SAMANÁ



WELCOME TO SAMANÁ

Los Haitises National Park

Come and discover the ecological bliss of the Samaná Peninsula, Dominican Republic's breathtaking paradise. With majestic crystal-clear waterfalls, secluded pristine beaches, nightlife bound to satisfy all genr

rolling hills studded with coconut palms, and an infusion of rich culture and history, Samaná 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, Samaná 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, 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 and 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, ziplining 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 ecoadventures that await you.





Located on the northeast coast of Dominican Republic, the Samaná Peninsula is known for its magnificent beauty, and splendid untouched beaches. Dominican Republic occupies the eastern two-thirds of the large island of Hispaniola, which it shares with the Republic of Haiti. It is the second largest country in the Caribbean, comprising an area of 19,292 square miles (49,967 square kilometers). The country has a population of 10.5 million and enjoys sunny tropical weather all year. The average year-round temperatures are 78°F to 88°F (25°C 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. Its Colonial City was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1990.

GETTING HERE: Dominican Republic currently has eight international airports throughout the country, including: Las Américas International Airport (SDQ) in Santo Domingo, Punta Cana International Airport (PUJ), La Romana International Airport (LRM), Gregorio Luperón International Airport (POP) in Puerto Plata, El Catey International Airport (AZS) in Samaná, and El Cibao International Airport (STI) in Santiago. Maritime ports that regularly receive cruise ships in the country include Santo Domingo Port (Sans Souci and Don Diego terminals), La Romana Port (east and west docks, Catalina Island and Casa de Campo Marina) Punta Cana (Cap Cana Marina), Puerto Plata (Amber Cove) and Samaná Bay facilities (Cayo Levantado).

DOCUMENTATION: Most visitors arriving in the Dominican Republic-including those from the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, the European Union, Mexico, many South American countries and Central America (see the full list of countries on our website)-only need a passport with a minimum validity equivalent to the duration of their stay to enter the country. The cost of the 30-day tourist card, paid separately in the past, is now included in the airline ticket for all visitors.

VISAS: Any person, regardless of their nationality, can visit Dominican Republic if they are a legal resident of, or if they have one of the following valid visas in their passport: United States, Canada, United Kingdom or Schengen. Travelers who do not have a passport or visa from countries listed above will need to apply for a visa. To issue a visa, the passport needs to have a validity of at least six (6) months. If you need to apply for a Tourist visa, please visit this website to find your Dominican consulate abroad: www.consuladord.com

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, among other.

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

ELECTRICITY: Electricity operates at 110 Volts/60 Hertz, the same as North America. If needed, adapter plugs are available at most hotels.

TAXES: Dominican hotels and restaurants collect an additional 28 % of their published prices (18 % sales tax + 10 % service charge).

MEDICAL PRECAUTIONS: Due to the strength of the Caribbean sun and the climatic conditions of the area, it is recommended for tourists to always wear sunscreen and mosquito repellent, especially for outdoor activities, and to drink bottled water throughout the day to avoid dehydration. In case of an emergency contact 9-1-1, the National Emergency and Security Attention System. www.911.gob.do

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

HOTELS: For information about Dominican Republic hotels and accommodations in Santo Domingo region, visit: www.GoDominicanRepublic.com/hotels, Santo Domingo Hotels Association www.cometosantodomingo.com, and the Association of Hotels and Tourism www.asonahores.com

Download our free app Go Dominican Republic, available in the App Store and on Google Play.



LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

As the second-largest country in the Caribbean, Dominican Republic offers a wide range of activities. Many options exist for traveling on well-maintained highways to nearby attractions and also to more distantly located excursions.

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.

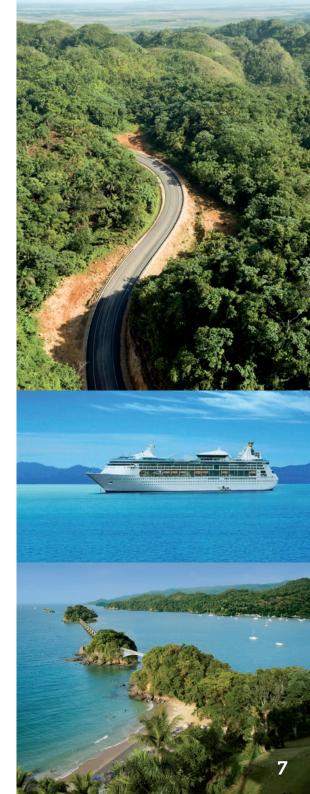
BUSES: Air-conditioned motor coaches and vans arranged by local tour operators are available from most hotels. Check with your hotel or tour operator for more information. Major companies include Caribe Tours. www.caribetours.com.do

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

HIGHWAYS: Samaná's spectacular highway connects Santo Domingo's Las Américas International Airport (SDQ) with Samaná, making it a speedy two-hour commute. Visitors will be enchanted with views of coconut palm plantations and Los Haitises National Park, among more. The Boulevard Turístico del Atlántico tollway offers impressive views of the Atlantic Ocean and connects the Las Terrenas community with the rest of the northern coastal zone.

AIRPORTS: Two local airports are used for international and domestic flights: El Catey International Airport (AZS), located 30 minutes from the towns of Samaná and Las Terrenas, and Arroyo Barril Airport (MDAB), which serves the province with domestic flights to other regions in the country. www.aerodom.com

CRUISES: A short distance from Miami, Samaná is conveniently located along the route of many 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.



BEACHES

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

PLAYA PORTILLO: East of Las Terrenas is Portillo, 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. Playa Bonita 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 is located west of Las Terrenas and consists of calm waters with a range of colors, river mouths, and strong winds for kite surfers and waves for surfing. The surrounding area is also developed with gated communities, private villas and hotel complexes.

Playa Frontón

PLAYA 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 river mouth delights the little ones who often play in the cool waters.

PLAYA EL LIMÓN: Located in El Limón, east of Las Terrenas and Portillo, this spectacular golden-sand, 3-mile (4.8 kilometers) 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.





PLAYA MORÓN: Morón'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: Considered the second best beach in the world by Condé Nast Traveler, Rincón 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 ice-cold Caño Frío River.

PLAYA EL VALLE: Defined by its name, El Valle, meaning "the valley", 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. It's also a fishing zone with gorgeous turquoise water and a stretch of golden sand which hugs the surrounding rolling hills. Enjoy seafood on the beach and remain close to the shore when swimming to avoid strong waves.

PLAYA 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 water and even join a boat tour to other beaches for whale watching.

PLAYA FRONTÓN Reachable by boat from Las Galeras or by a longer hiking trip, the impressive Playa Frontón coast is a spectacular sight. Its shining fine white sand is at the foot of a 295 feet (90-meter) rocky cliff dotted with bright green coconut trees. It is popular for rock climbing and snorkeling due to its turquoise waters full of corals and sea urchins. Playa Frontón has also been featured on episodes of the international series "Survivor," given its impressive coastal landscape, its mysterious caves and the front reef that protects it. Bring rubber shoes to protect your feet from sea urchins and observe the abundant marine life and corals in the area.



LOS HAITISES NATIONAL PARK: Making up approximately 232 square miles (600 square kilometers) of unique, diverse area, Los Haitises National Park which means "Highland or Mountain" is comprised of mangroves, estuaries, coves mogotes (conical mountains), sinkholes and bays. Easily reached by a boat ride across Samaná Bay, the park is well-known for both its magnificent series of limestone caves covered in Taíno Indian art with an immense historical value, covered with rock art, pictographs, and petroglyphs that exemplify the aborigines of the Tainos who originally occupied the island. Visitors will find themselves surrounded by more than 110 species of birds, 700 plus plant species, and a wide variety of mammals. You can also reach the park from Caño Hondo, Sabana de la Mar in the province of Hato Mayor via a short boat ride through the San Lorenzo bay. A tour of the Los Haitises area will allow you to discover places of extraordinary beauty such as:

- The Caño Hondo inlet
- The mangrove forests of Caño Hondo and San Lorenzo
- Walk the path of the Humid Forest
- Visit the Caves of La Arena, Willi, La Línea and San Gabriel
- San Lorenzo Bay
- The inlet towards the Humid Forest
- Visit The Cayo de los Pájaros

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 0.77-square-mile (2 square-kilometer) island to walk along the pristine beach for a 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, gourmet restaurants, beach bars, craft shops, supermarkets, sports facilities, tour operators and other services, all of which reflect a rich European influence.

LAND WHALE OBSERVATORY: The Ministry of Environment opened Dominican Republic's first land whale observation point 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.

THE WHALE MUSEUM: A unique community space where visitors can connect with the great family of humpback whales that each year make Samaná their home. The museum shows the public details of the voyage made by these cetaceans from the sanctuaries to the North, to Samaná Bay, where they come to mate and give birth.

MARINA PUERTO BAHÍA: A full-service marina on the Samaná Bay very close to the cruise facilities. 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. There's also a hotel, restaurants and bars with impressive views of the bay and a residential community. www.puertobahiasamana.com

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 paintings, Taino ceramics, larimar jewelry, amber artifacts and hand-crafted figurines from Dominican tropical wood. Local artisans also work with elements of palm, bamboo, decorative objects with yagua and coconut that is widely used in various craft pieces. Others make beautiful pieces of crafts with higüeros. There are many boutiques that offer beachwear and jewelry from European designers.

GASTRONOMY & NIGHTLIFE: A main attraction in Las Terrenas is "Pueblo de Los Pescadores", a row of small restaurants and bars right on the beach that offer a wide range of options like seafood, tapas, Italian, and American, among others. It also is rightly celebrated for its busy but laid-back after-dark ambience, particularly at weekends when locals and tourists mingle and you can get a taste of the local sounds. The Samaná Peninsula is known for the use of coconut in their signature dishes such as seafood or fish with coconut, in a flavorful sauce of tomato, garlic, and coconut milk. Also, the local coconut bread and coconut sweets are very popular.



EXCURSIONS

Salto El Limón

HUMPBACK WHALES OBSERVATION: Each winter 1,500 to 2,000 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 Marine Mammals Sanctuary or at the Land Whale Observatory. The 200 square mile (518 square kilometers) sanctuary was established in 1966 and continues to protect the thousands of humpback whales who migrate from the arctic waters of the north.

SALTO EL LIMÓN: Considered the most spectacular of Dominican Republic's many waterfalls, El Limón captivates as it cascades 164 feet (50 meters) into a pool where visitors may take a dip. To reach the falls, horseback riding is a popular option among adventure tourists and also provides a beautiful view of the surrounding forest and natural pool below.

DISCOVER SAMANÁ: Visit Santa Bárbara 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. Guests can also visit La Churcha, also known as the Dominican Evangelical Church. The Churcha 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 Lulú waterfall at 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 bay.

ZIP LINE TOURS: Visitors are now able to experience a new dimension of entertainment in Samaná. Adventure seekers can zip for more than 1000 feet (300 meters) between the platforms, flying safely over coconut palms and lush green valleys with spectacular views of Samaná Bay and Cayo Levantado. The tour lasts approximately 3 hours and includes expert trainers, refreshments and fresh Dominican grown fruit. This tour is available at several locations in the Samaná area such as Juana Vicente, El Valle and Caño Hondo.

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 Banco de la Plata. 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. Sail the Bay as you savor the majestic scenery, rich vegetation and pristine waters. Eventually anchor in Cayo La Farola; perfect for snorkeling within variety of tropical fish, vibrant coral and gardens. Finally you will reach Cayo Levantado for a relaxing time on its breathtaking beach.



EVENTS

SAMANÁ CARNIVAL: Widely celebrated in the month of February, the local neighborhoods pour into the streets with music and dancing. At the Santa Bárbara de Samaná carnival celebration, many groups come from various towns in the province, enriching the traditional festival even more. Color, music and joy are markers of the Samaná carnival.

HARVEST FESTIVAL: The African-American heritage of Samaná is celebrated in the month of October during the annual harvest festivals in Santa Barbara de Samaná. Expect drums and foods like coconut rice, johnnycakes and ginger ale.

RIPIAO SEAFOOD FESTIVAL: Every summer there is a seafood festival in the small fishing town of Sánchez, which is located on the other side of the bay in Samaná. The festival offers workshops with Dominican chefs, food, drinks, local artisans and entertainment, too.

FISHING TOURNAMENTS AND REGATTAS: During springtime Marina Puerto Bahía hosts fishing tournaments. Mahi-mahi, tuna, wahoo, as well as other species of billfishes such as white marlin, blue marlin, sailfish and swordfish are some of the varieties that you can find. In the month of March, regattas in the Samaná Bay are also very popular with hundreds of sailboats from different countries.

SPORTS COMPETITIONS: "Xterra" is an athletic event that includes the trail racing disciplines of 3, 6 and 13 miles (5, 10 and 21 kilometers); all-terrain triathlon; Stand Up Paddle (SUP) competitions and children's race in the month of June. "100K del Caribe" is a 62 mile (100-kilometer) race with a duration of five days, which is celebrated in the month of June starting from Cabarete, Puerto Plata until finishing in Las Terrenas, Samaná.

GASTRONOMIC JOURNEYS "SAMANÁ EXQUISITA": The Tourism Cluster of Samaná and the Association of Hotels and Tourism Companies organize this event that brings together the best of the gastronomy of the province, recognized nationally and internationally for its diversity and exquisiteness. It has the participation of more than 20 local restaurants, offering the best of our cuisine with a special three-course menu. https://gosamana.com.

For an updated list of events in Samaná, visit: www.godominicanrepublic.com/events

TABLE OF DISTANCES:

Samaná City to:

Punta Balandra	20 minutes
Las Galeras	30 minutes
Cayo Levantado	35 minutes*
Los Haitises (by boat)	40 minutes
Playa Rincón	40 minutes
Las Terrenas	55 minutes
Samaná to other regions:	
Santo Domingo	2 hours 30 minutes
La Romana	3 hours
Bayahibe	3 hours 20 minutes
Puerto Plata	3 hours 30 minutes
Santiago	3 hours 30 minutes

* Includes a 20 minute boat ride.

Punta Cana

Times may vary according to traffic conditions. For emergency on the road, contact Roadside Assistance at 829-688-1000

3 hours 45 minutes

Playa Rincón

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC





Ministry of Tourism

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