sure everyone is happy.



CAFÉ EL PUNTO

Just to the right of the Café is OLE where they sell hats for men and women. The hat that everyone goes to see and perhaps buy is the *Panama hat*. They come in different price ranges and they can be customized to your liking. Be a sport and buy one for your first mate; I am sure she will love it!

To the left of Café El Punto is YUTE, which sells a variety of “this and that’s” including souvenirs. They also sell Puerto Rican cigars, 3 for \$10.00 US.

Now how good can a cigar like that be in relationship to a Cuban cigar?

In fact it is superb. Off the scale good. Or perhaps I just had drunk too many rum cocktails that day and everything looked good to me. I do not normally smoke, but it took me an hour to finish this one off and at \$3.33 per hour I think it was a great buy.



FINISHING A PANAMA HAT

Art Galleries

In this immediate area there are also three noteworthy art galleries which show wonderful collections and should be seen. *Galeria Botello* on Del Cristo Street has an excellent display and is one of the oldest. *Galleria Exodo* run by Serena Becroft is just around the corner and also on Cristo Street. She is very knowledgeable. And *Galeria Labiosa* owned by Wilfred Labiosa on Tetuan Street is an intimate place where you will find an owner who is willing to take the time to talk to you and explain to you the scope of Puerto Rican Art.

Among the many other things of interest to see and do in San Juan and Old San Juan, I want to point out two that are often overlooked.



PLAZUELA DE LA ROGATIVA

The Plazuela de La Rogativa is a stunning sculpture that offers meaningful insight into Puerto Rican culture and history. It is not far from the San Juan Gate if you are walking.

La Rogativa means “The Procession”. The procession took place in 1797 during the attempted invasion of Puerto Rico by the British. According to the legend, it was a processional act of faith done at night by the residents with torches. Seeing it from a distance the British mistook the massed lights for Spanish reinforcements, and the attack was aborted. From the sculpture you can look out across the water and experience the enormity of the city wall and La Fortaleza.

The cemetery in Old San Juan is often overlooked; after all who on vacation or holiday wants to go to a cemetery? The cemetery in Havana, Cuba, is in my opinion, one of the greatest in the world architecturally speaking. The San Juan Cemetery, located next to the El Morro Fort, is a close second to Havana. It should not be missed if you like sculpture and architecture.



SAN JUAN CEMETERY

The circular chapel in the center is dedicated to Mary Magdalene and is neo classical in design. The views from the cemetery seaward and landward are breathtaking, and as you pass by the many sculptures you will be touched by many emotions; at least if you are alive and well!



BEAUTY, GRANDEUR, GREAT STYLE!



BAHIA DE CANGREJOS

Lat. 18 27.91 N Long. 66 00.74

1nm NW of entrance to bay and anchorage

There is a private yacht club here, the Cangrejos Yacht Club. Both the bay and the entrance to the channel that leads to the club have many shallow areas that require local knowledge. Outside the yacht club, the anchorage is a niche in shallow water on a lee coast. There is no reason to stop here as San Juan is just 7 nm west.

CRUISING PUERTO RICO: WEST COAST

COAST SEQUENCE:
South, East, North, WEST

ISLANDS

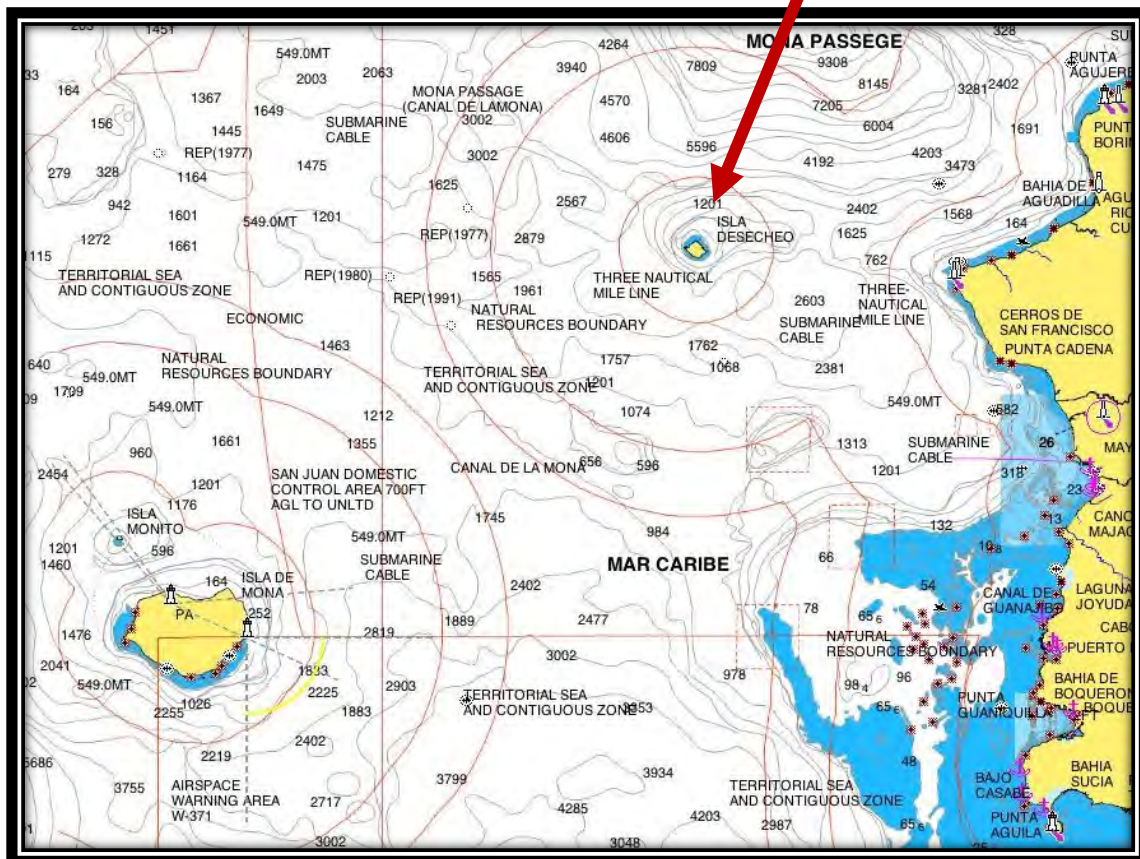
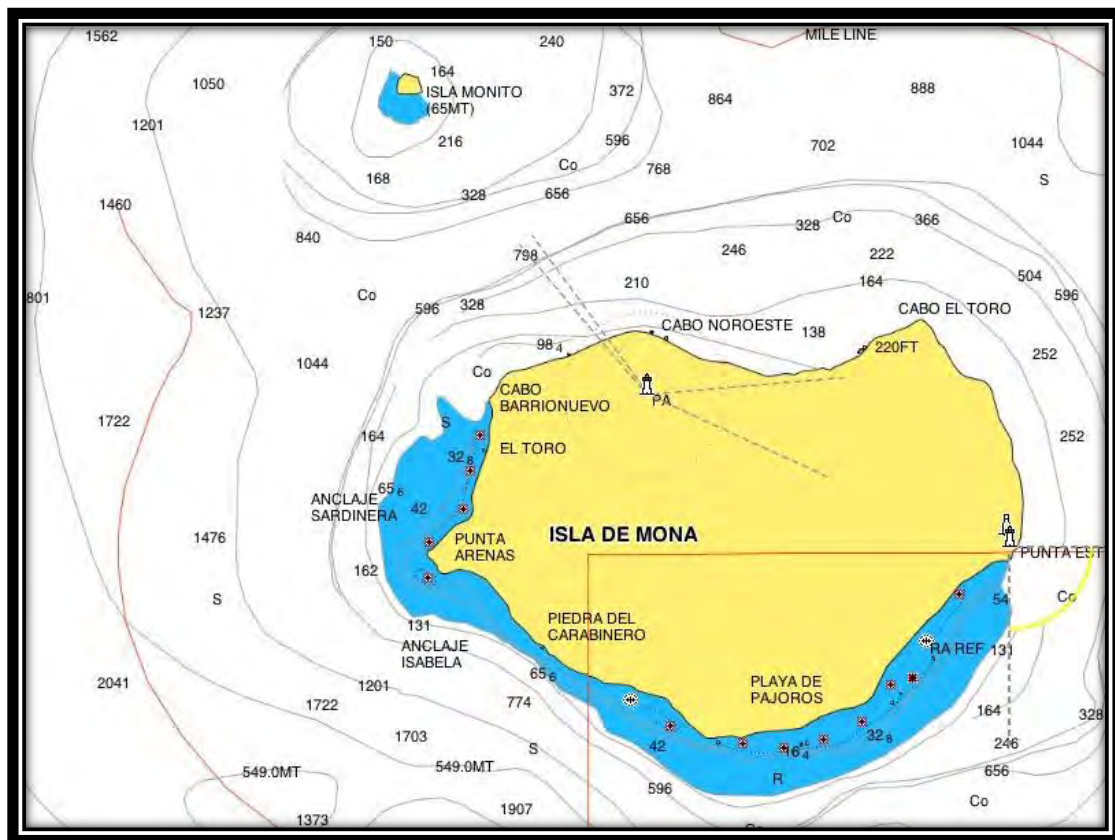


Figure 6g. WEST COAST PUERTO RICO WITH ISLANDS

1 nm NW of Island

2 nm NW of entrance to anchorage



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The cliff side of Mona Island is about 200ft high and you will be able to see the island from a distance. On the northern side is the Mona Island Light which is 323ft high and can be easily spotted at night.

Some cruising sailors like the thought that they can stop at Isla de Mona but I have never favored it. Many times the sea is just too rough to get in the very small harbor at “Anclaje Sardinera”. If the sea is not rough, then the question is raised as to why you want to stop in the first place. Unless you are really curious regarding this island, I like to think of it as a day anchorage if one wanted to explore.

The entrance is marked by triangular markers but the depth is about 6½ ft going in and less if there is wave action. If you do go in, you may find that there are a few boats on the inside and that you will have trouble turning to get back out.

Isla Monito to the NW is not noteworthy.

NOTE:

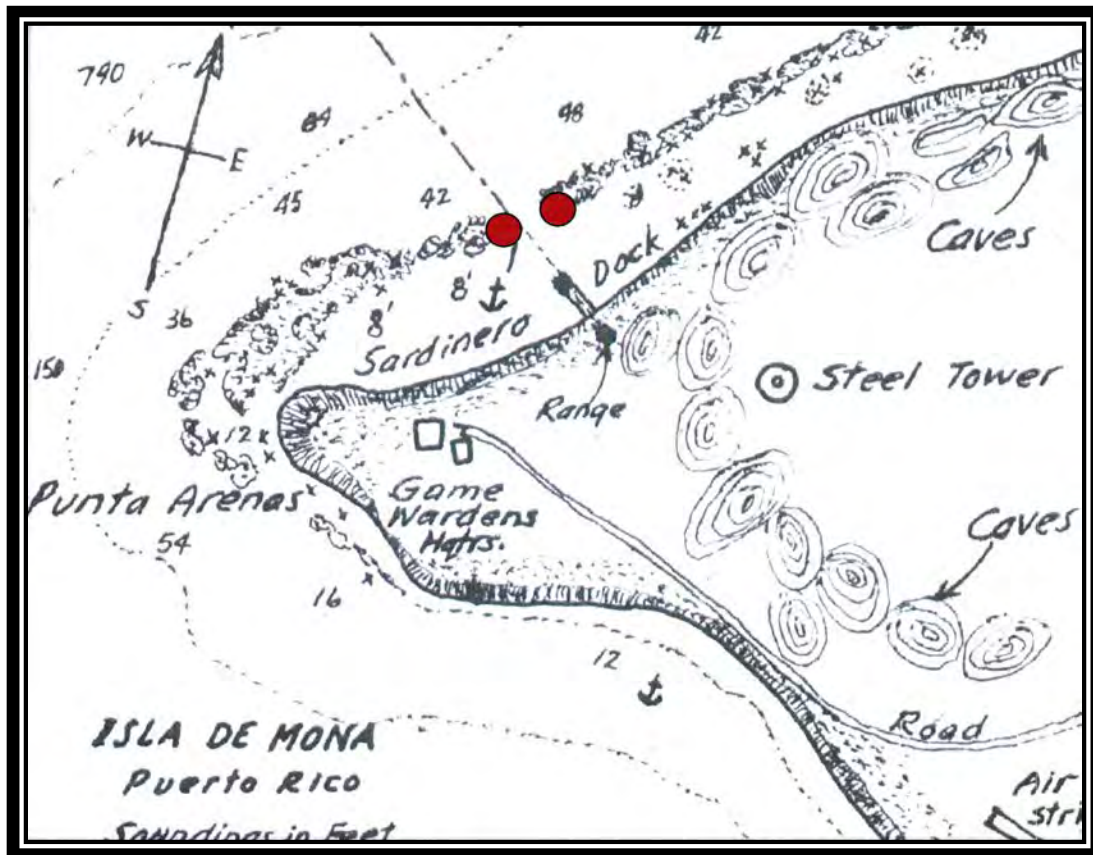


Figure 71. ENTRANCE TO ANCLAJE SARDINERO, ISLA DE MONA

The entrance between the stakes, *if you can see them*, is less than 100ft wide. When there is a northerly blow, the entrance is dangerous and should not be attempted. Mona Island should NOT be considered a stop between Hispaniola and Puerto Rico, especially from November through the end of March.

WEST COAST MAINLAND

The entire west side of Puerto Rico is, on average, less developed than either the north, east or south coasts.

At the northwestern side of the west coast, anchorages can be rough during winter months because they are exposed to the Trade Wind when those winds are from the NE and heavy, and also when northers come down from North America. The better anchorages on the west side of the island tend towards the south.

AGUADILLA

18° 25.90N 67° 10.47W

1 nm west of anchorage

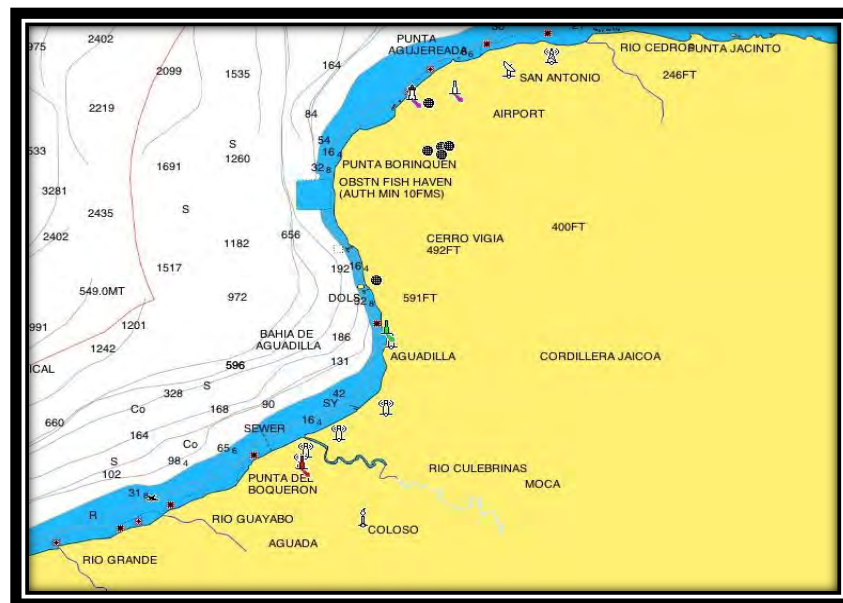


Figure 72. AGUADILLA

NOTE: There is a breakwater at Aguadilla but it is not one that you can really anchor behind and should not be considered as a protected area.

Aguadilla was a sleepy fishing village for many, many years until the current Mayor, the Hon. Carlos Mendez Martinez, returned from the United States. The short version of a much longer story is that local boy goes to United States, makes good and comes back to his hometown well off. Instead of retiring and spending the rest of his life fishing and on the beach, he runs for mayor, wins, and begins the process of revitalizing the town. The mayor showed us that the town of Aguadilla is one of the few in Puerto Rico that is “budget positive” and has a surplus. This surplus has come from the privatization of nearly all services in the town. Taxes in the town are modest and the general sentiment was one of proud and happy.



In the nearly two decades that he has been mayor he has accomplished some amazing things. First and foremost he cleaned up the town and inspired the townspeople to become proactive. They have started a major project on the waterfront and torn down or rebuilt much of the downtown area. Crime is extremely low and the town can point to many achievements. One that stands out as unusual is an enclosed ice skating rink ~ in the Caribbean!

The mayor was nice enough to meet us in his offices at town hall and explain what the town is doing. I met a fellow who is on in years but who has the vitality and sparkle of men half his age. When we entered the Town Hall Building, it was remarkable.

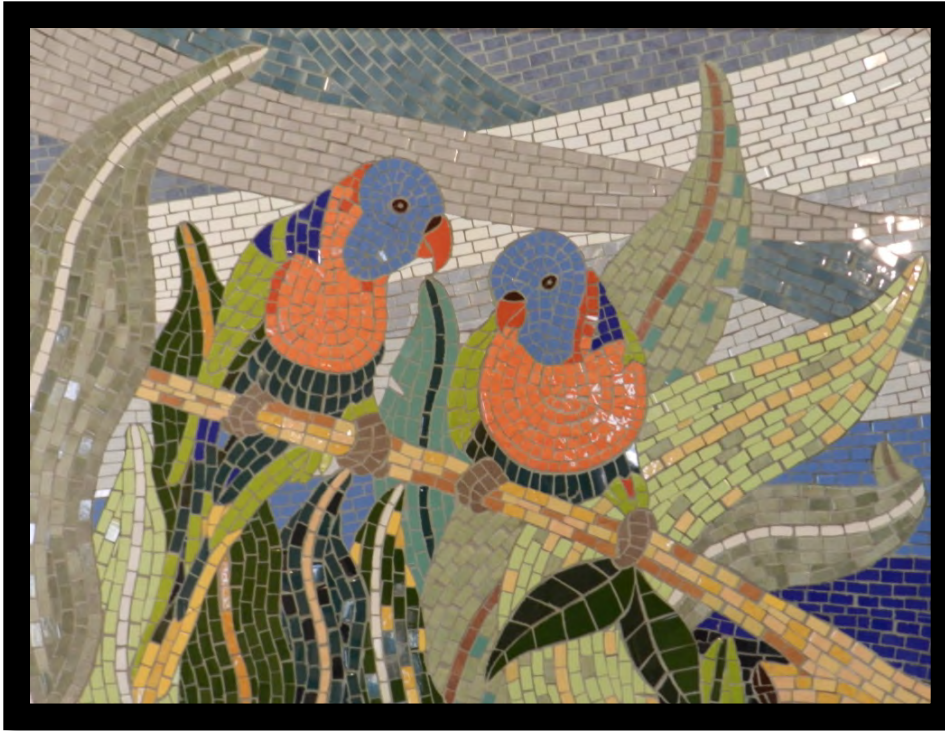


FAÇADE OF TOWN HALL A MONTH BEFORE CHRISTMAS

The inside of the town hall is immaculately clean and has a dynamic art gallery that displays the works of local artists. It also has a unique display of sculptured “heads” that acknowledge men and women of the town who have made great achievements in life and who have helped the town.



**EACH SCULPTURE IS A LIKENESS OF THE PERSON, ACCOMPANIED BY
A SYNOPSIS OF WHO THEY ARE**



CERAMIC TILE ARTWORK ON WALLS AND OIL PAINTINGS





Painting of typical "Campesino" or country folk
at gallery in Aguadilla Town Hall.

Pride in one's past is a big part of the town's culture and it is much celebrated.

Aguadilla is known for Crashboat Beach. The beaches on the west coast can be rough and are highly valued by surfers.

Thomas Cordero, who was so supportive in the preparation of this guide and is also the Seven Seas Cruising Association host for Puerto Rico, is involved in a new development in this area called Discovery Bay. It will include a marina that will cater to sport fishermen and cruising sailors alike. Given how rough the Mona Passage can be, a sheltered marina at the NW corner of Puerto Rico will be a wonderful addition to the area.



Artist's rendition of the Discovery Bay project located between
Aguadilla to the north and Rincon to the south

www.discoverybay-pr.com

RINCON

18° 20.11N 67° 15.92W

¾ nm W of anchorage

Like many anchorages on the west coast of Puerto Rico, Rincon can give you shelter from the prevailing Trade Wind but not from northers. To anchor here one must pick one's weather.

The best time to visit here or any part of the NW Puerto Rican coast is late in the Trade Wind season when the northers no longer come down and the Mona Passage settles down. Jeanne Walker St. Clair is the coordinator of the Rincon Sailing Club. If you contact her, she can provide local information: rinconsailing@gmail.com. Better yet, text her at 787-421-4700.

The town of Rincon is small and pleasant and if you need to do small grocery shopping there are some stores here. The town is wonderfully colorful with really great sunsets and worth the visit. See the details at: www.rincon.org.

What I found extremely interesting, and worth a walk through, is the Horned Dorset Primavera Hotel. Wilhelm Sack is the General Manager and one of its developers and has been there many years. To say that this is a boutique two story hotel spread over many acres with views of the sea would be an extreme understatement.

The architecture and interior decorating are so exceptional as to be mesmerizing and this establishment has rightly won many, many awards. It is not that it is luxurious or pricey, which it is; it is that it is simply outstanding in every way. If it were a senior citizens' home, no one would mind getting old!

If you stop in Rincon and if your budget allows for a 5-star experience, go to The Horned Dorset Primavera for tea, or arrange for lunch or dinner, and enjoy the view of the sea.



WOW!!!



**EVEN IF THEY SERVED HAMBURGER IN THIS ROOM,
IT WOULD TASTE LIKE FILET MIGNON!**

BAHIA DE MAYAGUEZ

18° 13.39N 67° 13.01W

1 nm west of # 3 & 4 entrance buoys

Mayaguez is the third largest city on the island of Puerto Rico. Unlike some of the harbors on the west side of Puerto Rico, this bay offers a protected anchorage, albeit somewhat commercial. It is a point of entry and the Customs building is here; you can clear in here without difficulty.



UNITED STATES CUSTOMS BUILDING ~ MAYAGUEZ

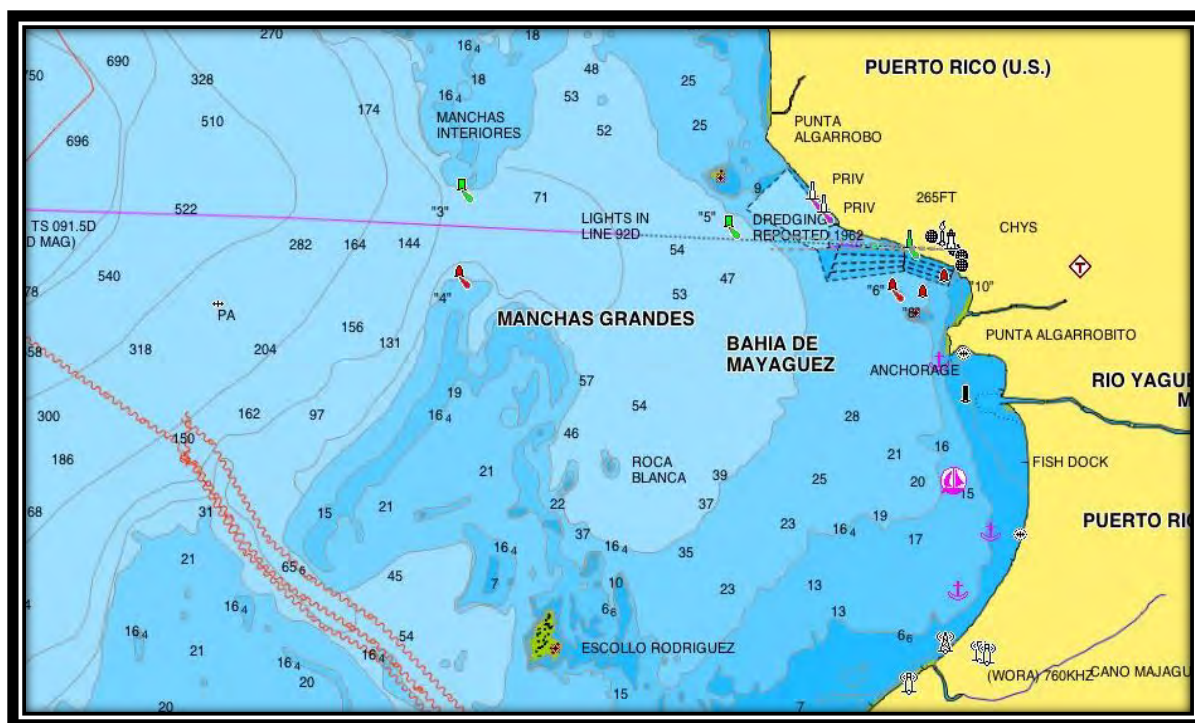


Figure 73. BAHIA DE MAYAGUEZ



BAY OF MAYAGUEZ

The bay offers good protection. However, most cruising boats do not like it because it is somewhat commercial, large and impersonal. There is also a swell from the northwest during the winter months. As a result, many of the cruising boats wanting to clear in, anchor in Puerto Real or Boquerón about 8 to 12 nm further south.

The difficulty is that everyone on the boat must report to Immigration and sometimes the Customs inspector will require that the boat be in Mayaguez.

Mayaguez is an excellent re-provisioning stop.

NOTE: If you are approaching from the south, or departing Mayaguez and heading south, you must stand clear of Tourmaline Reef which is about 5 nm west northwest of Punta Arenas (**18° 08.18N 67° 11.22W**) , which point is just north of Puerto Real. The reef includes coral as well as shallow spots that break in heavy weather. The reef can be passed on either side, although the side closest to the mainland requires careful navigation and should not be attempted at night. **At night, stand off! (Stay west of 18° 09.77N 67° 20.70W)**

PUERTO REAL

18° 04.10N 67° 12.23W

½ nm W of entrance to harbor



Figure 74. PUERTO REAL

Puerto Real is about 8 nm south of Mayaguez and is very under utilized by cruising sailors. It is an extremely secure anchorage that now has a newly reconstructed marina with a very inviting staff. There are 3 pairs of red/green buoys that mark the entrance channel, with depths that average 15ft. The bottom is mud and the tidal range about one foot. If you think you need help, you can call the marina and they will assist you; VHF channel 68.

Jose Mendez is the president and owner of the marina and he puts a personal touch and a great deal of work into it. **Marina Pescaderia ~ Puerto Real.** His email is: info@marinapescaderia.com and you can call him at 787-717-3638. He is an authorized SSCA station host.



MARINA PESCARDERIA ~ PUERTO REAL



ANCHORAGE AT SOUTHWEST SIDE OF MARINA IN 10FT OF WATER

The marina offers all the services that one could ask for including showers and bathrooms, free Wi-Fi and support with repairs.

Consider Puerto Real a really good alternative to Boqueron, especially if you prefer a marina with security.

BAHIA DE BOQUERON

18° 00.75N 67° 13.48W

1 nm W of green entrance buoy

Leave the green can to port on entering the bay. It is straightforward and easy to enter in all weather. There is a large shoal called Bajo Enmedio that blocks the center of the entrance and can be seen breaking in heavy weather. The bay is large, measuring more than 1.5 nm wide and 1.5 nm long. At the southeast corner is a mangrove backwater that would seem to be secure in virtually any storm. Stakes mark a 10ft dredged channel that enters.

Boqueron is the most popular stop for cruising boats on the west coast. It is not a port of entry but many boats anchor here and the crew travels by land to Mayaguez to clear in. If, while clearing in, they ask you where your boat is anchored, I strongly suggest you tell the truth and say Boqueron. Some officers will then direct you to bring the boat up to Mayaguez to complete the clearing in procedure. What you are told depends on a variety of factors too speculative to review here.

Just off the town docks there is a rock called Roca Valasquez. It is easily seen and you should avoid it. Anchor off the beach in the spot you favor.

On the northeast side of the bay is the Club Nautico de Boqueron. They can help you with fuel and water but the water depth can be a problem for some boats. Go in at high tide and you should have about 7ft.

Once you walk in from the town dinghy dock, you will find a number of bars and small restaurants and will not have to look hard to find fellow cruisers.



"THE FLEET" AT THE BOQUERON ANCHORAGE



CLUB NAUTICO DE BOQUERON



THE "LOCAL HANGOUT" IN BOQUERON

When you exit Boqueron, if you are going east along the south shore, do not cut the southwest part of the bay on exiting as there is a shoal call Bajo Palo. Best to exit the way you entered.

CABO ROJO

Like most capes, there is a wind effect and when the Trade Wind comes up strong rounding this cape, which translates as Cape Red, it will leave you red in the face. It is best to go round it at night or early in the morning with a forecast of light winds unless you like beating into strong winds and heavy seas.



CABO ROJO ~ RED CAPE

CONCLUDING NOTES ~

PUERTO RICO

Puerto Rico is one country with two flags surrounded by four coasts. The composition of nationalities that make up the Puerto Rican spirit leads to the statement,

“Yo Soy Puertorriqueno, pa'que tu lo sepas!”

(Yo Soy Borinquen, Yo Soy Boricua).

The literacy rate in Puerto Rico is over 90% and there is a very high emphasis on education. Most Puerto Ricans are bilingual and many speak more than two languages fluently.

The island has cruising opportunities on every shore; some of which are exceptional and world class. Inland there is the El Yunque Rainforest which is a national park and an ecosystem worthy of your time and effort.

The cities and culture of Puerto Rico are remarkable. Puerto Ricans have been consistently held to be “amongst the happiest people in the world” by a variety of well documented studies; notwithstanding all the problems that urbanization and density of population can create.

When you meet Puerto Ricans, you will find them, on the average, to be exceptionally welcoming. While a new acquaintance may shake your hand, if you know them you will be met with hugs and kisses (never between men ~ this is not acceptable in Latino culture).

Disagreement is loud and vociferous but rarely more than openly animated and usually full of laughter and smiles. Puerto Ricans do not like heaviness and those that take themselves too serious. They like human nature. They openly forgive it and do not hold on to resentments.

When you visit the island, go with the flow. If loud music offends you, then get ear plugs because Puerto Ricans like music and many times they like it loud.

Puerto Ricans have won 8 Olympic Gold medals under their own name in their own right. They have excelled in every major industry and sport the world has to offer.

Before you think that I am crazy in love with Puerto Rico, remember that this is a cruising guide that should lead you through the anchorages as well as the country and its culture. I have visited and cruised Puerto Rico many times over more than four decades and I always go away with the feeling, *“Yo estoy loco pero feliz”* (I am crazy but happy) after spending time there.

There is much beauty to see and take in on a visit to Puerto Rico; so take your time and do not rush through!



**PUERTO RICO HAS BEAUTIFUL BEACHES EVERYWHERE YOU GO AND
THE NEXT ONE WILL ALWAYS BE BETTER THAN THE LAST ONE.**



**THE PUERTO RICAN "SPIRIT"
SHOWS UP IN MANY WAYS!**



Zuleika Rivera became Miss Universe in 2006. There is no doubt that she is beautiful, but if you were fortunate to meet her and hear her speak, she has a charisma and a charm, a warmth and humility, that earns her the right to say

“Yo Soy Puertorriquena, pa’que tu lo sepas” (I am Puerto Rican, just so you know!).

I say, Que Dios te bendiga y que viaje bien!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to my daughter Nathalie Virgintino for serving as editor of freecruisingguides.com.

My sincere gratitude for the time and talent Catherine Hebson brought to the formatting and presentation of this book.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Frank Virgintino is a native New Yorker. His sailing background of over forty years covers the Canadian Maritimes, all of the eastern seaboard of the United States and the entire Caribbean, many times over. Aside from cruising he has spent the better part of his career building and administering marinas.

In the process of writing this guide all of the harbors listed were personally researched as was all of the information about, and knowledge of, Puerto Rico contained in the guide. It is hoped that this guide will make Puerto Rico easier to access and understand for the cruising community.

The author believes this guide should serve as an excellent source of information for this beautiful island although it should not be used for navigation at any time. *All charts, latitude and longitude positions given, and inserts exhibited should be used as a frame of reference only. Navigation should only be undertaken with appropriate charts of the area.*

Anchorage, harbors and facilities are dynamic and thus in a state of constant change. This cruising guide should be a tool that provides for insight and basis for your research, but it is a “guide” only.

Comments and/or questions can be emailed to fvirgintino@gmail.com.

Fair winds and great cruising!

SPECIAL NOTE

It bears repeating: *Please keep in mind that cruising guides are not meant to be used for navigation.* They are **GUIDES** to assist and enhance cruising and should be used only for reference.

All of the Latitudes and Longitudes provided here are given to the best of the author's ability. However, they should never be relied on. The skipper of the boat must remember that he/she has the sole responsibility for proper navigation.

Additionally, facts and circumstances related to statements made in the guide can change; sometimes facilities and services that existed during the writing of the guide may no longer be available.

ALSO BY FRANK VIRGINTINO

- ★ A Cruising Guide to Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao
- ★ Cayman Islands Cruising Guide
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