

Lifestyle Holidays
VACATION CLUB

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC | FACT SHEET

LOCATION:
The second largest country in the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic occupies the eastern two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola in the Greater Antilles (Haiti is on the other side of its mountainous western border). The largest of its four rugged mountain ranges is the Cordillera Central with Pico Duarte, the tallest point in the Caribbean, rising over 10,700 feet. Its northern coast is on the Atlantic Ocean and its southern coastline is washed by the Caribbean Sea. Hispaniola's neighbors on the west are the island of Cuba and Jamaica. To the east, across the Mona Passage, is Puerto Rico.

SIZE:
Land area is 19,000 square miles, twice the size of New Hampshire.

HISTORY:
The Dominican Republic was discovered by Christopher Columbus on Dec. 5, 1492 and he established the first settlement in the New World on the northeastern tip of the island. The native inhabitants were the Arawak – or Taino – Indians, now extinct.

CULTURE:
Multicultural, multiracial society of Spanish predominance. Contributing to the genetic blend were European adventurers and African slaves. The official language is Spanish, but most of those involved in tourism speak English.

POPULATION:
Over eight million.

GOVERNMENT:
A representative democracy similar to the U.S. political system. Dominican citizens elect a president and members of Congress, which is formed by a Senate and chamber of deputies.

CLIMATE:
Sunny and warm year round. Temperatures vary little from one season to the next. However, throughout the mountain ranges, from December to April, temperatures can fall below 32 degrees Fahrenheit in Valle Nuevo, Constanza and Pico Duarte.

CAPITAL:
The capital is Santo Domingo, the oldest city and the first capital of the New World. It is a seaport and the largest city in the Caribbean, with a population of more than 2 million. Its colonial section lures travelers with its historic sites, ancient churches, parks and plazas.

ENTRY:
Citizens of the United States, Canada, Britain and many other countries do not require a vista. They must show a valid passport.

TOURISM:
The primary industry is tourism, drawing more than 22 million people a year. The country offers a wide range of accommodations at urban, mountain and beach resorts and hotels. Its guest hotels have gaming casinos and arrange for all kinds of adventure sports, ranging from diving to mountain climbing.

BEACHES:
More than 300 miles of palm-fringed beaches along the Atlantic and Caribbean shores, considered some of the best beaches in the world. The majority of the beaches have resorts and other lodging facilities attached. Boat and yacht rentals are available, and water sports, diving, deep-sea fishing and surfing are popular.

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SPORTS:
Baseball is the national pastime, with scores of Dominican players in the U.S. major leagues. There are five professional baseball stadiums in the country. Golf courses have proliferated in recent years, with championship links designed by Pete Dye and Robert Trent Jones in La Romana, Santo Domingo, Puerto Plata and Playa Grande. Resort hotels have tennis courts, as do country clubs.

CURRENCY:
The U.S. dollar is readily exchanged for Dominican pesos at all banks, most hotels and Bancos de Reservas booths at all airports.

ELECTRICITY:
Power outlets are wired at 110 volts and 60 cycles, the same as in the United States.

DINING:
Variety and creativity typify Dominican cuisine. Restaurants offer a range of menus, from the most cosmopolitan to hearty native fare. There are many ethnic specialty restaurants. With daily catches from two oceans, seafood is bountiful. The country is known as the breadbasket of the Caribbean because of its extensive agricultural, cattle and tropical fruit industries. The native dish is sancocho, a thick stew with seven different meats.

For more Lifestyle Holidays Vacation Club information, go to www.lifestyleholidaysvc.com or call (809) 970-7777.