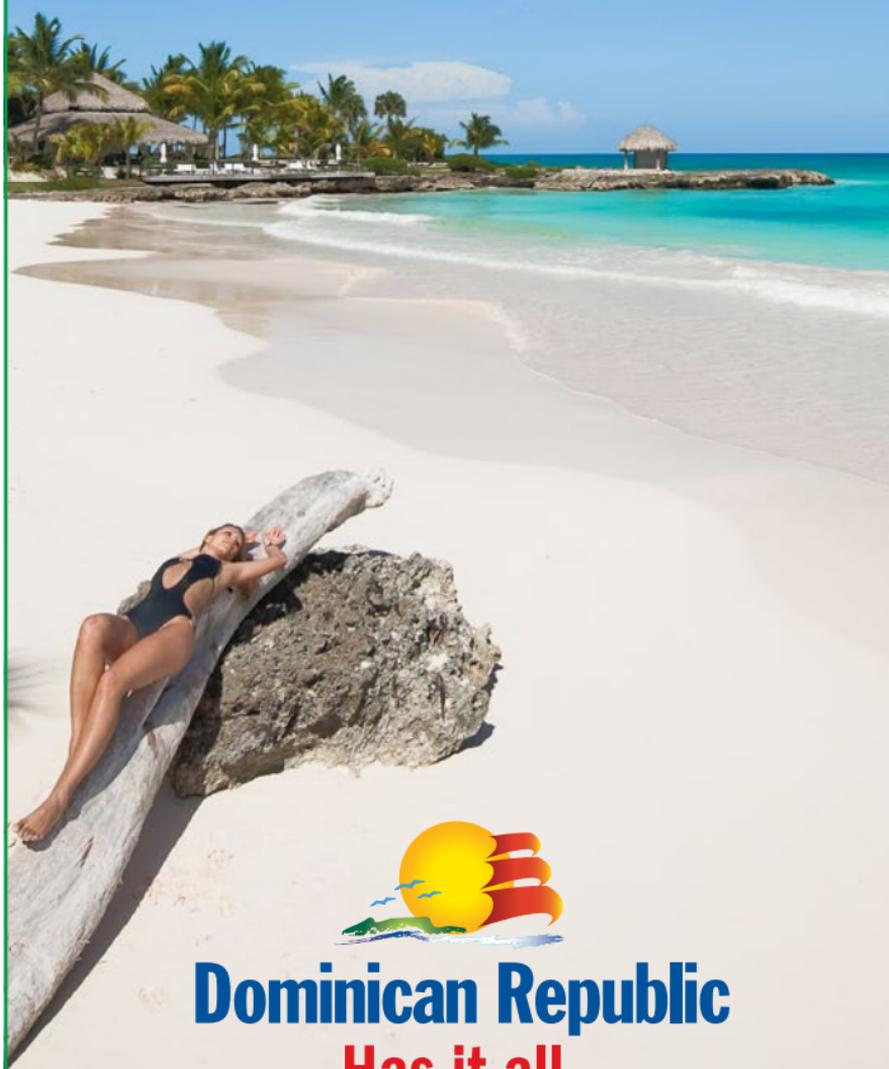

PUNTA CANA



Dominican Republic
Has it all

Welcome to Punta Cana

The sophisticated East Coast of Dominican Republic attracts vacationers from around the world who come to explore and savor the luxuries of Punta Cana. Nestled across 100 miles (160 kilometers) of the world's top beaches lapped by turquoise waters and dotted with swaying palm trees, Punta Cana is Dominican Republic's most lavish and popular destination.

Your inspiration begins at touchdown, where the picture-perfect coastline beckons with a seemingly endless strip of frost-white sand shelving into reef-protected lagoons of irresistible peacock blues and greens. These silvery sands stretch virtually unbroken for 40 miles (64 kilometers) and are the reason for Dominican Republic's astonishing assemblage of all-inclusive resorts and convention centers.

Punta Cana's beaches and all-inclusive resorts may be its biggest draw, but its world-renowned golf courses and entertainment, like swimming with dolphins and zip lining through the exotic vegetation, promise to capture your imagination and refresh your soul.

To the north of Punta Cana is the equally luxe resort area of Bávaro. Together, Bávaro and Punta Cana feature Dominican Republic's largest hotel and resort infrastructure. Year after year, this region, where the Atlantic meets the Caribbean Sea, have been the venue for international fishing competitions and have also become the number one golf destination in the Caribbean, among the top in the world.

The following guide to Punta Cana includes descriptions of the amazing attractions, golf courses, beaches and more that await you.

Cover photo: Playa Caletón



Punta Espada Golf Course

Facts

Dominican Republic occupies the eastern two-thirds of the large island of Hispaniola, which it shares with the Republic of Haiti, and is the second largest country in the Caribbean, comprising an area of 19,279 square miles (48,442 square kilometers). The country has a population of more than 9.5 million and enjoys sunny tropical weather all year. The average year-round temperatures are 78° to 88° F (25° to 31° C). The cooler season is November through April, while it is warmest from May through October.

TIME: The local time zone is Eastern Caribbean Time (GMT -0400). Dominican Republic does not observe daylight savings time.

CAPITAL CITY: Dominican Republic's historic and sophisticated capital city, Santo Domingo, is the oldest city of the New World and was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1990.

LANGUAGE: Spanish is the official language, however, you'll be surprised by the fact that the majority of employees in hotels and tourist destinations speak relatively good English, French, German and Italian.

CURRENCY: The Dominican peso (RD\$) is the official currency.

GETTING HERE: Dominican Republic currently has eight international airports. The country's most modern and popular,

Punta Cana International Airport (PUJ), services the Punta Cana and Bávaro regions. Most hotels are only a 10-45 minute taxi-ride from the airport, making it easily accessible. Maritime Ports that regularly receive cruise ships in the country include: Santo Domingo Port (Don Diego and Sans Souci terminals), Casa de Campo Port in La Romana and Samaná Bay facilities.

DOCUMENTATION: For most visitors, a valid passport along with a US\$10 Tourist Card (available at the airport) is required to enter the country. For a list of countries that can enter Dominican Republic without a visa, please visit: www.GoDominicanRepublic.com/en/entry-requirements.

ELECTRICITY: Operates at 110 Volts/60 Hertz, the same as North America.

TAXES: Dominican hotels and restaurants collect 26 percent of their published prices (16 percent sales tax + 10 percent service charge).

MEDICAL PRECAUTIONS: Travelers visiting the country are advised to drink only bottled water. Also, because of the strength of the Caribbean sun, it is recommended that vacationers drink water throughout the day to avoid dehydration.

DRINKING AGE: The legal drinking age in the country is 18 years old.

HOTELS: For information about Dominican Republic hotels and accommodations in the Punta Cana region, visit the Association of Hotels and Tourism: www.Asonahores.com and www.GoDominicanRepublic.com/en/hotels.



Cap Cana



Attractions



CAP CANA HARBOR AND MARINA – The largest world-class marina in the Caribbean, Cap Cana Harbor & Marina is designed to be the most complete and modern one in the area where, in waters just beyond the Marina, you can experience some of the best angling in the Caribbean. The facility features 1,200 slips handling yachts up to 250 feet long (75 meters) and is equipped with meteorological buoyancy services unique to the Caribbean. When operating, the buoy measures wind and sea conditions, which are transmitted to the crews. Other facilities include government authorities such as harbor officials and customs departments, wireless internet and courtesy shuttle services. www.capcana.com.

PUNTACANA RESORT & CLUB MARINA – The full-service marina is located at the Puntacana Resort & Club. With two docks and mooring for 43 yachts up to 70 feet (21 meters) LOA, the Marina is well-liked with big game fishermen and is one of the most popular areas to hold billfish tournaments in Dominican Republic. The established Marina includes a swimming pool, restaurant, cable television, telephone, laundry facilities, ice bags and drinking water to name a few. www.puntacana.com.

INDIGENOUS EYES ECOLOGICAL PARK – The southern end of Punta Cana harbors more than 500 species of exotic plants and trails that snake along 11 natural lagoons, each with a unique name from the native Taino language, in the Indigenous Eyes Ecological Park. The park has 1,500 acres (600 hectares) set aside as conservation land and is owned and managed by the Puntacana Ecological Foundation. The reserve is also categorized as a “transition zone sub-tropical forest” due to the flora and fauna exhibiting characteristics of both the dry and humid sub-tropical forests. The park, owned by the Puntacana Resort & Club, is open to the public daily from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and guided tours are also offered. www.puntacana.org.

DOLPHIN ISLAND PARK – Located between the beach and coral barrier of Bávaro, Dolphin Island Park takes visitors swimming with the delicate and graceful sea animals in the midst of their natural habitat. Trained professionals boat visitors out to a platform where they can snorkel, swim and take pictures with dolphins, sharks, stingrays and sea lions. www.dolphinislandpark.com.

PONCE DE LEÓN FORT MUSEUM – The Ponce de León Fort Museum was built by the famous explorer Juan Ponce de León in the region of San Rafael de Yuma more than 500 years ago. The plantation-house museum, which features Renaissance-inspired architecture, contains the Spanish conquistador’s personal belongings like his shield, a reenactment of how his house was set-up and more. The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday.



MANATI PARK – Tropical birds, reptiles and animal entertainment shows are dispersed throughout this 80 square mile (210 square kilometer) attraction, centered in magnificent gardens abundant with orchids and tropical plants. The park and its exhibits feature an insight into Dominican culture, folklore and artistry of the Taino Indians, the island’s inhabitants at the time of the Spanish conquest. Kids can even get up close and personal with some of the country’s most intriguing creatures like dolphins and non-poisonous snakes. www.manatipark.com.

MARINARIUM – The Marinarium is the perfect tour for lovers of swimming and the wonders that are hidden in the marine world. Marinarium is an experience that allows you to enjoy and rediscover the beauty of coral reefs, as well as swimming with nurse sharks and stingrays. Excursions set off from the company’s Cabeza de Toro base. www.marinarium.com.

SPAS – Whether it be for a girlfriend getaway, romantic trip for two or a stress-relief holiday from the hustle and bustle of the everyday, a spa visit at Punta Cana and Bávaro’s all-inclusive resorts and spa facilities is an ideal way to decompress. The East Coast world-class brands boast some of the best spas in the Caribbean and specialize in some of today’s hottest and most luxurious spa services.



DEEP SEA FISHING – The waters surrounding Punta Cana and Bávaro are some of the best spots in the world for deep sea fishing and are regarded as one of the world’s top five billfish areas. For this reason, annual tournaments attract international participants during the summer months. At the end of October, the waters are calm enough to fish for mahi-mahi, tuna, mackerel, swordfish, blue marlin, barracuda and dorado among others.

NIGHTLIFE – Effervescent nightlife and world-class gambling can be found at most resorts throughout the region, and are a great way to unwind after a day filled with adventure. You can experience the nightlife of Punta Cana like a local at one of many discos and nightspots, which can be lively or laid back to suit your style. Partygoers can also enjoy a mystical night of dancing and animation in an unparalleled location at Imagine Nightclub, a club dispersed throughout a network of caves spanning 115,500 feet (35,000 meters).



Events



BOCA DE YUMA – Situated an hour southwest of Punta Cana, this hidden paradise remains a humble village surrounded by beautiful beaches. Boca de Yuma is an authentic fishing village that used to be a favorite hangout for pirates, most notably Roberto Cofresi. High coral bluffs surround the bay that is home to a fleet of small colorful fishing boats and wildlife such as iguanas, pelicans and seabirds.

SHOPPING – Visitors can embrace the lifestyle of the rich and famous in Punta Cana or seek out Dominican Republic souvenirs at local shops. From the shops at Puntacana Village, to Palma Real Shopping Village, to San Juan Shopping Center, Punta Cana features upscale boutiques, local vendors and shops along the beaches to satisfy the tastes of any traveler.

HIGÜEY – Located an hour away from the resort area, Higüey was founded in 1494 by Spanish colonist Juan de Esquivela. Higüey is home to the basilica in honor of our Lady of Altigracia, Patroness of the Dominican people, and is known as a city deep in history. Higüey was originally one of the Taino Kingdoms that occupied the land, but is now a bustling city with a mix of modern and traditional architecture, a great way to better understand the Dominican way of life.



PUNTA CANA CARNIVAL – Visitors and locals alike celebrate Punta Cana Carnival in Punta Cana Village each March. The annual parade features carnival troops from throughout the country, costumed characters and live performances. The celebration showcases more than 1,000 carnival characters from 15 of the island's provinces. Be one of the hundreds of spectators who gather to watch and join the parade. www.puntacana.com.

DOMINICAN ANNUAL TOURISM EXCHANGE (DATE) – The National Hotel and Tourism Association welcomes more than 150 international wholesalers, tour operators, incentive groups, airlines and buyers from the U.S., Canada, Germany and Latin America to Dominican Republic every April. DATE is Dominican Republic's leading travel booking event where each attendee meets with local hoteliers to discuss marketing and product information. www.asonahores.com.

INTERNATIONAL WHITE MARLIN TOURNAMENT – Every June/July, participants from Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Curacao and various clubs in Dominican Republic compete in Cabeza de Toro at the International White Marlin Tournament. This event is considered one of the most important fishing events traditionally organized by Club Náutico de Santo Domingo.

TRIATHLON IN PUNTA CANA – The annual triathlon is a true celebration of sports and friendship that brings together athletes from all over the world. Puntacana Resort & Club hosts this annual event every July, encouraging participants to exercise in a fun way. The event has two different versions – triathlon and dualthon – and includes swimming, cycling and running. www.pctrisports.com.

ANNUAL PUNTA CANA SALSA CONGRESS – Held at the Grand Palladium Punta Cana Resort in October, the Annual Punta Cana Salsa Congress is an all-inclusive vacation where vacationers can enjoy electrifying performances, salsa workshops and dances with world-renowned salsa dancers. www.puntacanasalsacongress.com.

ANNUAL OSCAR DE LA RENTA SOCIAL TENNIS TOURNAMENT – The annual Oscar de la Renta Social Tennis Tournament is held in December with men's and women's singles, and men's and women's doubles. This charity social tennis tournament benefits the education of the tennis center ball boys of Puntacana Resort & Club. Homeowners and guests of Puntacana Resort & Club, and Oscar de la Renta's friends are invited to participate every year. www.puntacana.com.

For an updated list of events in the country visit: www.godominicanrepublic.com/en/events

PUNTA CANA



- To:**
- Higüey
 - La Romana
 - Santo Domingo

KEY			
	City or Town		Sailing
	Point of Interest		Fishing charter
	Expressway		Kitesurfing
	Road		Diving/Snorkeling
	Caution		Shipwreck
	Gas station		Cave
	International Airport		Water spring
	Heliport		Zipline
	Bus Station		Excursion
	Marina		Carnival
	Boat Launch		Casino
	Beach		Golf Course
	Blue Flag Beach		Hotel Area
	Surfing		Shops



Beaches



The main draw to the luxurious and exotic area of Punta Cana are the pristine beaches that stretch more than 40 miles (64 kilometers) and border the meeting point between the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. The multi-shaded blue waters are complemented by pristine white sands and create lasting impressions for all beach goers.

PUNTA CANA – Punta Cana is any beach goer's dream with its glorious white sand lined with palms and lapped by turquoise waters. A private beach, Punta Cana's sands stretch for 3 miles (4.8 kilometers) and visitors can enjoy lunch on the beach at Playa Blanca, a beach restaurant open daily to the public and often frequented by Oscar de la Renta and Julio Iglesias.

CABEZA DE TORO – Cabeza de Toro Beach's "Blue Flag" European certification guarantees that the beach is always in fantastic shape and therefore is a popular beach for tourists. Cabeza de Toro Yacht Club is a departure point for fishing trips and fishing tournament sites.

BÁVARO – The most developed section of the East Coast resort strip, the Bávaro area, is dotted with hotels, restaurants and gift shops right on the beach. The area is one strip of sparkling white sand that extends 30 miles (48 kilometers) surrounded by coral reefs. Most of this stretch of beach is walkable and is the perfect place to book beach activities, ranging from parasailing to speed-boat riding.

UVERO ALTO – With fine bronze-colored sands, this is one of the most popular beaches in the area. Depending on the part of the beach you visit, you can either enjoy open areas with large waves or calm waters protected by reefs.

MACAO – Declared by UNESCO as one of the best in the Caribbean, Macao Beach is a public beach located 20 to 30 minutes away from most hotels. Surfing classes are available if the conditions are appropriate and various beach shacks serving refreshments and food can be found along the beach.

EL CORTECITO-LOS CORALES – With no access restrictions, El Cortecito Beach and Los Corales, in the heart of Bávaro, is like a small fisherman's village where you will find restaurants, bars, supermarkets, shopping centers and many gift and craft shops nearby.

JUANILLO – Juanillo Beach at Cap Cana offers miles of pristine, white sand beaches with turquoise waters so clear that it is often referred to one of the best beaches in Dominican Republic. A wide selection of tropical food and drinks, as well as formal events and concerts, are available at Juanillo Beach. Beach activities such as volleyball, snorkeling, kayaking and horseback riding are also offered by tour operators.



Excursions



The delightful attractions around the Punta Cana region are at your fingertips. For these tours and more, please contact your hotel's tour desk or representative.

INLAND SAFARIS – Jeep, truck and 8-wheel military truck in-country safari tours are offered at all resort hotels. These high vehicles take you inland across rivers and rough terrain using one of several routes, usually traveling through jungle terrain and sugar cane plantations, stopping for a refreshing swim in a river or at an unspoiled beach; enjoying a Dominican food buffet, listening to typical “perico ripiao” music, visiting a small village with a stopover at the local “colmado” (grocery store), and making an inside peek into a country home for a cup of home-brewed coffee.

OFF-ROADING ADVENTURES – Journey off-the-beaten-path with an adventurous monster truck safari tour where you will experience the diversity and beauty of the Dominican countryside in an unconventional way. Take a guided tour or go behind the wheel of your own 4x4 jeep and explore secluded beaches, learn about local customs and even mingle with the Dominican people.

CARIBBEAN FESTIVAL – Enjoy the crystal-clear waters, snorkeling, open bar and Caribbean rhythms onboard Caribbean Festival, a double-decker catamaran with a glass bottom used to explore underwater marine life. Check out the baby sharks and stingrays at the Stingray Bay Aquarium or take a sunset cruise to get an ocean view of all the resorts lined up along the coastline. Many of these trips are billed as “party boats” for the open bar and nonstop music on board.

JAMES BOND SPEEDBOATS – The waters surrounding Punta Cana are a dream to explore and there is no better way than to take a ride on the wild side with an adrenaline-pumping two-seater speedboat excursion. Tour participants will fly across waves as they drive their boat along the beaches of Bávaro and end at a snorkeling platform where they can dive into crystalline waters to see coral, fish and sea life. Snorkeling equipment is provided in selected areas. This excursion is available from Bávaro Splash and Scuba and it combines snorkeling and scuba diving.

BEACH BUGGY & QUAD ADVENTURES – Macao beach territory, to the north of most Punta Cana resorts, is chosen for the many beach buggy, quad adventure (4-wheel ATV motorbikes) and other off-road excursions that put the tourist behind the wheel. The beach buggy vehicle provides the smoothest ride of those that take you inland through rugged territory, with time for racing across the sands of the expansive Macao beach.

ZIPLINE AND CANOPY TOURS – Fly across the magnificent Anamuya pond, where a specialist nature guide will lead the way in this adventure to unlock the secrets of the Taino Anamuya Mountains. Come for the adrenaline rush of riding the zip lines through exuberant vegetation. Explore sugarcane fields or hike into the real jungle following the Anamuya River.

HORSEBACK RIDING – Several hotels feature horseback riding excursions that take tourists into the hillsides and to seldom-visited beaches.

MACAO SURF CAMP – Macao Surf Camp at Macao Beach is the best place for anyone looking to learn how to surf. The camp provides learners with step-by-step lessons that are targeted on improving your individual technique. The camp is open daily from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

SAONA ISLAND – Saona Island, separated from dry land by the Catuano Channel, is the most popular excursion taken by tourists visiting the Punta Cana area. Part of the National Park of the East and voted as one of the Caribbean’s Top Dream Beaches by Caribbean Travel & Life, Saona Island’s unspoiled beaches, lush palms and turquoise water make it one of Dominican Republic’s most enchanted regions. Boat tours depart from neighboring town Bayahibe.

TABACALERA DE GARCIA – Visit the Tabacalera De García, in the near town of La Romana, makers of the finest Dominican cigars: Montecristo, Romeo y Julieta, H. Upmann, Don Diego, Santa Damiana, VegaFina, and Onyx amongst others. The largest handmade cigar factory in the world, here you will see the proud handwork of the cigar industry’s most experienced craftsmen and women. Their Cigar Shop carries the best selection and prices of premium Dominican cigars. Tours are offered by appointment Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

FUN FUN CAVE – Thrill seekers can rappel down into a mysterious cave and explore sections of its underground caverns that are joined by a 4 mile (7 kilometer) long subterranean river flowing within. Be sure to look at the walls, as they are decorated with displays of cave paintings by the Tainos. Visitors can ride to the cave on horseback and can even descend 55 feet (16 meters) into the entrance of Los Haitises National Park. It is a full day excursion. www.cuevafunfun.net.

HELICOPTER TOURS – Discover the beauty of Punta Cana from the air, taking in panoramic flight views of the exotic landscapes. A truly unique and unforgettable experience.





Punta Cana is the destination of choice for those who seek upscale golf amid the luxury lifestyle. With the largest selection of world-class golf courses, Punta Cana is a destination where golfers can treat themselves to challenges created by designers such as Nick Price, Jack Nicklaus, Nick Faldo, Tom Fazio, P.B. Dye and Jose-Pepe-Gancedo. Some of the golf courses in the area include:

BARCELÓ GOLF DE BÁVARO

www.barcelo.com

CANA BAY PALACE GOLF CLUB

www.hardrockhotelpuntacana.com/amenities/golf

CAP CANA: PUNTA ESPADA GOLF COURSE

www.capcana.com

IBEROSTAR RESORT COMPLEX: IBEROSTATE BÁVARO GOLF CLUB

www.iberostar.com

CATALONIA BÁVARO RESORT: CATALONIA CABEZA DE TORO GOLF CLUB

www.cataloniacaribbean.com

CATALONIA BÁVARO RESORT: CATALONIA CARIBE GOLF CLUB

www.cataloniacaribbean.com

MELIA HOTELS & RESORTS: COCOTAL GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

www.cocotalgolf.com

PUNTA BLANCA GOLF CLUB

www.punta-blanca.com

PUNTACANA RESORT & CLUB: CORALES GOLF COURSE

www.puntacana.com

PUNTACANA RESORT & CLUB: LA CANA GOLF COURSE

www.puntacana.com

Local Transportation

As the second largest country in the Caribbean, Dominican Republic offers a wide range of activities which can be a short or long distance away from one another. Many options exist for traveling on well-maintained highways to nearby attractions and also to more distantly located excursions.

BUS COMPANIES – Air conditioned motor coaches and vans arranged by local tour operators are available from most hotels. Also, daily service is available between Punta Cana/Bávaro and Santo Domingo with the company Expreso Bávaro. Tel (809) 554-1473 and (809) 682-9670.

CAR RENTALS – Car rental offices and facilities can be found at the local airports. Renters must be 25 with a valid driver's license.

BY PLANE – Punta Cana International Airport (PUJ), the country's largest and most popular airport, services the Punta Cana and Bávaro regions. Many hotels are only a 10 – 45 minute taxi-ride from the airport, which added a 10,000 foot (3,000 meter) runway in 2011 in order to keep up with the high demand of flights to the region. For local flights contact www.dominicanshuttles.com and www.aircentury.com.

GROUND TRANSPORTATION – Taxis are available at most hotels and tour operators are more than willing to provide additional options for getting around. Visitors should also check with their hotel for any recommendations

TABLE OF DISTANCES:

Punta Cana Airport to -

Punta Cana	10 minutes
Cap Cana	15 minutes
Cabeza de Toro	15 minutes
Bávaro	25 minutes
Uvero Alto	50 minutes

Punta Cana to other regions -

Bayahibe	2 hours
La Romana	2 hours and 15 minutes
Juan Dolio	2 hours and 50 minutes
Boca Chica	3 hours
Santo Domingo	3 hours and 30 minutes
Samaná	5 hours
Jarabacoa	5 hours and 30 minutes
Barahona	7 hours and 30 minutes
Puerto Plata	7 hours and 30 minutes

Dominican Republic



KEY	
●	City and Town
■	Point of Interest
	Cruise Port
	International Airport
	Domestic Airport
	Beach
	Protected Area/Park
	Golf Course
	Whales
	Highest Peak

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