

ZAGAT

Puerto Rico

In Post-Hurricane Puerto Rico, Resilience Leads To Sustainability For Juan José Cuevas

In the aftermath of disaster, finding hope and strength to rebuild and grow.



Juan José Cuevas is the chef at [1919 Restaurant](#) at the [Condado Vanderbilt Hotel](#) in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Previously he worked at high-end kitchens in San Sebastián, Barcelona, San Francisco, and New York among others, including [Blue Hill at Stone Barns](#) and several others with Michelin stars. He brought his passion for local ingredients and cuisine to 1919, which presented a severe challenge after the islands were devastated by Hurricane Maria. But Cuevas only redoubled his resolve to support and encourage local Puerto Rican farmers and suppliers, using the disaster to explore new ways to increase sustainability and diversity. More recently, as a way to help out staff affected by pandemic closures, Cuevas and 1919 have created a [number of dinner and travel package auctions](#) to benefit their employee relief fund.