El Yunque RainForest Tour

El Yunque Rainforest is a semi-tropical rainforest in the mountainous region of eastern Puerto Rico. This is the largest rain forest in the U.S. Forest Service System and is known officially as the Caribbean National Forest. El Yunque is a 3500ft peak within the forest. The name derives from the Indian word “Yuqui” meaning white land, but was changed by the Spanish to “Yunque” which means anvil.

The rainforest, the only tropical rainforest in the U.S. national Forest System, covers 28,000 acres and contains 75% of the virgin forests left in Puerto Rico. Within the forest, there are many trees known to be over 1000 years old. There is the Tabonuco forest with trees reaching heights of 100ft. The Colorado forest contains short, gnarled trees with hollowed trunks. The Sierra Palms with their unusual yet distinctive root system grow in abundance, as do huge tropical ferns (some reaching over 40ft tall).

El Yunque is home to a variety of local Puerto Rican wildlife, but perhaps the most famous would be the Coquí (pronounced: - ko-kee) frog. El Coquí is not only the national mascot, but also a source of national pride. Growing to be only to ¼” to 1” in size, it gets its name from the cricket-like mating call that literally sings his name, Co-Qui-i-i-i! They are found in great numbers throughout the island, and though the tree frog can be easily heard, it can be difficult to find. Another local wildlife is the Puerto Rican parrot. It is an endangered species, very near extinction, so to see this red, blue and green beauty is a rare treat.
Tour Schedule: Saturday, July 21, 2007

Price: $55, return at 1pm. (Lunch NOT included in price)

8:00-9:00 - Transfer from Condado Plaza to Yunque Rainforest
9:00-9:30 - Visit the Portals Visitors Center
9:30-9:45 - Visit Yokahu Observation Tower
9:45-12:15 - La Mina Trail (45 min down hill, and 1hr return uphill)
includes 20-25 minute stop at La Mina Falls to swim (pack a bathing suit for a swim)
12:15-1:00 - Transfer back to Condado Plaza

ψ As there is limited seating, it will be first come first served. Payment for your participation must be made at the meeting in cash (to Laurie Clark) or in the form of a personal check (on US funds to Karen Meech).

Further information
http://ltmtnle.tripod.com/elyunque/id38.html (Coqui recording)