
SAMANÁ

Dominican Republic
Has it all



Welcome to Samaná

Come and discover the ecological bliss of the Samaná Peninsula, Dominican Republic's breathtaking paradise. With majestic crystal-clear waterfalls, secluded pristine beaches, rolling hills studded with coconut palms, and an infusion of rich culture and history, the Samaná Peninsula is a natural gem that remains one of the country's most unexplored regions, making it a haven for eco-tourists.

Off-the-beaten-path, the Samaná Peninsula beckons adventure, nature and romance seekers alike with destinations and attractions such as the secluded Cayo Levantado, mangrove reserves found in nearby Los Haitises National Park and the Marine Mammal Sanctuary of the Dominican Republic surrounding the Peninsula, where thousands of humpback whales retreat each winter to frolic, mate and give birth.

While Samaná is renowned for nature and adventure, Las Galeras and Las Terrenas are two charming towns on the peninsula that cater to tourists. Serenely located on the tip of the Peninsula, Las Galeras' main beach offers a breathtaking respite for sunning, swimming or strolling along the beachfront's stores and restaurants.

Las Terrenas, a Mediterranean-influenced town, features a mixture of distinctive restaurants, bars, shopping and vibrant nightlife bound to satisfy all genres of travelers. The city also offers a variety of accommodations to fit any style or budget, from small boutiques, to laid-back beachfront hotels, to deluxe all-inclusive resorts.

Samaná, Las Terrenas and Las Galeras are all destinations known for ecotourism as each offers numerous nature-friendly activities such as caving, cascading, scuba diving, mountain biking, hiking and horseback riding. Each adventure is a great way to see the Northeast Coast, whether by taking an excursion through the jungles and paradise beaches, or a plunge into the waters of a deserted beach.

The following guide to the Samaná Peninsula includes descriptions of the amazing attractions, excursions and eco-adventures that await you.

Cover Photo: "Salto El Limón"

Pedestrian bridge in Samaná Bay



Pueblo Príncipe



Cruise ship at Samaná Bay

Facts

The Samaná Peninsula, located on the Northeast Coast of Dominican Republic, is known for its magnificent beauty and quiet unspoiled beaches found within the Bay of Samaná, and remains one of the most natural and undiscovered regions in the Caribbean. 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 year-round. 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 throughout the country, including: El Catey International Airport (AZS) in Samaná, Punta Cana International

Airport (PUJ), La Romana International Airport (LRM), Gregorio Luperón International Airport (POP) in Puerto Plata, El Cibao International Airport (STI) in Santiago and Las Americas International Airport (SDQ) in Santo Domingo. Maritime ports that regularly receive cruise ships 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 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 charges).

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 Samaná region, visit the Association of Hotels and Tourism: www.Asonahores.com and www.godominicanrepublic.com/en/hotels



Los Haitises National Park



Cayo Levantado Island

Attractions

LOS HAITISES NATIONAL PARK – Making up approximately 62 square miles (160 square kilometers) of unique, diverse area, Los Haitises National Park is comprised of mangroves, estuaries, coves and bays. Easily reached by a short boat ride across Samaná Bay, the park is well-known for both its magnificent series of limestone caves covered in Taino Indian art and its boat excursions through exotic mangrove swamps. Within it, visitors will find themselves surrounded by more than 100 species of birds, 90 plus plant species, a wide variety of mammals and caves bearing pre-Columbian Taino art.

CAYO LEVANTADO – This coconut palm-lined island has become one of the area's top tourist destinations for romance, relaxation and exquisite Dominican cuisine. Many visitors flock to this 6-square-mile (15-square-kilometer) island to walk along the pristine beach and tan, while others venture out to the thriving reefs for snorkeling and scuba diving.

LAS TERRENAS – Once a fishing village, Las Terrenas has emerged as one of the most highly rated destinations in the country, offering a unique combination of entertainment, dining and hotels, in addition to the spectacular beauty of its 18 miles (28.2 kilometers) of untouched beaches. Las Terrenas is the most modern and commercial town in the peninsula with hotels, craft shops, supermarkets, sports facilities, tour operators and various other services, all of which reflect a rich European influence.

LAND WHALE OBSERVATORY – The Ministry of Environment inaugurated Dominican Republic's first land whale observation point in January 2011 in order to celebrate the annual whale watching season. The observatory is located at Punta Balandra on the Southeast Coast and allows visitors to view the thousands of humpback whales that migrate to the protected area of the Marine Mammal Sanctuary in Samaná Bay by land rather than boat.

SHIPWRECK MUSEUM – The Shipwreck Museum opened in 2010 and features exhibits of artifacts recovered from ancient shipwrecks. The museum is equipped with a modernized conservation lab, along with a well-stocked gift shop specifically added for visitors from the estimated 100 cruise ships that are scheduled to dock at Samaná.



Cayo Levantado Island



MARINAS – Puerto Bahía Marina is a full service marina on the north end of Samaná Bay and the top cruising ground of Dominican Republic. Numerous secluded safe harbors, intimate caves, bountiful fishing grounds, great stretches of sandy beaches and other alluring destinations invite exploration and offer memorable days of pure pleasure from Puerto Bahía www.puertobahiasamana.com.

NIGHTLIFE – With numerous beach restaurants and discotheques that carry on all night long, visitors can interact with locals while enjoying the area's exquisite gastronomy like the delectable coconut bread or fish with coconut sauce, or dancing the night away to pulsating beats of the merengue, bachata and salsa.

SHOPPING – You will find a wide variety of shops for souvenirs in Samaná City and Las Terrenas, while smaller boutiques and gift shops can be found in the resort complexes. Local vendors can be found throughout the beach towns selling larimar jewelry, amber artifacts and hand-crafted figurines from Dominican tropical wood. It is important to note that Samaná is one tourist area in Dominican Republic where credit cards are not as readily accepted. It is best to bring cash, traveler's checks or use your ATM card at one of the banks in town.





Beaches

The Samaná Peninsula boasts several magnificent beaches with silky sand gently lapped by turquoise water. The Peninsula's beaches are some of the most secluded and quiet beaches among Dominican Republic's 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) of coastline.

PORTILLO – East of Las Terrenas is Portillo Beach, an unspoiled sandy beach popular for walking along the calm, shallow waters in the golden sand.

PLAYA BONITA – This “beautiful” beach is a spectacle of nature with calm, clear water and coconut trees dipping into the sea and grass bordering the unspoiled beach. Bonita Beach is located in Las Terrenas and is decorated with numerous boutique hotels, private villas and famous restaurants, ideal for those looking for natural beauty, peace and quiet.

PLAYA COSÓN – An ideal beach for walking and nature observations, Cosón Beach is located west of Las Terrenas and consists of calm waters with a range of colors, river mouths, and strong winds for kite enthusiasts and waves for surfing. The surrounding area is also developed with gated communities, private villas and hotel complexes.

LAS BALLENAS – Located in Las Terrenas just a short distance away from the center of town lays this long beach of white-powder sand and well-established water sports facilities. The Marico rivermouth delights the little ones who often play in the cool waters.

EL LIMÓN – Located in El Limón, east of Las Terrenas and Portillo, this spectacular golden-sand, 3 mile (4.8 kilometer) beach has a beautiful view of Cayo El Limón (‘Cayo El Coquito’ or small coconut as the locals call it). Visitors can delight in areas with calm crystalline, shoulder deep pools or marvel in the power of the sea in other sections.

MORÓN BEACH – Morón Beach's charm is seen in its lush green surroundings, golden sand and sea that constantly changes colors. Visitors of this deserted beach may also find ancient canons from the days of the pirates.



Playa Rincón

PLAYA RINCÓN – Rincón Beach, considered the second best beach in the world by Condé Nast Traveler, is best known for its calm, crystalline waters just waiting to delight visitors. Located in the mouth of a small bay, this beautiful and quiet white-sand beach is surrounded by coconut and almond trees. One side of the beach remains relatively undeveloped and sheltered, while along the other, cliffs segue into the waters of the Caño Frio.

EL VALLE – Defined by its name, El Valle, meaning “the valley” in English, is located between two mountains and is north of the Bay of Samaná. Surfers will delight at El Valle due to the beach’s ideal surfing waves.

LAS GALERAS – Often referred to as “The Fisherman’s Beach,” Las Galeras is a quiet beach in the most northeastern point of the country. The highlight of this beautiful beach is the recreational diving aquarium. Visitors can purchase fresh fish, sip fresh coconut juice and even join a boat tour to other beaches for whale watching.





Excursions

HUMPBACK WHALES OBSERVATION – Each winter 3,000 to 5,000 whales migrate to the warm crystalline waters of the Bay of Samaná with intentions of mating and giving birth. Whale-watching season begins in mid-January and continues through the end of March, however, excursions are available as long as whales remain in the bay. Guests can view the gentle creatures at the Sanctuary for Marine Mammals of the Dominican Republic or at the new Land Whale Observatory. The 200 square mile (518 square kilometer) sanctuary was established in 1966 and continues to protect the thousands of humpback whales who migrate from the arctic waters of the north.

EL LIMÓN WATERFALL – Considered the most spectacular of Dominican Republic's many waterfalls, El Limón captivates as it cascades 170 feet (51.8 meters) into a pool where visitors may take a dip. To reach the top of the falls, horseback riding is a popular option among adventure tourists and also provides a beautiful view of the surrounding jungle and natural pool below.

DISCOVER SAMANÁ – Visit Santa Barbara de Samaná, which was discovered in 1756 and originally intended to be the country's capital. The city's pedestrian bridge offers panoramic views of Samaná and visitors are sure to enjoy the local market with fresh fruits and fish, as well as clothes and shoes. Visitors can also visit La Churcha, also known as the Dominican Evangelical Church. The church is the first African Wesleyan Methodist Church of Samaná and was made from materials originally shipped over by the English Methodist Church in the 1800s, thus maintaining any African-American culture left in Samaná.

JEEP SAFARI ADVENTURE – Set out on an adventure in an "all-terrain 4x4" where you'll have the opportunity to taste the flavorful Dominican coffee and the various tropical fruits surrounding you. Also, you will visit the waterfall of El Valle, where you can enjoy a dip in the natural pool, and then continue on to take the Loma de la Piña Trail through lush tropical vegetation, eventually leading you back to the pier.

ZIP LINE TOURS – Visitors are now able to experience a new dimension of entertainment in Samaná. Adventure seekers begin the tour walking through floral paths to the first of 20 platforms and 10 lines, between 230 and 1315 feet (78 and 400 meters) long. The zip line adventure begins at Juana Vicente, located just a few minutes from the Samaná Pier, and takes guests flying safely over coconut palms and lush green valleys with spectacular views of mountains, Samaná Bay and Cayo Levantado. The tour lasts for 3 hours and includes expert trainers, refreshments and fresh Dominican-grown fruit. To open soon.

SCUBA DIVING – The Samaná Peninsula is made up of a rocky coastline with high cliffs hiding an exciting underwater world of sheer drop-offs and pinnacles that rise from 165 feet (49.5 meters) to within 15 feet (4.5 meters) of the surface. Between January and March, humpback whales can be heard underwater as they migrate toward Silver Shoals. Divers can discover reef sites featuring undercuts, as well as series of large caves, tunnels and swim-throughs.

CATAMARAN & SNORKELING TOUR – Board a Catamaran for an unforgettable experience. You will sail the Bay as you savor the majestic scenery, rich vegetation and pristine waters, and you will eventually anchor in Cayo La Farola where you can enjoy snorkeling with a variety of tropical fish, vibrant coral and gardens. Then, you'll continue to the small island of Cayo Levantado where you can relax on its beautiful beach.



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 sites.

AIRPORTS – The peninsula is more accessible than ever with new and improved highways and three local airports used for international and commuter flights. El Catey International Airport (AZS) is located 30 minutes from the town of Samaná, and El Portillo National Airport (EPS) and Arroyo Barril Airport (DAB) both of which serve the province of Samaná with commuter flights. Local airlines provide services between some of these airports and other regions in the country, among them AERODOMCA, www.aerodomca.com.

HIGHWAYS – In June 2009, the Dominican government inaugurated a highway that connects Santo Domingo's Las Americas Airport with Samaná, making it a scenic yet speedy two-hour commute. Along the drive, visitors will be enchanted with views of coconut palm plantations and Los Haitises National Park, among more.

BUS COMPANIES – Air conditioned motor coaches and vans arranged by local tour operators are available from most hotels. Major bus companies include Caribe Tours, Tel. (809) 538-2229.

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

CRUISES – A short distance from Miami, Samaná is conveniently located along the route of all eastern and southern Caribbean cruises. Making Samaná a port of call gives cruise lines great flexibility in scheduling vessels in the eastern and southern Caribbean's sometimes crowded routes. Samaná Bay is encircled by the Peninsula to the north and Dominican Republic's mainland to the south, making the peaceful bay ideal for cruise ship anchorage.

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 BY LAND:

Samaná to	
Cayo Levantado (by boat)	20 minutes
Punta Balandra	20 minutes
Las Galeras	30 minutes
Los Haitises (by boat)	40 minutes
Las Terrenas	55 minutes
Playa Rincon	1 hour and 10 minutes
Samaná to other regions	
Santo Domingo	2 hours and 30 minutes
Puerto Plata	2 hours and 30 minutes
Santiago	3 hours
La Romana	3 hours and 45 minutes
Bayahibe	4 hours
Punta Cana	5 hours



Dominican Republic



KEY

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

dr1.com

© 2011 PRO RD S.A. • Email: info@dr1maps.com • Tel. 809.769.9560

Dominican Republic Ministry of Tourism

Av. Cayetano Germosén,
esquina Av. Gral Gregorio Luperón,
Santo Domingo, República Dominicana

Phone: 809-221-4660
info@godominicanrepublic.com

Tourist Offices in The United States and Canada

NEW YORK

Phone: 212-588-1012/ 14
Toll Free: 1-888-374-6361
newyork@godominicanrepublic.com

MIAMI

Phone: 305-358-2899
Toll Free: 1-888-358-9594
miami@godominicanrepublic.com

CHICAGO

Phone: 312-981-0325
chicago@godominicanrepublic.com

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

Phone: 787-722-0881
puertorico@godominicanrepublic.com

CANADA

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

Phone: 514-499-1918
Toll Free: 1-800-563-1611
montreal@godominicanrepublic.com

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Phone: 416-361-2126/ 27
Toll Free: 1-888-494-5050
toronto@godominicanrepublic.com



Dominican Republic Has it all

www.GoDominicanRepublic.com