



Plaza las Americas is the Caribbean's most-visited retail entertainment destination with more than 300 shops.

# The Best Caribbean destination for shopping

By **AMY GORDON**

*From American brand shops to exclusive anchor department stores to incomparable local choices; it's no wonder many flock to Puerto Rico to buy what they can't get elsewhere.*

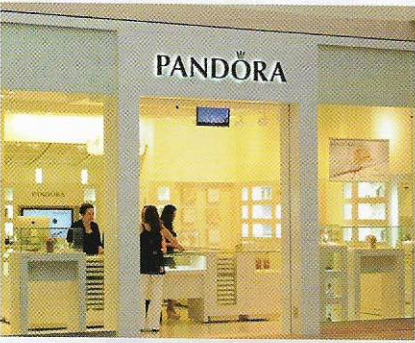
**F**or shopping in the Caribbean, no island quite compares to Puerto Rico. Whether at small, independently owned boutiques or international retail chains, shoppers are guaranteed

to find what they're looking for – and likely discover something new – no matter their style or budget.

San Juan is home to the Caribbean's largest most-visited retail

entertainment destination, Plaza Las Americas. This American-style marketplace houses more than 300 shops, including the only Macy's in the Caribbean and the largest JCPenney in the world.

Tourist clothes hounds find what they're looking for at spots like Abercrombie & Fitch, Forever 21, Banana Republic, Michael Kors, BCBG, Old Navy, and Zara. While options like Pandora, Sephora, and



*Pandora is a popular jewelry store for locals.*



*Galeria provides a variety of shoes, bags and accessories.*



*Michael Kors at Plaza las Americas offers classic clothing, handbags and accessories.*

Victoria's Secret cater to adults, kids love stepping into the Disney Store and Build-A-Bear workshop. Kury Jewelers at Plaza las Americas is 'the place to shop' for an exquisite selection of modern and innovative trinkets for women and men alike that includes necklaces, bracelets, rings, pendants, watches, earrings and purses from all of your favorite designers like Pandora, Alex and Ani, Pesavento, Folli Follie, Endless, Double Bone, among others. This striking store celebrates plenty of special activities and promotions year round in their facilities that also include Plaza Caribe in Ponce.



# yes!

- ADIDAS
- VAN HEUSEN
- TOUS
- LENSCRAFTERS
- JC PENNEY**
- CLARK'S
- OLD NAVY
- ATT
- WAL-MART**
- VITAMIN WORLD
- ALDO
- CARTER'S
- MARSHALLS**
- SUNGLASS HUT
- TOUS
- ZALES
- SEARS**
- GNC
- NOVUS
- GADGET STUDIO
- + 120 STORES**
- + 21 RESTAURANTS**



**MAYAGÜEZ MALL**  
date el gusto

State Road # 2 Km.159.8  
975 Hostos Ave. Mayagüez, Puerto Rico  
787 834 2760



*The Mall of San Juan is a luxury shopping oasis anchored by Nordstrom and Saks Fifth Avenue.*

When hunger sets in, grab a bite at eateries like Starbucks or The Cheesecake Factory, then end the day with a Hollywood blockbuster at the mall's thirteen-screen movie theater.

The Mall of San Juan only opened in 2015, but it is already one of the island's most impressive high end retail destinations. This 650,000-square-foot luxury shopping oasis features brands including Anthropologie, Desigual, Diesel, Oil & Vinegar, Tory Burch, Bulgari, Free People, Joaquin Blanco, Jimmy Choo, Versace, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Carolina Herrera, Gucci, Giuseppe Zanotti, Daniel Espinosa, Herve Leger, Kate Spade New York, and is anchored by the only Nordstrom and Saks Fifth Avenue in the Caribbean.

It also has incomparable choices to buy locally designed masterpieces by Columbian fashion designer Gustavo Arango, San Juan designer Luis Antonio featuring his modern and cosmopolitan, yet romantic and feminine collection, swimwear by designer Alexandra Escudero Thon, and accessories by Natalia Maldonado. Arango is an internationally known designer who has set up roots on the island and his boutique features a ready to wear clothing line. Escudero Thon is the daughter of renowned Puerto Rican designer Lisa Thon and owner of Bienteevo en el mar, a luxury swimwear line with other casual items for women who want to be the center of attention on the beach, on the yacht or at the resort pool.



*Giuseppe Zanotti opens its first boutique shop in Puerto Rico at The Mall of San Juan.*



*West Elm at Plaza las Americas offers a selection of modern furniture, home accessories and kitchen items.*

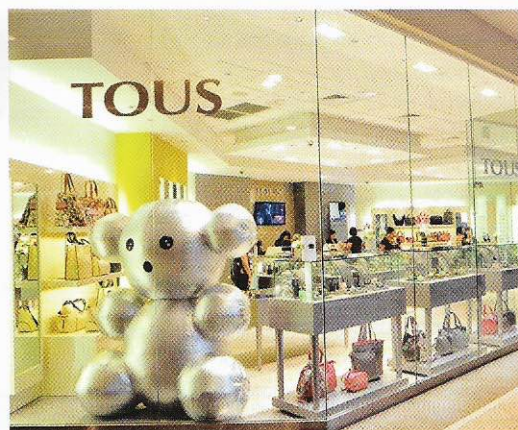
Upstairs on the indoor/outdoor third level, shoppers can rest in comfortable chairs and couches, dine at eateries like Burger & Beer Joint and Prosecco Bar, and peruse an Italian market with a Puerto Rican spin.

For more American-mall-style shopping, check out popular shopping

centers like Plaza Carolina in Carolina; Plaza del Caribe in Ponce; and the Mayaguez Mall, the third largest shopping center in Puerto Rico with a total of 1,050,000 square feet of retail space, and it is the main shopping center in western Puerto Rico. The island is also full of small strip malls found almost at every corner



*Find the most upscale timepieces at KURY Alta Relojeria in Plaza las Americas.*



*Tous offers a selection of high quality jewelry, fashion and accessories in Plaza Carolina.*



*Puerto Rico Premium Outlets in Barceloneta is perfect for bargain hunting and hassle-free shopping.*

most with food court selections, movie theaters and mega stores.

Like its colorful facades and historic fortifications, shopping in Old San Juan offers a distinctly Puerto Rican experience. On the cobblestone thoroughways of Fortaleza Street and Cristo Street, for example, patrons can purchase a range of unique items, whether they're in the market for custom-made hats from Ole Curiosidades, authentic cigars, coffee from Don Collins; hand-painted, city-inspired ceramic décor at Mi Pequeño San Juan or the most exquisite local artisan pieces at Puerto Rican Arts & Crafts. American brands like Coach and Polo Ralph Lauren also occupy some of the area's prime

real estate. In between spending sprees, shoppers can pop into the area's quaint restaurants and cafes for a bite, a beverage, and world-class people-watching.

Nearby in the posh seaside neighborhood of Condado, high-fashion designer boutiques take on a laid-back, Caribbean sensibility. Ashford Avenue, the district's main drag, is set just one block from the beach, and this sundrenched thoroughfare is lined with shops, hotels, cafes, casinos, and plazas.

Here, big spenders frequent upscale stores looking for harder-to-find clothing and accessories like Nativa Boutique, Suola, ABITTO,



*Old San Juan offers a distinctly Puerto Rican experience.*

Marella and other independently owned boutiques.

Looking for high-end fashion without a hefty price tag? You're in the right place. Puerto Rico's outlet malls combine bargain hunting with fun seeking. Puerto Rico Premium Outlets in Barceloneta includes discount factory versions of retailers like Kenneth Cole, Michael Kors, Nautica, and Calvin Klein. In Canovanas, The Outlet at Route 66 is home to Burlington Coat Factory, Carter's, Nike, Planet Fitness and even a crowd-pleasing, old-fashioned carousel. It also includes a movie theater, a U.S. Post Office, and a food court with a variety of food options as well as several restaurants surrounding the mall itself. The mall is fully air-conditioned and has plenty of parking for hassle-free shopping. The Outlets at Montehiedra in San Juan houses more than 100 stores

ranging from Marshall's to Guess. At all three malls, Caribbean Cinemas movie theaters show new releases in English and Spanish.

It's no coincidence that residents of many nearby islands flock to Puerto Rico to purchase what they can't get anywhere else. For everything from last-minute necessities to clothing to household goods, big box stores like Kmart, Walmart, and TJ Maxx all retain several locations throughout the island. Specialty chains like Home Depot and Best Buy operate here too, making it easy to find home supplies, necessities, and electronics.

So go ahead, splurge on a designer outfit, nab a one-of-a-kind souvenir, score a deep discount or pick up a few creature comforts. If you go overboard, don't worry; you can always buy (and fill!) another suitcase to bring your haul home. ☑



*The Outlet at Route 66 in Canovanas has 77 shops offering customers a broad range of options.*