

TRAVEL GUIDE TO THE  
NORTH COAST OF THE

# DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

What to Know Before You Go...



*Le Reef*

YOUR HOME BY THE WAVES



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## About the Dominican Republic

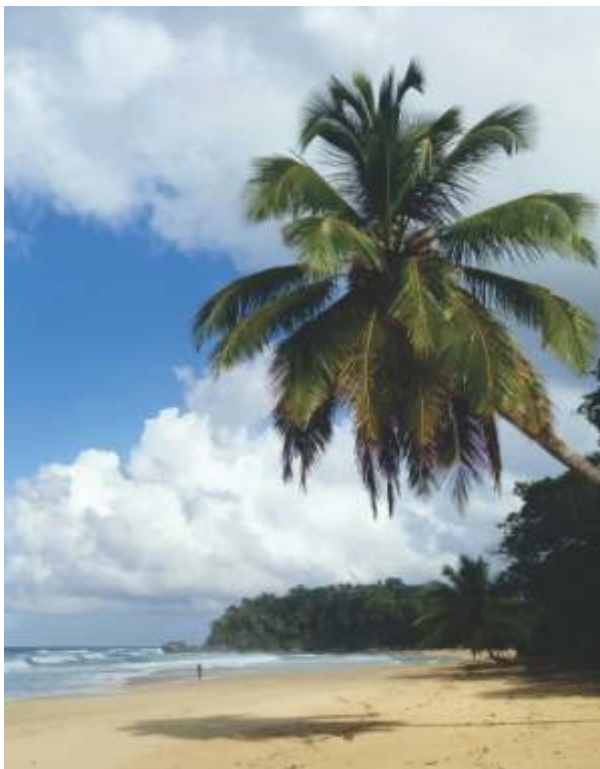
The Dominican Republic is a unique destination with stunning natural beauty, intriguing history, and a rich cultural heritage. Discover diverse landscapes featuring towering mountains, lush rainforests, and over 1,000 kilometers of pristine coastline with incredible beaches. This was the first permanent Spanish settlement in the Americas, established by Christopher Columbus on his first voyage in 1492. The country is steeped in fascinating history, with numerous museums and vibrant cultural experiences, including music, art, and festivals. Visitors can also enjoy uniquely Dominican specialties such as cigars, rum, chocolate, coffee, meringue, amber, and larimar.

The Dominican Republic is the second-largest Caribbean nation (after Cuba), covering 48,445 square kilometers, and

it is the #1 tourist destination in the Caribbean. Its geographical diversity includes the highest peak in the region, Pico Duarte, and the lowest body of water, Lago Enriquillo. The country is home to an astonishing variety of flora and fauna, with 6,000 species of plants and 7,000 species of animals, including cacti flowers, endemic hawks, and humpback whales.

Modern urban cities like Santo Domingo and Santiago coexist with charming, rural villages. Visitors are captivated by the warmth and friendliness of the people, the stunning landscapes, and the consistently pleasant tropical weather. There's so much to explore on this remarkable island.





### Weather:

The north coast of the Dominican Republic enjoys a tropical maritime climate year-round. The weather is typically hot and humid, with average temperatures ranging from the mid-70s (24°C) to the high 80s (33°C) Fahrenheit. Trade winds from the Atlantic Ocean provide a refreshing breeze, especially in the coastal areas. May to November generally brings more rain, but despite this, sunshine is abundant, and even during the rainy season, it tends to rain mostly at night. The dry season, from December to April, offers consistent sunshine, lower humidity, and gentle trade winds, making it a popular time for visitors. The coastal waters remain warm throughout the year, perfect for swimming, snorkelling, and other water activities.

### The sunniest months



JULY	19 days
SEPTEMBER	18 days
JUNE	17 days

### The warmest months



JULY	92°F or 33°C
AUGUST	92°F or 33°C
SEPTEMBER	91°F or 32°C

### Warmest Ocean Temperature



AUGUST	84°F or 29°C
SEPTEMBER	84°F or 29°C
OCTOBER	84°F or 29°C

### Coldest Months:



DECEMBER	82°F or 28°C
JANUARY	82°F or 28°C
FEBRUARY	82°F or 28°C

### Rainiest Months:



NOVEMBER	241 mm/12 days
DECEMBER	246 mm/11 days
APRIL/MAY	167 mm/12 days

## The Magical North Coast of the DR

This area of the Dominican Republic is arguably the prettiest part of the island. Lush mountains to the south slope towards the sea offering incredible views. Coral reefs offshore give us protected weather: a near perfect climate with no hurricanes. We have incredible beaches, each one a little different. Truly, a paradise to simply enjoy life.

For vacationers and people who live here full time, the north offers excellent infrastructure with great restaurants, shopping, hospitals, schools, and banking. We appreciate a low cost of living and taxation. You'll find everything you're used to having back home, except cold, snow and gray skies.

Whatever you want to do, it's here. You'll never be bored.

### Cabarete

Cabarete is a cosmopolitan beach village with a bohemian flare. Its coral reef protected bay is dotted with diverse restaurants, as well as quaint shops; water sports abound.

Many local events are held along the beach, and nighttime is especially pretty as restaurants light up the night and bring tables onto the sand for starlight dining. Cabarete is well known as a kite and windsurfing haven and hosts the world championships each year. Try your hand! There are many kite and windsurfing schools along the beach.





Other activities include stand up paddle boarding, enjoying lunch or dinner at great restaurants, exploring the local caves or protected lagoon, taking a tour or excursion, or simply relaxing on the beautiful beach.

This little town has grown up to be an active community with modern services, shopping, medical facilities, and community events. Population: 16,148 (2022)



## Sosua

Enjoy a leisurely walk around town, shop, eat at a dizzying variety of restaurants, snorkel, take a dive, go fish, head out on a catamaran.

Expat centred Sosua offers some of the most beautiful beaches on the island with powdery sand and crystal clear blue water. Vendors and restaurants run parallel to Sosua Beach and are available for shopping, food, drinks, and even on the beach service! Also in town is Playa Alicia - yet another lovely beach for tourists and residents. Sosua also offers big box grocery shopping, a modern hospital and a huge variety of restaurants.



The history of this seaside town is very unique. In the early 1940's many Jewish settlers arrived here to escape the persecution of war. The refugees settled in the east part of Sosua known as El Batey and formed the successful Sosua Dairy cooperative (Productos Sosua), which exists to this day. There is a small Jewish museum detailing the history of the refugees.



Sosua is a true home away from home with all the services you need, along with a quaint small town atmosphere. Population: 56,982 (2022)

## Puerto Plata

Enjoy a true slice of history in 500 year-old Puerto Plata. Ride the cable car, check out a rum factory, see the Amber Museum or just sip a cold drink on the stunning long beach.

Named for the silvery hues of its natural harbor, the city is surrounded by mountains. Visitors can enjoy the only aerial tramway in the Caribbean and ride to the top of Pico Isabel de Torres, a 793 metre high mountain. The top features a botanical garden.

Another must stop is the Fortaleza San Felipe, a historic Spanish fortress used to protect the city from pirates in the mid 1500's. Today it is used as a museum.

The north coast is also called the amber coast. Check out the amber museum and see this ancient tree sap that has hardened into a semiprecious stone. Guided tours are available. Enjoy your day listening to merengue, the ever present music of the DR, as you stroll about the city. Be sure to stop on the Malecon (ocean drive) for a Presidente Beer!

Population: 118,496 (2010)



# MAPS

Dominican Republic



Caribbean



## Important Info to Know - Before You Go

**Island life...sounds idyllic doesn't it?** It is actually. But like travelling anywhere else, the more information you have, the better your trip will be. Here's some great tips:

### Entry Requirements.

If you are coming from Europe or North America, you will need a passport that is valid for the duration of your stay.

### Passport Pic

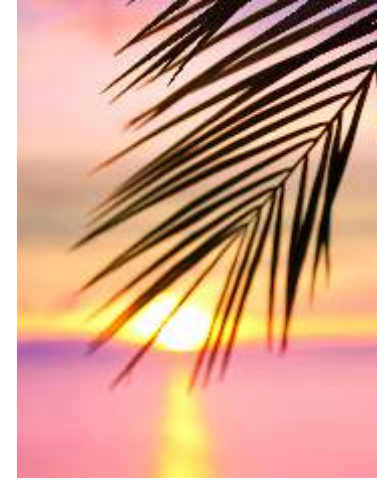
Speaking of passports, it's a great idea to use your phone to take a picture of the photo page of everyone's passport who is travelling with you. You'll often need a copy in the DR (using a credit card, renting a car, money exchange). We suggest you have a photocopy in your wallet and a copy in every suitcase as well.

### Embassy

In case of a lost or stolen passport (always keep it in the safe where you're staying), it's a good idea to have the phone number to your country's embassy stored as a contact in your phone.

### Tourist Card

Upon arrival at the airport you may be asked to pay \$10 US; however, this fee is often included in the price of your airline ticket. There's no fee for departing if you have been in the country for 30 days or less.



### Language:

The official language of the DR is Spanish; however, you'll find English spoken in all tourist areas. Local restaurants in Sosua and Cabarete have English speaking wait staff. You may have to use Google Translate at grocery stores, but staff are used to vacationers's and work with you - with a smile.

### Currency:

The currency is the Dominican peso, but US dollars are accepted almost everywhere. Don't exchange in your home country or at any airport! You will get much better exchange rates in Sosua and Cabarete. Any local DR bank will exchange at good rates (have a copy of your passport with you) or you can even do it at many money exchanges in town. You will be given DR Pesos. To see current exchange rates, please visit [XE Currency](#).

### Payment Methods On Your Trip

Cash is the preferred method of payments here with the DR Peso being the currency of choice. Many businesses

will accept US dollars; however, the exchange rate is not great at restaurants and stores. Best to convert your US or Canadian dollars.

### Credit Cards

Most US or Canadian banks no longer require you to tell them that you will use your credit card out of the country; however, it's advisable to call them to make sure your card will work in the Dominican Republic. Credit cards are accepted in the DR at restaurants and shopping; however, check with the merchant first.

### Getting Around

If you're staying in an all-inclusive resort, then generally transportation from the airport is included. If you're staying in a different type of accommodation, then you may need to hire a cab. When arriving at Puerto Plata airport (POP), you will see a large sign as you exit the baggage area that lists prices to various hotels & developments. All prices are fixed, so when getting into a cab, ask the driver to quote the price and make sure it's the posted rate. **It's \$30/US to**





**get back and forth to Casa Linda. We can also arrange for your airport pick up/drop off.**

**Rental cars:** If you rent a vehicle be sure and make a copy of your driver's license and keep it in your wallet. Check with your credit card company to see if vehicle insurance is included with your credit card. Car rental prices at the airport tend to be higher than renting in Sosua or Cabarete. If you stay in Casa Linda, we can have a car waiting for you at the airport, or on your driveway when you arrive. **If you don't want to rent a car, you have use of our free shuttle bus which goes to Sosua and Cabarete several times per day, every day.**

**Help on the Road:** The Dominican Republic has its own version of AMA called MOPC. You will see these white pick up trucks with flashing lights everywhere you go. If you break

down, have a flat tire, etc., they are there to assist.

#### Medical

**Travel Insurance:** Check with your credit card company, many cards offer travel medical coverage as a perk – you many not need to buy any at all; however, you will likely have to book your trip using that card for the coverage to be effective. Many times your airline will offer medical insurance when you book your flight. Banks also offer medical insurance now, and often at cheaper prices too.

**Hospitals:** There are several great local hospitals (one less than 5-minutes away from Casa Linda), each with English speaking doctors. They all accept international travel insurance.

**Prescriptions:** It's a great idea to take a photo of all your



prescription meds. That way if you lose them or run out, you can simply show the photo to the pharmacist to get a refill. For glasses, it's advisable to bring an extra pair. If they break or are lost, it will take up to two weeks for replacements.

**Eye Glasses:** Should you break your glasses, there are several places to get glasses made in the area. A photo of your prescription will be handy.

**Vaccinations:** The north coast is a safe zone and most people choose not to get travel vaccinations. It is a personal choice.

### Safety

The DR is a safe country; however, like anywhere in the world, there are places you shouldn't go. Tourist areas are safe, even at night; however, the same caution you would use at home should be used here. The Dominican Republic thrives on tourism and has a vested interest in ensuring the safety of visitors. We even have a tourist police force: Cestur. If you have a problem, they are there to help. You will see them patrolling tourist areas and driving in their colorful trucks. If you are not in a hotel, it is a good idea to rent in a gated community. This extra measure of security protects your valuables and offers you a level of service not found in stand alone villas or condos.

Some general rules:

- **Be aware of your surroundings**
- **Don't do things you wouldn't do in your home country**
- **If you feel unsafe somewhere, leave**
- **Protect your valuables**





### Eating Out and In

**Restaurants:** The Sosua and Cabarete area have incredible restaurants that offer the flavours of the world. You can expect three types of restaurants here:

1. Local Dominican places where you can buy chicken at the side of the road with rice and beans (it is really good!);
2. Beach side or town restaurants with low to mid prices. Any type of food can be found, and
3. Fine or high end dining for that special night out.

Tipping is generally 10% of the bill. Check your bill - often tips are included in the amount.

**Groceries:** We have a similar selection here to North America but with some Spanish and local brands mixed in. We have small local supermarket as well as large big box grocery stores. Depending on where you're from, you'll probably find prices similar or less to the US or Canada. Milk

is sold in tetra packs (like orange/apple juice) and doesn't have to be refrigerated until it's opened. Eggs are also not refrigerated (this is perfectly okay due to the way they are packaged).

**Tax:** You may notice "ITIBS" on your restaurant bill or something you purchase. This is part of DR sales tax.

**Beer and Alcohol:** A rule here is that if it's locally made, it's cheap. Presidente Beer, Barcelo and all brands of rum are lower. Imported liquors tend to cost a bit more than in North America.

### Water is not potable

It's safe to brush your teeth with the local tap water, but it's not safe to drink. Bottled water is always provided. Restaurants serve bottled water and bagged ice. Some villas

in Casa Linda have UV water treatment systems, making the tap water drinkable.

### What To Bring:

The DR is a tropical climate. Bring cotton and light coloured clothes for coolness. In the winter months, you may need a light sweater in the evenings on the beach. It's always advisable to dress to stay cool. If you forget something, there is ample shopping in the local area.

### Tours and Excursions

It's often cheaper to book directly from the tour operator instead of at your hotel or rental manager. Many hotels upcharge almost 50% and tell you it's not safe to leave your resort; however, this is usually just a ploy to keep you buying from their vendors and going with their tours.

**Insurance:** It's important to know that your excursion is reputable and insured (in case of accident or injury).

**Souvenirs:** Haggle! Never pay retail with vendors. Start at 1/2 price and work up.

### Miscellaneous

- **The legal drinking age is 18**
- **Mosquitos:** while they aren't a big problem, they can carry Dengue Fever. If they tend to bite you, it's wise to wear repellent. It's available in all stores.
- **WiFi** is available in most public places and restaurants. Casa Linda offers free WiFi in all rental villas.
- **Electricity:** The Dominican Republic uses standard North American style electricity, 110 VAC, so no adapters are required.



- **Sunblock!** Tans are great but the tropical sun is hot! A sunburn is no fun.
- **Sunglasses:** don't forget to bring yours! You'll be glad you did.
- **Cable TV:** Most hotels offer English speaking cable channels. All rental villas are equipped with Cable TV with a wide variety of channels. Some even offer Netflix and Prime.
- **Cell Phones:** If you bring a cell phone there are several options for their use. You can purchase a travel plan from your own carrier for talk, text and data or you can buy a short term plan from one of the 2 major carriers locally (Claro or Altice).
- **Manana Manana:** Dominicans are very relaxed in terms of time. While airport pickups or excursions are on time, sometimes everything else can be a little...late.
- **If you buy a painting** - it's totally okay to roll it up and put it in your suitcase. Be careful buying wood souvenirs, sometimes customs won't let wood products into your home country.
- **Local souvenirs** include amber, larimar and mamajuana! Larimar is a beautiful blue stone that can only be found in the DR and amber is found all over the north coast. Look for both in affordable, stunning jewellery. Mamajuana is a local drink made of honey, rum and local herbs. It's drunk as a liqueur and is very good.



## Airports & Travel:

### Dominican Republic

On Map	City Served	Province	IATA	Airport Name
#1	Puerto Plata, Sosua, Cabarete	Puerto Plata	POP	Gregorio Luperon International Airport
#2	Samana, Las Terrenes	Samana	AZS	Samana El Catey International Airport
#3	Santiago de los Caballeros	Santiago	STI	Cibao International Airport
#4	Punta Cana, Higüey	La Altagracia	PUJ	Punta Cana International Airport
#5	Barahona	Barahona	BRX	Maria Montez International Airport
#6	La Romana	La Romana	LRM	La Romana International Airport
#7	Santo Domingo	Distrito Nacional	JBQ	La Isabela International Airport
#8	Santo Domingo	Distrito Nacional	SDQ	Las Americas JFPG International Airport



#### FLIGHT TIMES:

DR to Canada: 3.5 hours from the Toronto area, some direct charter flights from Western Canada: 6-hours direct.

DR to US: 1.5 hours to Miami; 3 hours to New York.

DR to Europe: London 8.5 hours, Rome 9 hours, Moscow 11.5 hours, Madrid 7.5 hour

#### ENTRY REQUIREMENTS:

Canadian, American, and EU citizens require a valid passport that is valid until the date of expected departure.



## Activities & Things to Do

Activities on the north coast are limited only by your imagination. From lazy beach or pool days, historical city tours, to wild outdoor adventures, we offer over 30 tours and excursions.

Do something different everyday: explore a pristine beach, zipline through a jungle forest, slide down nature's water-slide, catch an ocean fish or snorkel in an underwater wonderland.



- **Monkey Jungle Ziplining:** an adventure for young and old with a 4,400 ft challenge course, 7 stations, 3 suspension bridges, and a decender into a cave! All proceeds to charity.
- **Twenty-Seven Waterfalls of Damajagua:** scale and hike a series of spectacular waterfalls. It's a natural water slide on the way down!
- **Canyoning & Safari:** Go on an outback Safari Adventure in a giant monster truck through the countryside & rivers.
- **River Rafting:** Maximum adventure! Hop on a raft and sail down the Yaque del Norte River (the longest in the Caribbean). Go through canyons and rapids – feel the adrenaline rush!
- **Fun City Go Karts:** - three great tracks in one location! Fun!
- **Buggy and Bike Adventures:** Get dirty! Dune buggies and four wheelers plow through the sugar cane.





- **Jungle Boat Safari:** Take a fun boat ride down the Yasica River to the Grill Boat restaurant where you will enjoy a special Dominican fish lunch.
- **Surf, Windsurf, & Kite Board Lessons:** Hands on introductory lessons.
- **Dudu (Blue) Lagoon:** - This "cenote" is an interesting ecosystem of a 700 metre tunnel that connects two freshwater lakes. Take a dip in either one or zipline in!
- **Xtreme Circus:** Try flying through the air on a trapeze or using aerial silks. From novice to expert, Xtreme Circus will get you flying!
- **Paradise Island:** A scenic speedboat ride takes you through mangroves and sparkling waters to Paradise Island. The snorkeling here offers some of the most beautiful coral reefs in the Caribbean.
- **Scuba/Snorkeling:** An underwater world awaits.
- **Catamaran:** Enjoy a day of sailing, snorkeling, lunch and rum drinks!
- **Ocean World Adventure Park:** From dolphins to sea lions to sharks! Ocean world offers great encounters and a look at marine life in the tropics.
- **Stand Up Paddle Boarding:** Relaxing, core revving fun through the river jungle or on the ocean.
- **Cocoa/Coffee Tours:** Experience Explore the Suriel organic cacao farm where beans are shade-grown under banyan and calabash trees.
- **Cigar Factory Tour** - learn how world famous Dominican cigars are made.
- **Whale Watching:** From January through March Samana is one of the best places to watch humpback whales in the world.
- **Samana/Bacardi Island:** See the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean in the same day. Coconut plantations, rice fields and soft white sand will astound you.
- **Baseball Game!** The DR is famous for its baseball and major league players. Take a bus ride to Santiago and watch the Aguilas



play. If you love baseball, you'll want to see this.

- **Dancing!** Learn to dance merengue and salsa in the true Latin way.
- **Deep Sea Fishing:** Come back with a whopper of a fish story!
- **Golf Packages:** there are two courses in the area to play.
- **Kayak Adventure:** float down a lazy river to where it meets the ocean. Enjoy lunch at a great outdoor restaurant then paddle back.
- **Horseback Riding:** A great ride that includes a trip into the surf in the ocean or up the mountains.
- **Gri-Gri Lagoon and Playa Caletón:** - take a boat ride through the mangroves, see a bird cave and end up at Playa Caletón- a lovely local beach.

### How About a Little History?

- **Puerto Plata City Tour:** Amber Museum, gondola ride, Fort San Felipe and the old town square.
- **Colonial Zone Tour in Santo Domingo.** Explore the first city in the New World, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- **Santiago City Tour.** This inland city is also rich in history. A centre for agriculture and tobacco, Santiago is a working Caribbean city.





Playa Dorada



Cabarete Beach



Sosua Beach



Cabarete Beach

- **Sosua Beach** - snorkel, go on the banana boat, glass bottom boat, or just soak up the sun with a Pina Colada from one of the local restaurants (who will serve you in your sun chair). This one of the prettiest beaches in the DR.

- **Cabarete Beach:** - try your hand at a watersports like wind surfing, have a beach side dinner, or shop in one of the quaint stores. An entire day and evening can be spent hanging out in Cabarete.

- **Playa Grande:** - take a tour of one of the largest and most beautiful beaches in the area. Local restaurants will bring your table to the beach for fresh fish and lobster.

- **Playa Costambar:** This charming beach features a great opportunity for snorkelling. A fishing area, Costambar offers some of the best, fresh seafood you'll find in the area. Have lunch on the beach and watch the fishermen come out of the water with their catch!

- **Playa Dorada** - located in Puerto Plata this is known as the "resort beach" but is open to anyone. It's beautiful and a great day trip. You'll find restaurants and lots to keep you as busy, or not busy, as you prefer.



Playa Costambar



Playa Grande



Sosua Beach



Playa Grande



## Thinking About Going to the DR?

### Try a better kind of vacation with us!

All-inclusive resort? They have their perks but come with a lot of other not so nice parts: dirty swim-up bars, long lines at the buffet - which may or may not serve good food, crowded spaces, no privacy, and a scramble for beach and pool chairs.

### A beachfront vacation condo at Le Reef offers much more...

Le Reef Condos offer all the comforts and service of an all inclusive resort, mixed with the privacy of a fully fitted apartment. Why share? Why be crowded? Why wonder about that “suspect” swim up bar. Get your own space, no lines, great service, food you choose, and a vacation that will make a lifetime of memories.



## We Have It All:

- **Cabarete Beach on your doorstep**  
Take the elevator straight to the beach. Pull up a private lounge chair and enjoy the day
- **An entire home away from home.**  
Large living room with big screen tv; huge patio with lounge furniture (with a great seaview); modern kitchens with full appliances & kitchenware; spacious bedrooms with king size beds; two full baths with glass showers & lots of towels. Weekly housekeeping provided.
- **Front Loop Beachfront Restaurant**  
serving international fare that even delivers to your door or to you on the

beach! Breakfast, lunch, dinner, daily Happy Hour, live music & events. 10% off!

- **Close to shopping, other restaurants & services.** Cabarete abounds with great services like supermarkets, restaurants, shopping, medical care and more. Everything is within walking distance or a short cab ride. Cabarete is a quaint town with a lively atmosphere and lots of fun things to do. La Reef has the perfect location.





## Your Big Daily Concerns Should Look Something Like This:

- Should I relax by the pool or at the beach?
- Where *are* my sunglasses?
- Do I order a mohito or Presidente beer?
- Should we take an excursion?
- Is it time to turn over and tan the other side yet?
- Shall we cook, go to a restaurant, or have delivery?
- Is my pool floaty deflating?
- Massage or pedicure...or both?
- How do we possibly extend this vacation , or never go home?





We're standing by to help you plan your best vacation.

Whether you're a family with big or small kids, seniors, a couple, or a group travelling together, we'll work with you to create a vacation you'll never forget.

Affordable, safe, fun, and relaxing! Your vacation...your way!

We look forward to meeting you!

Contact Us and/or Book a Vacation Condo