

TOP FIVE CITIES TO VISIT IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The Dominican Republic is a Caribbean country located in North America. It is among the most interesting and exciting countries in the Caribbean and is popular for its tourist attractions like beaches and resorts as well as golfing -with 26 golf courses, making it the most visited country in the Caribbean. The Dominican Republic has a lot of highlands, savannahs and rainforest. It also houses the popular Pico Duarte, the Caribbean's tallest mountain -which is 3,098 meters high- and the Enriquillo Lake, the largest lake in Caribbean which is 22.99 miles by length and covers an area of 144.8 meters.

The Dominican Republic has a population of 10.65 million, this makes it the second-largest country in the Caribbean after Cuba. It covers an area of 18,704 square miles and shares the island of Hispaniola with its neighboring nation Haiti, which occupies 3 eighths, while The Dominican Republic occupies the eastern five eighths of the island. Another fact to note is that the country has a passion for baseball. This sport was introduced to the country since the 1880s and has stuck with them as a favourite sport. Also, the main religion practiced in the Dominican Republic is Catholic, which makes up 48% of the population. The country is more accessible than other Caribbean countries when coming from the United States due to the availability of more direct flights than most of its other islands.



Fortaleza Ozama: the 16th century castle

Its capital city is Santo Domingo, one of the Caribbean's oldest cities. It is the cultural heart of the Dominican Republic, apart from being the major metropolis. Santo Domingo is an incredible place to visit in the Dominican Republic. Its rich historical identity and modernity makes it one of the most interesting tour locations.

There are a lot of fun and historical sites to visit in Santo Domingo, some of them include:

Alcázar de Colón

This is the most ancient colonial residence in the Americas and it is also among the best art galleries in the region. It exhibits a lot of Caribbean's most important collection of art works.

Los Tres Ojos

This is a beautiful structured cave complex which can be visited by foot or by boat. It's a natural wonder and a perfect tour to do in the day.

National Botanical Garden

This park is a perfect place to tour, it's one of the most beautiful and large gardens in the world. Lovely pictures could be taken in the park, or picnics with friends and family can be organized. It's definitely a must visit.

Basilica Cathedral of Santa María la Menor

This architecturally fascinating building is a pleasant view to the eyes and a must visit. It is the oldest cathedral in the Americas, and is situated right next to Columbus Park.

Fortaleza Ozama

The city also has an incredible 16th-Century castle. The Fortaleza Ozama is situated just at the entrance of Santo Domingo, overlooking the Ozama River. If you have never been to a castle, now you know where to find one.

Another important city to tour in the Dominican Republic is **Santana**.



Image:Tripadvisor

Levada Caldeirão do Inferno.

Santana is situated in the province of Elías Piña, on the border of Haiti. The city is known for its parks and nature and wild life areas which include: Levada Caldeirão do Inferno, Casas Típicas de Santana, Parque Temático da Madeira, Reserva Natural da Rocha do Navio and many more. These sites could be toured either by walking, hiking, or biking. The levada, forest and natural Park are incredibly stunning.

This article will not be complete without including the symbolic city of **Santiago de los Caballeros**.



Image: Tripadvisor

1944 Monument to heroes

It is simply called Santiago. Santiago is the second most important and urban city in the Dominican Republic. It is located in the north of the Dominican Republic, on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, and is home to a 70 meters high 1944 Monument to heroes which is located on the hill of Castillo, at the center of the city. This emblematic monument is dedicated to the heroes of the Dominican Restoration War. As a city rich in cultural practices and manifestations, The Carnival of Santiago is one of the most important activities in Santiago. This carnival is usually done in honor of San Santiago, Corpus Christi and Carnestolenda.

Other interesting places to visit in Santiago include:

Kaskada Water Park

This is an exciting place to visit and have fun with friends and family in the day. It is one of the largest water parks in the Caribbean. There are different bars, restaurants and pools and slides in this park. It's a beautiful tourist attraction to many residents of Santiago and its surroundings

who come to have fun.

Eduardo Leon Cultural Center

This is an important museum in Santiago which has different exhibitions of Dominican visual arts, anthropology, history, and the Dominican and Caribbean culture.

La Aurora Cigar Factory

The factory of the popular La Aurora brand of tobacco is also a site for tourists in Santiago.

The fourth interesting city to visit in the Dominican Republic is **Punta Cana**.



Image: Tripadvisor

Punta Cana is known for its beaches, restaurants and vast fun activities. It's a pure escape with a promise of pleasurable experiences; from its impeccable resorts, to activities like sailing to Isla Saona, visiting magical lagoons of the Indigenous Eyes Ecological Park, horse riding, ATV tours, zip-lining, snorkelling cruise, parasailing, and chocolate and coffee tasting among others.

Lastly, **San Felipe de Puerto Plata** is another city in the Dominican Republic you need to tour.



Image: Tripadvisor

Puerto Plata is the capital of the Puerto Plata province on the Dominican Republic's Atlantic north coast. The city is best known for its beaches. Other adventures that could be done are touring the Damajagua waterfall, hiking, biking or going through jungle paths with ATV to see the northern Dominican Republic's countryside and visiting monkey jungles, horseback riding, snorkeling and diving among others.

Tourism is the Dominican Republic's largest industry, contributing to the total Caribbean tourism market with about 21% and making it have the largest economy in the Caribbean. Touring the Dominican Republic should definitely be included in your bucket list. There are a lot of unforgettable experiences awaiting you!