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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC **Fuerte de Vieques (Fort of Vieques) or Fuerte de Mirasol**
AND/OR COMMON same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Calle del Fuerte
CITY, TOWN Isabel II
STATE Isle of Vieques
VICINITY OF
COUNTY Puerto Rico
CODE
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM (future use)
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN San Juan
STATE Puerto Rico
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Registro de la Propiedad
STREET & NUMBER Municipio de Vieques

CITY, TOWN Isabel II
STATE Vieques Puerto Rico

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Inventory of Historic Monuments of Puerto Rico

DATE 1976
_FEDERAL STATE _COUNTY _LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña
CITY, TOWN San Juan
STATE Puerto Rico

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR
 DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The fort is one of many variations of geometrical design which was adopted by the Spanish military engineers. The structure is one of the smaller fortifications to be found in Puerto Rico, probably because Vieques was not as threatened as the main island, where major fortifications existed since the late seventeenth and during the eighteenth centuries. This fort was also built toward the end of the Spanish colonial 'investment'.

The general shape of the exterior wall is an oval, however the oval is interrupted by sharp angles (see attached map). Within the wall is the main structure which is rectangular in plan with a semicircular hexagonal tower at one end. There are two interior courts.

The fort is in two levels, both of which are currently being restored. The materials are timber beam roofing, brick and stone supporting, exterior and interior walls, and local tile flooring. Parts of the structure are painted white others are left exposed, both for the interior and the exterior. The white is lime mortar.

The wall which serves as first line of defense was never completed.

The style ~~is~~ for Spanish Renaissance fortifications was maintained despite the late date of construction of the fort. The whole roof line was crenelated. In general, openings were rectangular, however, in the interior, wide arched openings are used throughout and there are occasional 'gothic' narrow arched doors.

The exterior, 'defense' wall, has a height from the ground to the floor level of the upper story, so that the effect is that the second level of the fort is on an extended protective platform.

The alterations consist mainly of changes in the form of the openings, which at one time were larger, then bricked up, then opened again to what is now considered the original size. Since the fort also served as a jail toward the end of the 19th century, certain alterations were made for security purposes, but no evidence of these changes remain since the start of restoration.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1845

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The fort was constructed in 1845, during the reign of Isabel II of Spain, by order of Don Rafael de Aristegui y Velez de Gevara, Count Mirasol, to control the passage between Vieques and prevent French and English raids. It is one the few military fortifications remaining in the Caribbean which is also in rather fair condition and in the process of restoration.

The island which was originally occupied in turn by the French and the British, [REDACTED] had fortifications built by those powers. These were destroyed by the Spanish fleet which occupied the island in 1647. The British managed to return to Vieques which [REDACTED] Spain was not defending as vigorously as other more important outposts. In the mid- 18th century a small band from Puerto Rico was sent to eradicate the British settlement, and decided to control the island in a more official manner. In 1843 it became a part of Puerto Rico, and Don Santiago Mendez Vigo the Governor, also controlled the island. From then on many sugar plantations flourished on the island, and the population increased. It thus became necessary to build the Fort which was to protect the island from any future intervention as well as to visually establish its importance. It seems to have ended up functioning more as a garrison than a truly defensive bastion. The island still retains the vestiges of its 3 cultures, with many streets and families bearing French and English names.

The Fort is being restored by the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture and shall be used as a museum for art and Vieques history and culture.

