



Where to Eat and Drink in San Juan - 2017 Edition

The Annual Research Chefs Association Culinology Conference will be in San Juan Puerto Rico this March, bringing hundreds of hungry food lovers to the city. As always, you can trust that the Symrise Culinary team will provide recommendations for all of the good spots you have to check out on your visit.

By Noah Michaels

Where to Eat:

Plaza del Mercado de Santurce

In addition to being a beautiful farmers market, the plaza is a great place to sample different street foods during the day or some live music at night.

*1348 José M. Raffucci Morales, San Juan, 00907, Puerto Rico
787-480-2500*

El Jibarito

El Jibarito is a classic hole in the wall popular with locals for lunch. Go for the upgraded version of mofongo called the trifongo.

280 Calle Sol, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico
787-725-8375
<https://www.facebook.com/eljibarito77/>

La Jaquita Baya

Plan to come early if you want to get in to this shoebox sized restaurant, it fills up fast. It's right near the convention center and almost everyone gets the pork belly mofongo.

801 Ave Fernandez Juncos, San Juan, PR 00927, Puerto Rico
787-993-5359
<https://www.facebook.com/lajaquitabaya/>

Centrico

Centrico is a beautiful little restaurant featuring Puerto Rican fusion cuisine borrowing French and Asian flavors and recombining with cuisine Criollo to create new and exciting flavors.

909 Calle Las Palmas, San Juan, San Juan, 00907, Puerto Rico
787-721-6100
<http://www.centricorestaurant.net/index.html>

Pikayo

This seaside restaurant in the Hilton features beautiful vistas and fusion cuisine to the more well-heeled visitor to San Juan.

The Condado Plaza Hilton, 999 Ashford Avenue, San Juan, PR 00907
787-721-6194
<http://www.wilobenet.com/pikayo/>

1919

1919 is another beautiful seaside Hotel restaurant for those with a more robust expense account. It serves high end "New American" food and will impress any clients you need to take out.

Condado Vanderbilt Hotel, 1055 Ashford Ave., San Juan, PR 00907
787-724-1919
www.1919restaurant.com/

BLT Steak

It's almost boring but we all crave a good steak from time to time. BLT Steak is the perfect choice for the less adventurous or those who've had enough Puerto Rican food.

The Ritz Carlton, 6961 Calle Violeta, Carolina, 00979, Puerto Rico

787-253-1700

<http://www.ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/puerto-rico/san-juan/dining/blt-steak>

Cocina Abierta

Cocina Abierta is a hip chef's table restaurant which offers delicious, eclectic Latin food inspired by the food of Spain, Portugal and Peru.

Cll Caribe, San Juan, 00907, Puerto Rico

787-946-1333

<http://cocinaabierta.net/>

La Alcapurria Quemá

The name is pretty self-explanatory; this place is all about Alcapurrias, the Puerto Rican stuffed plantains and serves some of the best.

251 Calle Duffaut, San Juan, 00907, Puerto Rico

939-204-6350

<https://www.facebook.com/laalcapurriaquema/>

Santaella

Chef Jose Santaella uses classic cooking techniques and farm to table ingredients to elevate "Cocina Criolla" to new and exciting levels.

219 Calle Canals, San Juan, 00907, Puerto Rico

787-725-1611

<http://josesantaella.com/>

La Casita Blanca

La Casita Blanca is the go to spot for low fuss, classic Puerto Rican food. It's small, kitschy and lists its daily menu on a blackboard when you walk in.

351 Calle Tapia, San Juan, 00912, Puerto Rico

787-726-5501

Nam Pla Street Food Co.

Nam Pla is a Vietnamese food truck run by a former Jean-Georges chef. It's totally random but great for a quick lunch on a nice day.

1323, 1321 Av. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, San Juan, 00909, Puerto Rico

787-552-9452

<https://www.facebook.com/namplastreetfood/>

Lechonera Los Pinos

45 minutes outside of San Juan, on Puerto Rico's pork highway, Lechonera Los Pinos serves some of the best Lechon in Puerto Rico and has been featured by Anthony Bourdain and Andrew Zimmern on national television.

Km. 27.7, PR-184, Cayey, 00736, Puerto Rico

787-286-1917

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Lechonera-Los-Pinos-Guavate/153381998018232>

Marmalade

The Chef at Marmalade brings flawless technique honed by working for Raymond Blanc and Gordon Ramsay alongside Puerto Rican ingredients to one of the top restaurants in San Juan. Serving mostly tasting menus, this is definitely not for those visiting on tight budgets.

317 Calle Fortaleza, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico

787-724-3969

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

Jose Enrique

Jose Enrique grew up in Puerto Rico, attended the CIA and then went to work for Todd English before returning to become the restaurant king of San Juan. His namesake restaurant serves whimsical takes on the dishes of his childhood.

176 Calle Duffaut, San Juan, 00907, Puerto Rico

787-725-3518

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

Mi Casa

José Andrés Puerto Rico outpost features all of his classics plus some updated Puerto Rican classics in a beautiful beachfront location.

Ritz-Carlton, 100 Dorado Beach Drive, Dorado, 00646, Puerto Rico

787-278-7217

<http://www.ritzcarlton.com/content/dam/the-ritz-carlton/hotels/mexico-caribbean-and-latin-america/puerto-rico/dorado-beach-a-ritz-carlton-reserve/pdf/Mi%20Casa%20Dinner%20Menu%20NEW.pdf>

El Hamburger

While there's nothing particularly fancy, El Hamburger serves great, huge burgers right by the beach.

402 Avenue Muñoz Rivera, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico

787-721-4269

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/El-Hamburger/157653194277984>

Pirilo Pizza Rústica

If you get sick of Puerto Rican food, there's always pizza. Pirilo serves some of San Juan's best Neapolitan style pizzas.

2000 Calle McLeary, San Juan, 00911, Puerto Rico

787-268-2346

<http://www.sal.pr/place/pirilo-pizza-rustica/>

Where to Drink:

La Factoría

La Factoría has made it onto global bar guides since opening and has even been listed as one of the 50 best bars in the world. It's speakeasy in style and serves great classic cocktails, some island favorites and some light bites.

148 Calle San Sebastián, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico

787-412-4251

<https://www.facebook.com/lafactoriapr/>

Jungle Bird

Tiki drinks were probably never out of style in San Juan, giving the bartenders at Jungle Bird time to perfect them. Try the swizzle, which uses a special branch to mix the drink, the same way it was done in the 1800's.

254 Calle Canals, Santurce, San Juan 00907, Puerto Rico

no phone

www.instagram.com/junglebirdbar/

Volando Bajito

Sometimes you just want to beast on some wings and beer instead of going to fancy bars and restaurants. Volando Bajito is the place to do it. They offer wings 3 ways: American (Buffalo), Korean and Boricua (Sweet and Spicy Mojo) and buckets of cold beer.

101 Calle Ismael Rivera, (Esquina Calle Loiza 2010-2012 Local #3), San Juan, 00911, Puerto Rico
939-338-0182

<https://www.facebook.com/VolandoBajitoLoiza/>

Dragonfly

Dragonfly is technically a restaurant, specializing in sushi and Asian/Latin fusion cuisine but it's really a place to drink and be seen. If you're a fan of club restaurants, this is the place for you.

364 Calle Fortaleza, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico
787-977-3886

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

Oceano

Oceano is a trendy beachfront bar/restaurant. On a nice day, it's a great place to grab a drink seaside during off hours.

2 Cll Vendig, Condado, PR 00907
787-724-6300

<http://oceanopr.com/>

El Batey

For those of us that prefer the divey side of things, El Batey will fit the bill perfectly. It's been virtually untouched for 40 years and promises interesting characters and cheap drinks.

101 Calle del Cristo, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico
787-725-1787

<https://www.facebook.com/ClasicDiveBar/>

El Bar Bero

Located in an old barber shop, El Bar Bero takes full advantage of the barber shop theme. The bartenders have barber type coats and they have cool mule mugs with mustaches on them. Don't let all the gimmicks fool you though, they take their cocktails seriously and it shows.

1507 Calle Loíza, San Juan, 00911, Puerto Rico
787-473-8161

<https://www.facebook.com/elbarberopr/>

The Mezzanine at St. Germain

Located on the second floor of a colonial building in Old San Juan that once housed the Puerto Rican Nationalist party, the Mezzanine serves classic and modern cocktails, lots of rum, microbrews and tapas in a speakeasy type setting.

156 2nd Floor, Calle Sol, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico
787-724-4657
<http://www.solycruz.com/themezzaninepr>

Bar Gitano

Bar Gitano, located in the beach district of Condado, is a classic Spanish style tapas restaurant. It features classic cured and meat options as well as cocas (the Spanish version of pizza) and ample wines by the glass.

1302 Ashford Avenue, San Juan, 00907, Puerto Rico
787-294-5513
<http://www.ootwrestaurants.com/page.cgi?pag=2a>

Cinema Bar 1950

Located in an historic movie theater in Old San Juan, Cinema Bar 1950 is a one stop shop for a drink, a quick bite and a movie.

Calle Norzagaray, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico
787-708-6113
<http://cinemabar1950.com/>

Code Bar and Lounge

If you have the urge to dance, Code Bar and Lounge is a popular location for Salsa dancing, even including lessons some nights for beginners.

137 Av. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, San Juan, 00919, Puerto Rico
787-639-5038
<http://www.puertoricomusic.com/locations/code-bar-lounge-san-juan/>

Where to Recharge:

Señor Paleta

On hot days in San Juan, Señor Paletas is the place to cool down with a refreshing fruit popsicle including the traditional coconut paletas made from scratch and their signature stuffed paletas.

153 Calle Tetuan, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico
787-724-2337
<https://www.facebook.com/srpaletaoldsanjuan/>

Casa Cortés Choco Bar

Casa Cortés is part art gallery and part tribute to all things chocolate, including 8 types of hot chocolate and equal amount of cold chocolate drinks. Add delicious pastries, bonbons and fresh churros with melted chocolate dipping sauce and this is one of the must visits during your trip.

210 Calle San Francisco, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico

787-722-0499

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

Café Cuatro Sombras

All of the coffee served in this shop is house roasted and grown in their coffee plantation in Yauco, Puerto Rico for the perfect flavors of Terroir in the morning.

259 Calle Recinto Sur, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico

787-724-9955

<http://cuatrosombras.com/>

Hacienda San Pedro

Hacienda San Pedro's name sake is a small coffee plantation in Jayuya, Puerto Rico, where they grow their beans. The beans are handpicked, carefully aged and roasted in house. All of this care translates into a delicious cup of coffee.

318 Av. De Diego, San Juan, 00923, Puerto Rico

787-993-1871

<https://cafehsp.com/>

Punto Medio

For those that love coffee but like it with a more substantial breakfast, Punto Medio is a good morning choice. In addition to excellent baristas and Pastries, Punto Medio has a full kitchen.

1762 Calle Loíza, San Juan, 00911, Puerto Rico

787-230-0230

<https://www.facebook.com/puntomediopr/>

Repostería Kasalta

Kasalta is a fine foods market and bakery with plenty of seating made famous during one of President Obama's visits. It produces delicious pastries but also stocks fine hams and other cured meats in their deli.

1966 Calle McLeary, San Juan, 00911, Puerto Rico

787-727-7340

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

El Departamento de la Comida

After a few days of eating Lechon, you might want to detox a little. This vegan restaurant offers kombuchas, fresh juices and other healthy options to start your day.

2413 Calle Laurel, San Juan, 00913, Puerto Rico

787-722-2228

<https://www.facebook.com/departamentodelacomida/>

Patio del Nispero

The patio at the Hotel ElConvento offers traditional breakfasts and beautiful views at their outdoor patio and specializes in Banana Nut Pancakes.

100 Calle del Cristo, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico

787-723-9020

<http://www.elconvento.com/dining/patio-del-nispero.aspx>

Finca Cialitos

The plantation for Finca Cialitos in Ciales has been growing great 100% Arabica coffee for 60 years. The beans are hand harvested and batch roasted using traditional methods. The shop in Old San Juan was created as an extension of the plantation for those who can't make the trip themselves.

267 Calle San Francisco, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico

939-207-9998

<https://fincacialitos.com/>

La Bombonera

The bakery La Bombonera offers traditional Majorcan pastries and breakfast items as well as great, strong coffee. A word of warning, it's small and fills up quickly.

259 Calle San Francisco, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico

787-705-3370

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/La-Bombonera/162387477143458>

Caficultura

After a late night Caficultura is the perfect spot, serving great coffee and breakfast all day. My recommendation is the coconut French toast.

401 Calle San Francisco, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico

787-723-7731

<https://www.facebook.com/Caficultura-301489746674534/?rf=149475201748395>