

Media Navigator

Dominican Republic



 Punta Cana



Dominican Republic
Has it all
Tourist Board



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 Dominican Republic Tourist Board
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The Dominican Republic: The most multifaceted country in the Caribbean

The Dominican Republic is the second-largest and most multifaceted, varied country in the Caribbean. Measuring 48,671 square kilometers (18,792 square miles), it is located in the eastern part of the island of Hispaniola. The Atlantic Ocean to the north and the Caribbean Sea to the south shape the diverse landscape, with its dense rainforest, verdant hills and steppe-like regions. The mountains in the country's interior are the highest in the Caribbean, with Pico Duarte rising up 3,098 meters (10,164 feet) above sea

level. This rich diversity, along with the country's 1,609 kilometers (1000 miles) of coastline, its more than 200 beaches, and warm weather year-round, attracts nearly six and a half million visitors from all over the world each year. Guests will enjoy the omnipresent reminders of history – with historical sights, a vivid cultural heritage comprising crafts, culinary arts, music and dance, as well as a well-developed infrastructure with accommodations for every taste and wallet.

Did you know?

The first tourist

... was Christopher Columbus, in 1492. His brother Bartholomew founded Santo Domingo, the first settlement in the “New World” – the historic old town is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Hello from Jurassic Park

In the world-famous movie, scientists extract DNA from a mosquito captured in amber and use it to breed dinosaurs – something that would be very unlikely to succeed in real life. BUT: the mosquito from the blockbuster hit does really exist, and it can be admired in the amber museum in Puerto Plata. Incidentally, amber from the Dominican Republic is considered the finest in the world, thanks to its fossil density and clarity.

The highest and lowest point in the Caribbean

Pico Duarte (at 3,175 meters, or 10,164 feet, above sea level) is the highest point in the Caribbean. Just 90 kilometers (56 miles) away as the crow flies is Lago Enriquillo. With an area of more than 350 km² (135 mi²), it is not only the largest lake, but also the deepest point in the Caribbean, 43 meters (141 feet) below sea level.

A national flag like no other

Blue and red with a white cross. Those are the colors of the national flag. But a glance at the middle of the design reveals a bible in the flag’s coat of arms – the only one in the world.



New accommodations: For every taste and wallet

Club concepts, eco-lodges, adults-only hotels and all-inclusive facilities with casinos and water parks – the Dominican Republic is constantly finding new ways to thrill visitors. In 2020, a few new rooms will be added to the approximately 92,000 rooms currently available in the Caribbean nation. The following accommodations were opened in late 2019, or will be opening in 2020 or the following year.

Punta Cana and surroundings: Two all-inclusive resorts, [Hyatt Ziva Cap Cana](#) and [Hyatt Zilara Cap Cana](#), opened in late 2019 on the popular Juanillo Beach in Cap Cana. The [Serenade Punta Cana Beach, Spa & Casino Resort](#) is slated to open in the summer of 2020 – with 600 rooms, luxurious service, and a convenient location right next to the fishing yacht club. Another luxury hotel will welcome guests starting in 2021: the 2,150-room all-inclusive resort **Moon Palace Punta Cana** – featuring the Norman Eco Signature Design golf course. The adult-friendly luxury hotel **Pure Salt Orchidarium** will also be opening in 2021, in Uvero Alto, with 269 rooms and its own orchid garden.

Puerto Plata and surroundings:

Located in the middle of the Playa Dorada Golf Course, the all-inclusive [VH Atmosphere Adults Only & Beach Club](#) has reopened following a complete renovation. The former **Puerto Plata Village** is being remodeled as part of the first stage of the Green One Playa Dorada project. One sub-project is a new 17-room hotel that includes a beach club.

Santo Domingo

The new [Homewood Suites by Hilton](#) opened in October 2019 – located in the heart of downtown, featuring 145 suites and a sky lobby on the 12th floor with a view of the metropolis.

North Coast:

The [Club Med Miches Playa Esmeralda](#) has opened near Miches. The club is a showcase residence from the Club Med Exclusive Collection, with four concepts: Archipelago is a concept for romantic vacationers. Caribbean Paradise offers exotic flair and colorful nature. For rest and relaxation, there is the Zen-like oasis of Emerald Jungle. And families can enjoy adventures in Explorer Cove, including a trapeze and climbing school.

Experience the culture of the Dominican Republic

Music is in the air: Dance and music events

Music in the Dominican Republic is not only in the DNA of every Dominican, but it is also part of the UNESCO intangible cultural heritage. The Merengue has been on the UNESCO list since 2016 and the Bachata was added at the end of 2019. For visitors, the numerous musical events throughout the country are an ideal opportunity to immerse themselves in the vibrant culture of the Dominican Republic.



The capital of the Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo, is also the dance capital of the country. In June, more than 600 artists perform in 60 concerts at **the Fiesta de la Música** in Santo Domingo. The event is one of the largest musical events in the country and is organized by the Alliance Française, a non-profit association. Thousands of visitors are expected to attend the free concerts in bars, restaurants, hotels, cultural centers, squares, and parks. All year round, on Friday and Saturday evenings, the central Plaza de España is transformed into a large dance floor with folklore performances. On Sunday evenings, Merengue and Son Cubano fill the ruins of the San Francisco Monastery with Caribbean rhythms.

The way to one's heart is through the stomach: Food festivals in Santo Domingo, the gastronomic capital of the Caribbean.

The diversity of Dominican cuisine ranges from soups and stews to street food and sweet desserts consisting of coconut, milk, and corn. Santo Domingo was named the gastronomic capital of the Caribbean in 2017 by the Ibero-American and Royal Spanish Academies of Gastronomy.

Many Dominicans have a hearty start to the day with mashed plantains and red onions cooked in a vinegar sauce, which is served with baked cheese and salami. Lunch is the most important part of the day. A typical lunch is the Bandera Dominicana. This dish, named after the national flag, consists of rice and beans with chicken or meat and is served with an avocado salad and tostones (crispy fried plantain slices).



The thick stew, Sancocho combines chicken, pork, yuca, yam, green plantains, and potatoes. It is served with a bowl of rice and sliced avocado. Those with a sweet tooth should try Habichuelas con Dulce - a sweet bean cream that is eaten primarily during Easter.



Visitors can try Dominican delicacies, not only in restaurants but also at several food festivals: In June, the Punta Cana Food Fest and the Samaná Exquisita offer gourmet treats. In July, visitors can enjoy the Bocao Food Fest in Santo Domingo, or the Punta Cana Gourmet Week at the end of the month. From August 7 to 9, everything in Puerto Plata revolves around rum, which is one of the country's most important exports. As the gastronomic capital of the Caribbean, Santo Domingo celebrates the SDQ Gastronómico with their Restaurant Week event in September.

A class of its own: Baseball in the Dominican Republic



Baseball, also called pelota, is the national sport of the Dominican Republic. Most Dominicans are passionate about watching the victories and defeats of their favourite teams and numerous school and hobby teams produce skilled young players. Several famous players in the US leagues learned to pitch and catch in their home country of the Dominican Republic.

In autumn and winter, the professional teams play for the championship in the stadiums of Santo Domingo, Santiago, San Francisco de Macorís, San Pedro de Macorís and La Romana. The winning team then represents the country in the Caribbean Series, competing against Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba and Venezuela. Foreign visitors are also welcome to join the party atmosphere in the stadium for a "Juego de Pelota".

A complete calendar of events for the Dominican Republic can be found [here](#).

Sustainable tourism in the Dominican Republic

Protecting nature and culture is one of the Tourism Ministry's stated goals. Several state-sponsored and privately funded projects are devoted to developing environmentally friendly, resource-protecting tourism in the Dominican Republic.

A top choice for a sustainable vacation: The Samaná peninsula

The Centro para la Conservación y Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno (Center for the Protection and Sustainable Ecological Development of the Bay of Samaná and Surroundings, CEBSE) was founded in 1991 – a nonprofit organization designed to help protect and sustainably use the region's natural and cultural resources.



CEBSE advises all of the organizations, including companies, that are involved in tourism activities, and actively involves them in the planning process. In addition, CEBSE supports the founding of regional and thematic organizations. For instance, independent nature conservation organizations have been created to protect the Salto del Limón waterfall and Lake Enriquillo, as well as to monitor whale-watching operations.

Cayo La Farola

The Cayo La Farola trail, which opened in 2018, is also contributing to the goal of sustainable whale-watching. The joint project sponsored by fishing cooperative Espíritu Santo, the Ministry of Environment and Raw Materials in the Dominican Republic, the German embassy, Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Enterprise for International Cooperation, GIZ), and the US Agency for International Development is intended to create sustainable sources of income for the region. Travelers and locals can hike on the trail all the way to the Santuario Mamíferos Marinos la Navidad marine reserve. From the viewing platform, which also opened in 2018, they are rewarded with the chance to see the humpback whales that come to the Bay of Samaná every year, from January until March, to mate and give birth to their young.

Helping the environment during your vacation

Various providers offer tours of the country's interior for environmentally conscious visitors who enjoy active holidays. Certified experts teach participants about the importance of the ecological habitat with entertaining presentations and useful activities, like beach cleanup and reforestation campaigns.

The first state-recognized ecotourism region: Hato Mayor



About 100 kilometers (62 miles) from the vacation spot of Punta Cana-Bávaro, the Dominican Republic's first state-recognized ecotourism region is an attractive destination for bird-watchers. Toni De Leon Demorizi, who owns the hotel Paraíso Caño Hondo, offers a variety of tours. For instance, visitors can spot the gavilán, a rare bird of prey that is part of the hawk family.

The region also boasts common kestrels, turkey vultures, narrow-billed tody, woodpeckers, nightingales, owls, pelicans and many exotic species. Some tours are held at night in order to track down nocturnal birds. More information at: www.paraisocanohondo.com.

Puerto Plata: Tourism with a focus on agriculture

In Puerto Plata, the Association of Women of Altamira offers tours on the subject of cocoa. The Hacienda Cufa eco-lodge features rooms with an agrotourism atmosphere. People planning to visit the Dominican Republic in December should make sure not to miss the big harvest festival, celebrated each year on December 11.



Cities and regions: Santo Domingo

The capital city of Santo Domingo, with three million residents, is not just the largest city in the Caribbean islands; it is also the oldest European-founded settlement in the Americas. Bartholomew Columbus established it in 1498 in the same location as the current city. During the colonial era, the Spaniards governed their colonies from headquarters in Santo Domingo.



Since 1990, the well-preserved and recently extensively renovated historic old town, which houses the oldest cathedral in the Americas (cornerstone laid in 1521, consecrated in 1540), has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site. [More information](#)



Cities and regions: La Romana



The area around La Romana on the Caribbean coast is one of the country's most popular travel destinations. Golfers appreciate the region's top-quality courses. Visitors pass by sugarcane fields on their way to the white sand beaches of *Dominicus* and Bayahíbe. The forests of Cotubanamá National Park contain freshwater springs and caves with Taíno paintings.

The islands of Saona, Catalina and Catalinita are home to numerous turtle nesting areas near natural coral reefs. The reefs have spelled disaster for many ships – today, the shipwrecks are popular diving destinations due to their diversity of fish. [More information](#)



Cities and regions: Punta Cana



48 kilometers (30 miles) of beach attract tourists from all over the world to the eastern coast of the Dominican Republic, where the Caribbean Sea meets the Atlantic Ocean. All-inclusive resorts and boutique hotels are located very close to the beach. Golfers will find ten golf courses right on the coast. In addition, there are luxurious yacht harbors, fine dining restaurants, and the country's best spas, including the only Six Senses in the Caribbean. [More information](#)



Cities and regions: Samaná

The Samaná peninsula is a pristine natural paradise on the country's northeastern coast. In the 16th century, pirates hid in its caves and palm forests while Europeans and Haitian troops fought over the protected bay. The area still features untouched beaches, coconut plantations, and rainforests with waterfalls. Green mountains birth the rivers that flow out into the Atlantic at sandy beaches along the rocky coast.



Every spring, around 2,500 humpback whales come to the Bay of Samaná. There is hardly any other region where sustainable tourism plays such a major role. [More information](#)



Cities and regions: Puerto Plata



The province of Puerto Plata (literally: “Silver Port”) on the northern coast is the birthplace of tourism in the Dominican Republic, and it remains one of the most popular regions for visitors. With good reason – mountains, valleys, rivers and a multitude of beaches create an especially diverse landscape, offering a wide range of experiences for adventurous vacationers in particular. The clearest amber in the world lies buried in the earth here, and the town of Cabarete is considered one of the world’s best kite-surfing and windsurfing areas.

Cliff formations and caves offer countless experiences for adventure-seekers. Cocoa and coffee trees grow in the mountainous interior, and the earth contains one of the largest amber deposits in the world. [More information](#)



Cities and regions: Jarabacoa

The idyllic vacation spot of Jarabacoa, 529 meters (1736 feet) above sea level, is a popular excursion site for the urban residents of Santiago and Santo Domingo. The cooler temperatures, rivers, and dense pine forests make the region a center for ecotourism, a philosophy that many of the accommodations also subscribe to.



In the Taíno language, the city’s name means “Land of Waters.” Jarabacoa is also the starting point for people setting out to climb the tallest peak in the Caribbean – Pico Duarte. [More information](#)



Cities and regions: Constanza

Constanza, located 1,200 meters (3937 feet) above sea level, is the highest-altitude town in the Caribbean. That means cooler temperatures, so a vacation there can even include cozy evenings around the fireplace. The hilly landscape is crowded with dense pine forests. At the same time, Constanza is the country's breadbasket. The region also produces potatoes, carrots, cabbage, flowers and strawberries. Due to the impressive views from the mountain villages, the region is also known as the "Switzerland of the Caribbean." [More information](#)



Cities and regions: Barahona

The "Deep South," El Sur Profundo, is far away from the country's main tourist attractions. Those who travel here, though, will be richly rewarded by the natural surroundings – the area's nature reserves and national parks boast an unusual level of biodiversity. There are also idyllic surfing beaches, waterfalls with inviting freshwater pools for swimming, bird paradises in the mountains, and plantations where the country's finest coffee is grown. The larimar mines where the unique turquoise-colored semiprecious stone is extracted lie in the heart of the *Bahoruco* mountains. Larimar jewelry is a popular souvenir, since the stone has never been found anywhere else in the world. [More information](#)



Cities and regions: Pedernales

The province of Pedernales is located at the southernmost western tip of the country. Its coastal landscape makes it well worth a trip, especially for fans of the outdoors. Giant cacti line the streets, glimpses of the coast flickering between them. Iguanas are also a common sight here. Still, most visitors come for the Playa Bahía de Las Águilas, a gem among the Dominican Republic's beaches. [More information](#)

Important information for visitors

Arrival: The Dominican Republic has eight international airports: Barahona (BRX), La Romana (LRM), Puerto Plata (POP), Punta Cana (PUJ), Samaná (AZS), Santiago (STI) and Santo Domingo (SDQ) as well as JBQ (within the Caribbean).

EU and Swiss citizens need a valid passport. As a rule, the immigration form is completed on the plane. The fee for the obligatory tourist card has been included in the price of the plane ticket since 2018.

The infrastructure in the Dominican Republic also includes five cruise ports (Santo Domingo, La Romana, Puerto Plata, Samaná and Punta Cana), numerous yacht harbors, and airfields for private and chartered planes.

EU and Swiss citizens need a passport that is valid beyond the date of return. As a rule, the immigration form is completed on the plane. The fee for the obligatory tourist card has been included in the price of the ticket since 2018.

Local travel: The public transport network is well-developed and is among the best in the Caribbean. There is a metro system in the capital city of Santo Domingo. Taxis and Uber vehicles can be found in all of the major cities. Modern intercity buses connect larger cities. The Guaguas buses have fixed routes and travel within cities, but also serve smaller towns on intercity routes. Rental cars are available as well.

Bookings: The Dominican Republic is a standard touring destination and can be booked with most major travel agencies. Many specialized trips can also be arranged. The Tourist Board offers a list of tour operators.



Tourism as an economic driver in the Dominican Republic

In 2018, the contribution of tourism to the Dominican Republic's gross domestic product was 690.2 billion Dominican pesos (11.9 billion euros). This represents 17.2 percent of the total economy, with a growth rate of 6 percent.

The tourism industry in the Dominican Republic employed 728,500 people in 2018. This is approximately 16 percent of the population. This trend is continuing to rise as the World Travel & Tourism Council is estimating an increase to 788,400 jobs by 2029.

Visitor spending in the Dominican Republic in 2018 was 393.4 billion Dominican pesos (6.8 billion euros). This represents 39.1 percent of total exports and a growth rate of 12.1 percent.

A total of 6.4 Million visitors travelled to the Dominican Republic in **2019**. Most important international source markets are the US, Canada and Russia. From Europe the largest markets of France, Germany, Spain and Great Britain report similar numbers.

Source: World Travel and Tourism Council



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