

## Things to Do in Isabela, Puerto Rico

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The town of Isabela, on Puerto Rico's northwest coast, is known as the "Garden of the Northwest" because of its natural beauty with swimming and fishing beaches, forests with flora and fauna unique to the area, and places to snorkel and see colorful fish.

Isabela is home to a unique and kind culture. Visitors will look forward to unique foods like the local cheese called quesito de hoja and fresh seafood. Elegant Paso Fino horses are bred in the area and are known for their smooth gait.

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**Enjoy the Beaches**



Isabela is known for its numerous beaches, which cater to surfers, snorkelers, boogie boarders, and fishermen, along with people who crave a lazy day in the sun. Isabela's best stretches of sand include:

**Jobos:** One of Puerto Rico's most popular surfing beaches, Jobos is a favorite with the locals and not over-run with tourists. There is a protected cover where you can go snorkeling. When you get hungry enjoy some casual island food and relax with the locals.

**Shacks:** An all-purpose beach good for snorkeling, surfing, and diving, Shacks is a popular beach destination. The crystal-clear waters and underwater cathedral-like caverns make Shacks an ideal place for diving.

**Blue Hole:** This beach is a must-visit destination for anyone who loves to snorkel. Blue Hole Beach has a reef where you will find a great variety of fish, coral, and other species of marine life. Sometimes, at the end of the reef, you'll see manatees.

**Baño La Princesa and Blowhole:** This is a large area dotted with coral formations, beaches, and natural pools. The area is very popular in spring and summer. A blowhole is found towards the east end called Pozo Brujo at the base of the cliff.

**Villa Pesquera Beach:** Is a familiar beach in Isabela. On weekends many people visit this place to spend the day in the beach while they enjoy the music coming from the nearby kiosks. In its vicinity there are villas for rent. You can park in its surroundings and there are restaurants,

scooter rental and restrooms.

**Punta Sardina:** Just a short drive from the center of Isabela, Punta's deep waters make it a popular swimming beach and a great fishing spot. The scenic beach also has a shallow area where families with little ones can enjoy a dip.



**Montones:** This area has a variety of accommodations and restaurants. You can rent cabanas for the day and swim in a variety of depths of water. Popular with families, the beach has shallow areas ideal for snorkeling or swimming safely.

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Trek to the Guajataca Tunnel



Built in 1911, the Guajataca Tunnel was a railroad tunnel that connected the towns of Isabela and Quebradillas and was used to transport the sugar crop. The railroads are long gone and the tunnel is open to the public and safe to walk through. The trek is worth it for the views of the rugged and beautiful coastline, including Playa El Pastillo and Playa de Guajataca. The latter has a rough surf and strong currents, and is not a safe place to swim; the former, on the other hand, is a large and beautiful beach.

On the west side, take a look at the Cara del Indio, a rock carving of a Cacique, or native chief, named Mabodomaca. Legend has it that Mabodomaca leaped into the ocean to his death rather than be captured by the Conquistadors.



The Guajataca Tunnel park is located at the border of Isabela and Quebradillas. Entrance and parking are free at the Route 2 entrance in Quebradillas.

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**Explore the Guajataca Forest**

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The Guajataca Forest is a pristine nature reserve with flora and fauna unique to the island. The forest has 25 miles of trails, with the most popular being Trail #1, leading to the Cueva del Viento (Cave of the Wind). This beautiful natural cave is filled with bats and features limestone rock formations.

Also popular is the 2-mile circular interpretive trail that makes for a light hike. From the trail, you can also visit an observation tower and a picnic area. The forest contains 156 types of trees and 45 species of birds.

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### Go Horseback Riding



### Tropical Trail Rides

PHONE +1 787-872-9256

Tropical Trail Rides offers beachfront horseback rides and ATV tours in Isabela. From here, you'll ride into a lush forest setting and then to the beach.

For those who are inclined and able, they'll even take you on a hike up the cliff for a panoramic photo opportunity. If you choose not to hike, you can swim on the beach or explore the cliffside caves.

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## Go Scuba Diving



Isabela offers great scuba diving whether you are a novice or an expert thanks to its underwater caves. Aquatica Dive and Surf offers scuba, mountain biking, snorkeling, and surfing tours, and equipment rentals. You can sign up for scuba or surfing lessons.

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## Savor Local Seafood



When in Isabella, you'll want to try some of the local seafood. Ocean Front Restaurant, located on the beach offers both alfresco dining and fine dining indoors and features Caribbean fusion cuisine. Freshly grilled specialties feature catch from neighboring fishermen, including spiny lobster, Mahi Mahi, and Ahi Tuna.

Restaurante Sonido del Mar, also highly rated, has a beautiful ocean view and features fresh local seafood along with Caribbean specialty items.

Tu Mojito hace the best mojitos in town.



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### Peruse the Tiny Photography Museum



The Museo de Fotos de Isabela (photography museum) has photographs illustrating the history of Isabela from 1725 to the present day. You'll learn about the sugar cane plantations, famous local athletes, and area history. It's a small museum owned by Totín Ruiz Méndez, who enjoys answering questions and chatting with visitors, does not charge admission. You'll need to call ahead for an appointment. His phone is 787-872-2777 or 787-403-5005 (cell).

WAS THIS PAGE HELPFUL

NO

x YES very much!!!

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