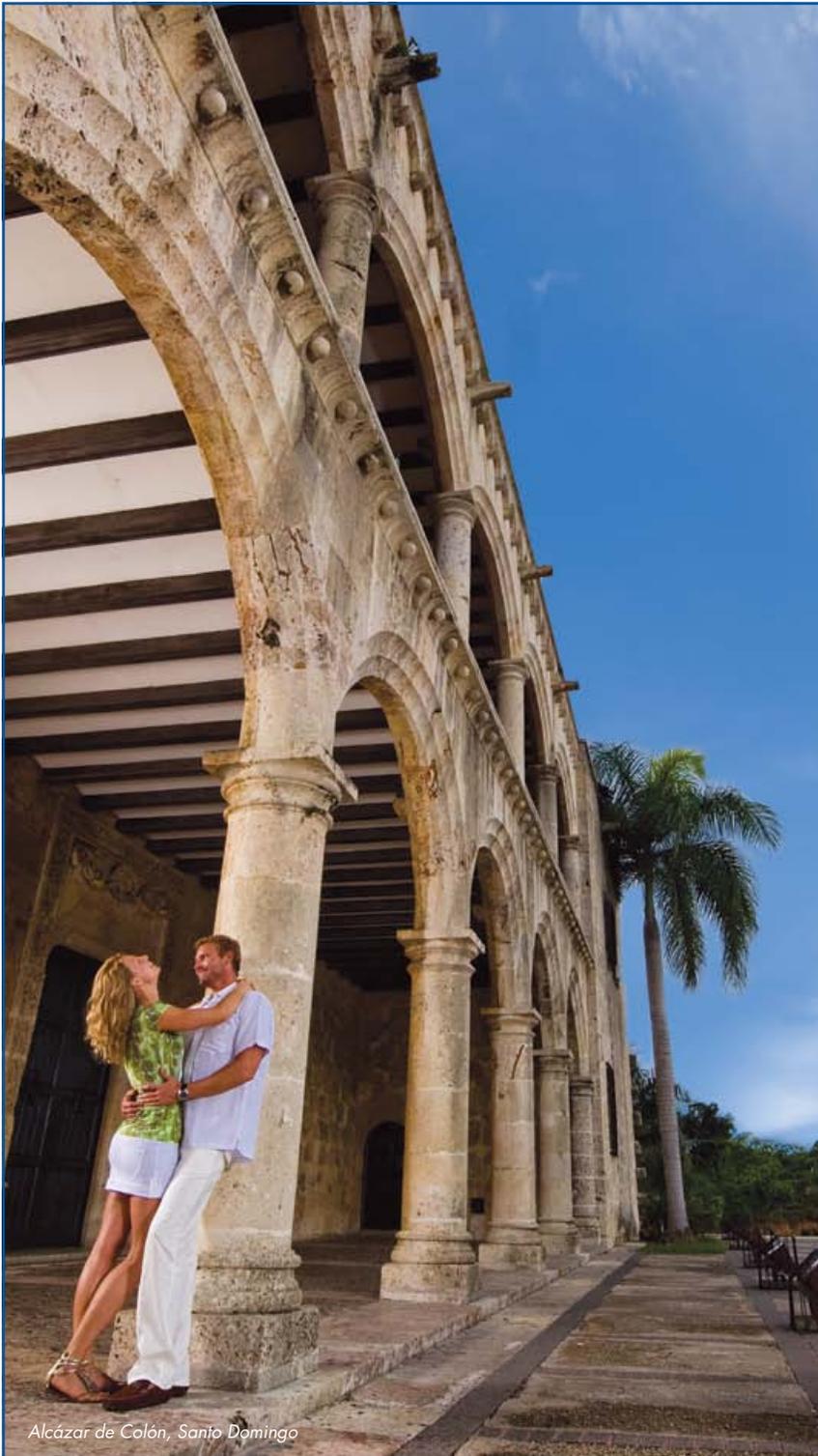

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



Dominican Republic
Has it all



Alcazar de Colon, Santo Domingo

Welcome to Dominican Republic

Dominican Republic is the second largest and most diverse Caribbean country, situated just two hours south of Miami, less than four hours from New York and eight hours from most European cities. Known for our warm and hospitable people, Dominican Republic is a destination like no other, featuring astounding nature, intriguing history and rich culture.

Surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean on the north and the Caribbean Sea on the south, our lush tropical island paradise boasts nearly 1,000 miles (1,609 km) of coastline, 250 miles (402 km) of the world's top beaches, magnificent resorts and hotels, and a variety of sports, recreation and entertainment options. Here you can dance to the pulse-pounding thrill of the merengue, renew in our luxurious and diverse accommodations, explore ancient relics of centuries past, delight in delicious Dominican gastronomy or enjoy ecotourism adventures in our magnificent national parks, mountain ranges, rivers and beaches.

Discovered in 1492 by Christopher Columbus, the country overflows with fascinating history, museums and exciting cultural experiences like music, art and festivals, plus uniquely Dominican specialties such as cigars, rum, chocolate, coffee, merengue, amber and larimar.

The #1 destination for golf in the Caribbean and Latin America, Dominican Republic delights visitors with 25 designer golf courses amid breathtaking coastlines with mountain backdrops and lush green fairways. With so many beautiful natural settings like romantic waterfalls, breathtaking coasts and idyllic accommodations, Dominican Republic is a top destination for weddings and romance. Many world class-resorts and hotels also cater to meetings and incentive groups who flock to Dominican Republic for excellent, friendly service and dynamic meeting venues.

Dominican Republic offers a fantastic combination of environments to capture your imagination and refresh the soul. And with eight international airports, paradise has never been easier to explore. We invite you to discover our breathtaking island sanctuary and create memories that will last a lifetime.

Cover photo: Playa Juanillo

Dominican Republic 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 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:

Las Americas International Airport (SDQ) – serving the capital city of Santo Domingo, Boca Chica and Juan Dolio.

La Romana International Airport (LRM) – serving the Casa de Campo resort and Bayahibe Hotels.

Punta Cana International Airport (PUJ) – serving the Punta Cana/Bávaro resort región.

Gregorio Luperón International Airport (POP) – serving the Puerto Plata resort region.

El Cibao International Airport (STI) – serving the city of Santiago.

El Catey International Airport (AZS) – serving the ecologically- rich Samaná Peninsula.

AIRLINES: Aeroflot, Air Berlin, Air Canada, Air Caraïbes, Air Europa, Air France, Air Italy, Air Transat, American Airlines, American Eagle, Avianca, British Airways, Cubana de Aviación, Condor, Copa, Delta, Gol, Iberia, Jet Air, Jet Blue, Lan, Spirit, Sunwing, Taca, United Airlines, US Airways, Venezolana, West Jet and XL Airways, among others.

CRUISE SHIPS PORTS: Santo Domingo Port (Don Diego and Sans Souci terminals), Casa de Campo Port in La Romana, and Samaná Bay facilities.





HOTELS: For information about Dominican Republic hotels, visit the Association of Hotels and Tourism: www.Asonahores.com and www.godominicarepublic.com/en/hotels

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 with or without a visa, please visit: www.GoDominicanRepublic.com/en/entry-requirements. However, any person, no matter their nationality, can enter Dominican Republic with a Tourist Card (not a visa) if they are legal resident or if they have one of the following valid visas in their passport: United States, Canada, United Kingdom or Schengen.

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

AREA CODES: 809, 829 and 849.

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 is 18-years old.

SHOPPING: In the main cities and vacation resorts, numerous commercial plazas can be found that sell internationally known brands, as well as local designers and products. The main Dominican products that can be purchased throughout the country include amber, larimar, ceramic dolls, chocolate, coffee, rum, macadamia nuts, cigars, Taino ceramics, merengue music, and more.

GASTRONOMY: Dominican Republic possesses a rich and multi-faceted culinary history, having been influenced by Spain, France and many other corners of the world, giving rise to Dominican food with delicious tastes and aromas. Main ingredients in Dominican dishes include rice, meat, beans, plantains and vegetables, as well as seafood.

NATIONAL SPORT: Baseball.

NATIONAL DANCE: Merengue.

NATIONAL FLOWER: Bayahibe Rose.

NATIONAL TREE: Mahogany.

NATIONAL BIRD: Cigua Palmera.

Events

WHALE SEASON – Between mid-January and mid-March, 3,000 to 5,000 humpback whales migrate to the waters of the Bay of Samaná in order to mate and give birth. Whale watchers can visit the Land Whale Observatory at Punta Balandra or in the surrounding area of the Marine Mammal Sanctuary in Samana Bay.



LA VEGA AND SANTO DOMINGO CARNIVAL – Thousands of townspeople and visitors alike gather in La Vega every Sunday in February to take part in the annual celebration with colorful masks, music and dancing. La Vega is the country's cultural capital during February, where the country's largest celebration of Carnival features spectacular "diablos cojuelos" (mischievous devils) with their oversized masks and huge horns mimicking demons or animals. The Santo Domingo carnival parade takes place on the first week of March with a big celebration in the Malecón, Santo Domingo's Ocean Boulevard.

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.

MERENGUE FESTIVAL – Santo Domingo holds one of the most popular merengue festivals in Dominican Republic every July. The Malecón, Santo Domingo's Ocean Boulevard, becomes a musical stage to celebrate the unique passionate and thrilling music of Dominican Republic. Another popular merengue festival is celebrated in Puerto Plata in October.



KITEBOARDING COMPETITIONS – Cabarete's idyllic bay is known for hosting some of the world's most spectacular kiteboarding events during the summer months. The bay's excellent trade winds and warm waters draw internationally recognized competitions that attract top-ranked water and wind sport champions globally.

BASEBALL – In December and January, Dominican Major League Baseball greats join their local teams in Santiago, San Pedro de Macoris, La Romana, San Francisco de Macoris and Santo Domingo to close the regular season and commence league season finals. The regular season opens in the middle of October and runs through the first week of February when the winner of the Winter Professional Baseball Championship gets to represent the country in the Caribbean Series. Every year the Caribbean Series rotates among Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Mexico and Venezuela. www.lidom.com.do.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC JAZZ FESTIVAL – Jazz aficionados travel from around the world each fall to the annual Dominican Republic Jazz Festival held on the beaches of Cabarete and Sosua, which is held every November. The event features an impressive line-up of jazz musicians, including artists from the U.S., Cuba, Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic. www.drjazzfestival.com.

For an updated list of events in Dominican Republic visit www.GoDominicanRepublic.com/en/events.





Where to go



El Conde street

Santo Domingo

Dominican Republic's capital city, Santo Domingo, is the Caribbean's most diverse destination and, arguably, it's most vibrant. The city's restaurants specialize in gourmet Dominican gastronomy and cuisine from around the world. Boutiques and major chain retailers from the U.S. and Europe have set up shops, and a wealth of museums, galleries and theaters ensure no shortage of cultural experiences.

In Santo Domingo, by the Ozama River, lies the first city of the Americas, which was established by Christopher Columbus and his brother Bartholomew in 1498. Visitors can walk cobblestone streets that conquistadors once strolled centuries ago. The Colonial City is one of the most beautiful and romantic areas in all of the Caribbean at night, with beautifully lit restaurants, museums and stone structures dating to the early 1500s.

Just forty minutes east of Santo Domingo, visitors can escape to the resort town of Boca Chica, known as the capital's beach town. Boca Chica beach is a family favorite for their coral reef-protected lagoon, shallow waters and soft powdery sand lapped by turquoise waters. The area is surrounded by a variety of seafood restaurants; charming hotels, fun shops, pristine beaches and boasts perfect weather for sailing.

Further east, Juan Dolio is a slow-paced escape from the energetic capital city for Dominicans and visitors alike. The beach town lies along the Caribbean shoreline with a quiet main street where most hotels and restaurants are located. Two of Dominican Republic's top golf courses are also located near Juan Dolio making this a favorite getaway with just the right amount of relaxation and recreation nearby.



Ruinas San Nicolás de Bari



View of Ozama river



Santo Domingo Cathedral

La Romana and Bayahibe

Two hours east of Santo Domingo along the Caribbean Sea are two of the most popular destinations in the country. La Romana and Bayahibe, two of the fastest-growing parts of the country, rest amid vast sugar cane fields that surround some of the Caribbean's most beautiful resorts and beaches. The area features a combination of picturesque beaches, chic accommodations and desirable attractions.

With its brilliant waters, tropical forests and excellent range of activities, La Romana provides the ideal destination for families, honeymooners, divers and golfers. Within La Romana is Casa de Campo, a leading hotel of the world and one of the most luxurious and complete resorts in the Caribbean. Here golf enthusiasts can play golf on three magnificent courses: Teeth of the Dog, Dye Fore and the Links. Additionally, the resort boasts a marina with internationally renowned boutiques and restaurants that serve haute cuisine.

Your visit to La Romana won't be complete without a trip to Altos de Chavón, a beautiful replica of a 16th century artists' village overlooking the Chavón River. An equally delightful activity is to visit nearby Catalina Island and Saona Island.

Nearby, the local resort area of Bayahibe was founded as a fishing village in 1874 and is now known as a favorite destination for the beach and sun. This ecotourism-rich destination is located just 25 minutes east of La Romana. Bayahibe allows visitors to enjoy a tour of the surrounding nature and learn the history of the authentic fishing village.



Parque del Este



Altos de Chavón, La Romana

Punta Cana

Dominican Republic's east coast is a top destination for sophisticated luxury, championship golf, the world's top beaches and exciting activities. The area flaunts a growing array of first-class accommodations, marinas, and more than a dozen designer golf courses.

The Punta Cana region features a variety of world-class hotels in several distinct districts, including (from south to north) Cap Cana, Juanillo, Punta Cana, Cabeza de Toro, Bávaro, El Cortecito, Arena Gorda, Macao and Uvero Alto. Punta Cana is a place for relaxation and serenity with sumptuous resorts and miles of powder-fine white sand beaches and coconut palms.

In addition, exciting excursions such as zip line adventures, swimming with dolphins, jeep safaris, stingray and shark encounters, nearby national parks and other great attractions make for fun-filled and memorable family vacations.



Playa Dorada

Puerto Plata

The North Coast of the Dominican Republic will satisfy travelers wanting both a relaxing beach vacation and one filled with ecotourism adventures. Mountains and sugar cane fields serve as a backdrop to sunny coastlines with the best conditions for water sports in the world.

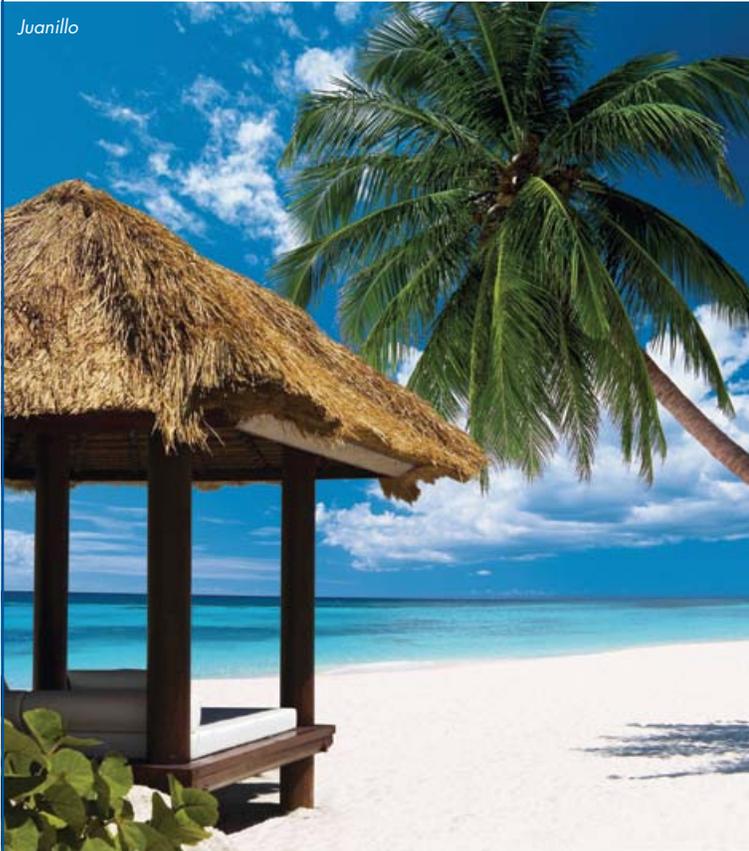
Puerto Plata's centrally located international airport is less than a 20-minute drive from most hotels. Cofresí and Playa Dorada are the main tourism enclaves located near Puerto Plata city. In Cofresí, Ocean World Adventure Park Marina and Casino is one of the most important attractions. Here you can interact with marine animals, including swimming with the dolphins.

Playa Dorada, 10 minutes to the east of Puerto Plata, has the largest number of hotel rooms in the north. This vacation compound includes 12 low-rise resorts built in a "U" shape that share a common gold sand beach and the Playa Dorada Golf Course, an 18-hole course designed by Robert Trent Jones.

While in the area, don't miss a visit to San Felipe Fort on Puerto Plata's waterfront, built by the Spaniards in the 16th Century to fend off pirates. Another favorite for visitors and locals is taking a cable car to the top of Mount Isabel de Torres, which offers spectacular views of the environs and surrounding sea.

Cabarete, part of the Puerto Plata province, is a coastal village located just 25 minutes east of Gregorio Luperón International airport. The village is known as the world's kiteboarding and wind sporting capital of the world due to its warm waters and perfect tradewinds. Cabarete is very popular among the young and adventurous for the aquatic sports offered on its beach, its famous annual jazz festival each fall and its eclectic bars, cafes, restaurants and shops. Nearby, Sosúa features excellent snorkeling and diving for those seeking an underwater thrill.

Juanillo



Samaná Peninsula

The Samaná Peninsula on the Northeast Coast of Dominican Republic is one of the country's most breathtakingly beautiful regions. This is the place many Dominicans choose as their vacation getaway for its secluded beaches, radiant turquoise ocean waters and lush green mountains covered with coconut palm trees, and the magnificent views of the Bay of Samaná. Three main towns located on the Samaná Peninsula are the focal point for tourism activities – Samaná, Las Terrenas and Las Galeras.

The Peninsula is a romantic destination with majestic waterfalls, the secluded Cayo Levantado island, tropical forests, the untouched mangrove reserves found in nearby Los Haitises National Park, and Dominican Republic's Whale Sanctuary, where thousands of humpback whales return during the winter months to frolic, mate and give birth.



Los Haitises



Cayo Levantado

Santiago and the Central Region

Santiago, the second largest city and the heart of the central region, proves to be a cultured downtown area and a very active and productive city with vibrant restaurants, culture, shops and nightlife. Centro León is a world-class cultural center for the Dominican arts that includes a multimedia biodiversity show, a museum dedicated to the history of Dominican Republic, a replica of a typical local market, a dramatic showcase of Dominican art and sculpture, a reproduction of the León family's first cigar factory and more.

Southeast of Santiago is La Vega. The city becomes one of celebration during the month of February, since it is the home of Dominican Carnival.

Those seeking more adventure can travel to Jarabacoa, a major draw in the country's ecotourism industry. The rapids of the three rivers flowing nearby also make the area popular for outdoor activities. Similar to Jarabacoa, the Cibao Valley and Constanza are known for fresh products and flora.



Jarabacoa

Barahona

If Dominican Republic has a well-kept secret, it is the biodiverse Southwestern Region with amazing natural beaches juxtaposed to rugged ranges of mountain pine, and cloud forests leading to wetlands and cactus studded deserts.

The areas of Barahona and Pedernales are the most ecologically diverse in the country and the striking natural attractions of this region are incomparable, boasting the largest and only saltwater lake in the Caribbean, and a scenic highway with vistas along the coast.

Two of the country's major national parks, Parque Nacional Jaragua to the southwest and Parque Nacional Sierra de Bahoruco to the north, serve as borders and make the village an excellent base camp for hikers.

Top Excursions:

FROM SANTO DOMINGO

- Santo Domingo's Colonial City
- Cueva de los Tres Ojos (Three Eyes Cave)
- Shopping, Casinos and Night Life
- Boca Chica and Juan Dolio Beaches

FROM LA ROMANA

- Altos de Chavón
- Saona Island
- Cueva de las Maravillas (Wonder Cave)

FROM PUNTA CANA

- Manati Park
- Dolphin Island Park
- Marinarium
- Inland Safaris
- Zipline
- Caribbean Festival
- Fun Fun Cave

FROM PUERTO PLATA

- 27 Charcos de Damajagua
(27 Falls of Damajagua)
- Cayo Arena (Paradise Cay)
- Ocean World Adventure Park
- Mount Isabel de Torres & Cable Car Ride
- Puerto Plata City Tour and Rum Factory
- Zip Lines

FROM SAMANA

- Humpback Whale Observation
- El Limon Waterfall
- Cayo Levantado Island
- Los Haitises National Park
- Zip Lines

FROM SANTIAGO

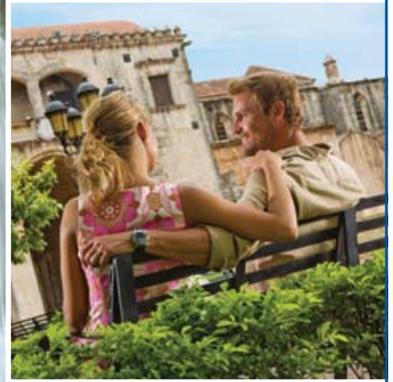
- Centro Leon
- Tobacco Museum

FROM JARABACOA

- River Rafting, Horseback riding and Tubing



Salto El Limón



Local Transportation and Table of Distance

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. Major companies include Caribe Tours, Autobuses Metro and Expreso Bávaro.

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

BY PLANE – Local airlines and numerous domestic airports make in-country transportation easily accessible for locals and visitors alike. Aerodomca (www.aerodomca.com), Takeoff (www.takeoffweb.com), and Air Century (www.aircentury.com) are local companies that offer daily and weekly flights throughout the country.

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.

SANTO DOMINGO TO

Boca Chica	40 minutes
Juan Dolio	55 minutes
La Romana	2 hours
Bayahibe	2 hours 20 minutes
Constanza	2 hours
Jarabacoa	2 hours
Santiago	2 hours
Samaná	2 ½ hours
Barahona	3 hours
Puerto Plata	3 ½ hours
Punta Cana	3 ½ hours

LA ROMANA TO

Bayahibe	20 minutes
Catalina Island (by boat)	30 minutes
Juan Dolio	1 hour 10 minutes
Boca Chica	1 hour 20 minutes
Punta Cana	1 ½ hours
Santo Domingo	2 hours
Samaná	3 hours
Jarabacoa	4 hours
Santiago	4 hours
Barahona	5 hours
Puerto Plata	5 ½ hours

BAYAHIBE TO

Saona Island (by boat)	45 minutes
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PUERTO PLATA TO

Cofresí	10 minutes
Playa Dorada	10 minutes
Sosúa	20 minutes
Damajagua	25 minutes
Cabarete	30 minutes
Playa Grande	1 ½ hours
Rio San Juan	1 ½ hours
Cayo Arena (Paraiso)	2 hours
Santiago	1 hour
Jarabacoa	2 hours
Samaná	2 ½ hours
Santo Domingo	3 ½ hours
La Romana	5 ½ hours
Bayahibe	5 hours 50 minutes
Barahona	6 ½ hours
Punta Cana	7 hours

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 Rincón	1 hour 10 minutes
Santo Domingo	2 ½ hours
Puerto Plata	2 ½ hours
Santiago	2 ½ hours
La Romana	3 hours
Bayahibe	3 hours 20 minutes
Punta Cana	4 ½ hours

PUNTA CANA TO

Cap Cana	15 minutes
Cabeza de Toro	15 minutes
Bávaro	25 minutes
Uvero Alto	50 minutes
Bayahibe	1 hour 10 minutes
La Romana	1 ½ hours
Juan Dolio	2 hours 40 minutes
Boca Chica	2 hours 50 minutes
Santo Domingo	3 ½ hours
Samaná	4 ½ hours
Jarabacoa	5 ½ hours
Barahona	6 ½ hours
Puerto Plata	7 hours

Times may vary depending on traffic conditions



Dominican Republic Ministry of Tourism

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