





Along Dominican Republic's Southeastern Coast lie vast sugar cane fields surrounding some of the Caribbean's most beautiful resorts and beaches of La Romana and Bayahibe. These areas boast a combination of picturesque beaches, chic accommodations and desirable attractions.

Founded in the early 19th century, La Romana was originally a sugar-producing region that was also developed as a commercial port for the transport of sugarcane and wood. Today, with its brilliant waters, tropical forests and an excellent range of activities, La Romana provides the ideal destination for families, honeymooners, divers and golfers alike.

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 on four magnificent courses: Teeth of the Dog, Dye Fore, The Links and La Romana Country Club. Additionally, the resort boasts a marina with internationally renowned boutiques and restaurants that serve haute cuisine, as well as Altos de Chavón, a beautiful replica of a 16th century artists' village overlooking the Chavón River.

Nearby, the local resort area of Bayahibe was originally 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 and allows visitors to enjoy a tour of the surrounding nature and absorb the history of the authentic fishing village. The Bayahibe region is also home to the country's national flower, the beautifully exotic Bayahibe Rose.

The following guide to La Romana and Bayahibe includes descriptions of the amazing attractions, golf courses, beaches and more that await you.



## **FACTS**

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 18,704 square miles (48,442 square kilometers). The country has a population of nearly 10 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.

**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 others.

**CURRENCY:** The Dominican peso (DOP) is the official currency.

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



**DOCUMENTATION:** For most visitors, a valid passport along with a US\$10 Tourist Card (available online or at the airport) is required to enter the country. Any person, no matter their nationality, can enter with a Tourist Card if they are a legal resident or if they have one of the following valid visas in their passport: United States, Canada, United Kingdom or Schengen. For more information: www.dgii.gov.do/tarjetaTuristica/en

**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 percent of their published prices (18 percent sales tax + 10 percent service charge).

**MEDICAL PRECAUTIONS:** Due of the strength of the Caribbean sun and the climatic conditions of the area, it is recommended that vacationers always wear sunscreen and mosquito repellent when outdoors, and drink filtered water throughout the day to avoid dehydration. For emergencies, contact 9-1-1, our National Care System for Emergency and Safety. 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 La Romana region, visit www.GoDominicanRepublic.com/hotels, La Romana – Bayahibe Hotel Association www.explorelaromana.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. Mayor bus companies include Autobuses Metro. www.metroserviciosturisticos.com

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

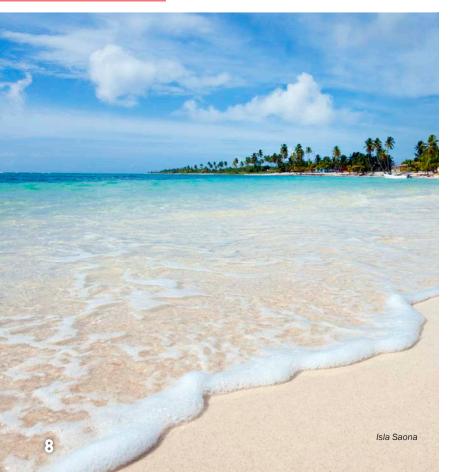
**AIRPORT:** La Romana International Airport (LRM), located just 10 minutes from the town of La Romana and 20 minutes from Bayahibe, consists of a single terminal with four modern gates in the style of an old sugar mill. www.romanaairport.com

**CRUISES:** Hundreds of cruise ships dock at the picturesque Casa de Campo Port in La Romana. With so much to do and see, the cruise port accommodates up to 24 tour buses and features a modern platform and harbor terminal, with a capacity for two large cruise ships. The port includes two docking platforms, a passenger terminal and ample parking facilities. www.cdcports.com



## **BEACHES**

Recognized for their exceptionally fine sand and pristine waters, La Romana and Bayahibe comprise some of the most beautiful beaches in the Caribbean. The beaches within the Bayahibe hotel zone are internationally recognized as certified Blue Flag beaches, which guarantee high quality clean coastal waters along with proper environmental management and safety measures.



ISLA SAONA: Saona Island has some of the most beautiful white sand beaches in the Caribbean. It is a very popular area of the Parque Nacional Cotubanamá – also known as National Park of the East – and is home to 112 species of birds, along with turtles, bottle-nose dolphins and manatees. The island is complete with facilities such as bathrooms, showers and picnic tables for visitors.

PLAYA MINITAS: Within Casa de Campo is Playa Minitas, the resort's exclusive beach, which includes a roped off area for swimming and an array of water sports including snorkeling, kayaking, windsurfing, paddleboats and more. The family friendly beach also allows kids to play beachside games and sports at the "La Palapa" beach hut.

**PLAYA BAYAHIBE:** Bayahibe lies southeast of La Romana and offers several top-rated beach strips without the crowds. The area is frequented by cruise ship passengers and offers pristine white-sand and tranquility, as well as great diving.

PLAYA DOMINICUS: The first beach in the Caribbean to receive Blue Flag certification, Playa Dominicus is most popular for diving with the lush reefs nearby and no undertow. Swimmers can relax at nearby restaurants and enjoy a little shopping at the surrounding souvenirs huts.

**PLAYA PALMILLA:** A secluded beach in Parque Nacional Cotubanamá, Palmilla is a Caribbean paradise where you can swim, snorkel and more. You can get there by renting a boat in nearby Bayahibe or La Romana.

ISLA CATALINA: The small island greets beachgoers and cruise ship visitors with white-sand beaches surrounded by the crystal clear blue waters of the Caribbean Sea. Catalina Island offers numerous water sports, specifically diving and snorkeling. The area is known for its coral reefs and now delights divers with a "Living Museum of the Sea" following the discovery of Captain Kidd's shipwreck 70 feet (21 meters) off the island's coast.

CATALINITA: Catalinita Island is a tiny isle off the eastern shore of the Parque Nacional Cotubanamá. Situated in the Catuano Channel as an attractive sandbar, Catalinita is characterized by its crystal waters, rich biodiversity and abundance of marine life. The reef environment makes this island a popular destination for divers and snorkelers.







Altos de Chavón Amphitheate

## **ATTRACTIONS**





ALTOS DE CHAVÓN: La Romana's hidden gem is Altos de Chavón, a replica of a 16th century Mediterranean artists' village that relishes among cobblestone streets, and coral block and terra cotta buildings. Offering magnificent scenic views of the Chavón River, Altos de Chavón was constructed by the imagination of Roberto Copa, a former Paramount Studios set designer, and Charles Bluhdorn, an American industrialist. Today, Altos de Chavón is a cultural center, home to artists' studios, craft workshops and art galleries where hundreds students from around the world compete to enter its intense, two-year programs in Communications Design, Fashion Design and Fine Arts & Illustration. The School of Design is associated with Parsons The New School for Design in New York, where students later migrate to complete their studies. In the heart of the village are a Grecian-style amphitheater and the Church of St. Stanislaus. www.casadecampo.com.do

CASA DE CAMPO MARINA: Is one of the most complete and prestigious marina in the Caribbean and is located where the Chavón River meets the Caribbean Sea, within the confines of the Casa de Campo Resort. Designed by the Italian architect Gianfranco Fini, Casa de Campo Marina consists of villas, town-house type apartments and a great variety of restaurants and shops. The marina accommodates up to 350 yachts from 50 to 250 feet LOA. Designed to international specifications, it was inspired by the old seaside villages of the Mediterranean. It is equipped to provide a wide range of services and first class facilities. www.marinacasadecampo.com

PADRE NUESTRO ARCHEOLOGY TRAIL: This trail allows visitors to delight in the incredible natural beauty of this area. Located in the Parque Nacional Cotubanamá, it leads to unique flora and fauna, so you can appreciate the tropical vegetation along the 1.25 mile (2 kilometer) route. The route even includes areas once populated by the Taino Indians.

**CUEVA DE LAS MARAVILLAS:** The cave is located between San Pedro de Macorís and La Romana. This fascinating cave system contains hundreds of well-preserved pictographs, petroglyphs and engravings from the Taino Indians who once inhabited it thousands of years before. The dwelling is easily accessible to visitors with its excellent lighting system, ramps, a footpath and a modern elevator. It is home to the most important sample of rock art and features amazing rock formations such as stalactites, stalagmites, and columns. Open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. www.cuevadelasmaravillas.com

**CASINO DOMINICUS:** Visitors can enjoy a night of Las Vegas-style gambling with a Caribbean twist at Casino Dominicus, located between Bayahibe and La Romana. The casino was constructed with the inspiration of its natural setting, with a touch of European elegance and charm.

**LIVING UNDERWATER MUSEUMS:** Fascinating underwater archaeological reserves are located in front of the coast of the Bayahibe hotel zone. Shipwrecked galleons dating back to the early 18th century have been recreated here to portray how they looked when originally discovered by marine biologists. Both snorkelers and scuba divers frequent the museums.









CAPTAIN KIDD SHIPWRECK: The Cara Merchant pirate ship, the ship Captain William Kidd commandeered and then abandoned in 1699 as he raced to New York in an attempt to clear his name of piracy charges, was discovered off Catalina Island in 2008. Since, the National Geographic Channel created a documentary titled, "Shipwreck, Captain Kidd" on the discovery and study of the Cara Merchant pirate ship. The discovery has been created into a "living museum" and is also available as a scientific field resource for students and professionals in the underwater archaeology, marine biology, ecology, and geology fields.

DEEP SEA FISHING: The waters surrounding La Romana are some of the best spots in the world for deep sea fishing for marlin, tuna and dorado, attracting professional anglers from around the world. Tournaments are held each year including the Blue Marlin Classic and the Dorado and Bonito tournaments. High season for blue marlin is in the summer. While chances of catching marlin are slim in the winter, the waters are filled with plenty of mahi-mahi, barracuda, and sailfish.

SCUBA DIVING & SNORKELING: Some of the best diving in the Caribbean can be found along the shores of La Romana. In combination with its spectacular clear blue warm waters, La Romana's undersea world offers incredible ocean adventures with ancient shipwrecks, underwater caverns and stunning coral reefs. Divers visiting the region will have the opportunity to experience one of the greatest examples of marine biodiversity found in the Caribbean, encountering more than 120

species of tropical fish and a variety of marine animals. La Romana's dive sites are filled with underwater archaeological reserves such as Guadalupe and Guaraguao museums, where divers can view shipwrecks and archaeological artifacts. These underwater museum sites are easily accessible to both snorkelers and scuba divers.

PARQUE NACIONAL COTUBANAMÁ: Also known as National Park of the East, is home to more than 500 flora species, 300 types of birds, and long stretches of beaches and underwater wonders, it is one of the most visited and protected areas in the country. While here, visitors can hike, discover ancient Taino ruins, take part in bird watching excursions, and

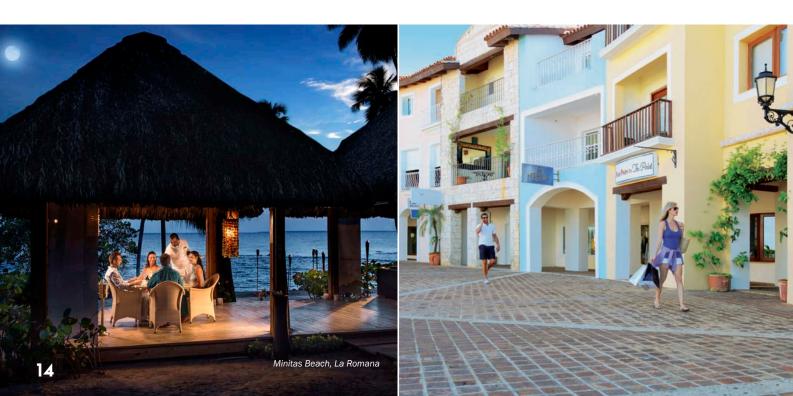
dive in coral reefs populated with manatees, bottle-nose dolphins and other sea creatures.

**SHOPPING:** Visitors to La Romana have various shopping options, whether they are seeking locally made crafts and distinctive Dominican food, or the island's latest fashions. El Artístico, approximately 2 miles (3 km) west of La Romana, is known for selling Dominican art jewelry and Dominican icons made from pounded metal and bright colors. Casa de Campo also houses retail stores with resort apparel, native jewelry, original art and ceramics, fine cigars and more.





The Casa de Campo Marina also has over 45 shopping boutiques offering something for every interest. Find clothing, traditional jewelry, crafts, ceramics, fine cigars and more. The shops also offer world-renowned fashion designers including Chanel, Dolce & Gabbana, Galliano and Prada to name a few. Also, Dominican designer Jenny Polanco has beautiful stores worth visiting in the Marina and in Altos de Chavón. If you are looking for quality jewelry and crafts, the gift shops of the Larimar and Amber Museums in Altos de Chavón offer an incredible selection and guarantee authentic and high-quality materials. For less expensive, but equally unique souvenirs, Bayahibe craftsmen offer crafts and jewelry made from local, organic materials such as seeds, shells and wood, as well as small replicas of famous traditional fishing boats in the area.



# **EXCURSIONS**

**ISLA SAONA:** Saona Island, separated from dry land by the Catuano Channel, is the most popular excursion taken by tourists visiting La Romana area. Part of the Parque Nacional Cotubanamá and voted as one of the Caribbean's Top Dream Beaches by Caribbean Travel & Life, Saona Island's unspoiled beaches, lush palms and turquoise water make it one of Dominican Republic's most enchanted regions. Boat tours depart from neighboring town Bayahibe.

**ISLA CATALINA:** Catalina, a 6-square-mile (15.6 km²) island, is completely surrounded by a marine coral reef nature preserve that attracts thousands of diving and snorkeling enthusiasts. It also boasts the shipwreck of Captain William Kidd, a famous pirate, close offshore. The

island itself is home to lush mangrove swamps, sandy dunes and verdant reefs, and is sometimes a docking destination for cruise ships.

**HORSEBACK RIDING:** Several hotels in La Romana and Bayahibe feature horseback riding excursions that take tourists into the hillsides and to seldom-visited beaches.

**SANTO DOMINGO CITY TOUR:** Experience a journey through history and natural splendor on a tour of the first city in the Americas. Santo Domingo maintains the first cathedral, the first paved street and the first court in the region. The day-long tour will explore the colonial architecture such as the Alcázar de Colón, Cathedral of Santa María La Menor, as well as a visit to the mysterious series of underground caves, Los Tres Ojos.







cigars Tours: Visitors can witness the pride of the men and women experienced in creating handcrafted cigars in La Estancia, La Romana. In this tour, you can learn about the tobacco aging vaults, its preparation, the formulation of tobacco blends, hand-rolling, and its final packaging. The exclusive cigar shop offers the best selection and best prices for premium Dominican cigars, including La Flor Dominicana, the most awarded Dominican premium cigar in the last decade. Open daily from 8am - 7pm.

www.cigarcountrytours.com

Check with your hotel reception or representative for available tours.









**PROCIGAR FESTIVAL:** Hundreds of people from the U.S., Asia, Europe and the Americas attend the annual Procigar Festival which starts in La Romana. The event is organized in February by the Association of Cigar Producers of the Dominican Republic and includes events at Casa de Campo, a tour to Tabacalera La Matilde factory, a golf tournament, beach excursions and visits to other cigar manufacturers in other parts of the country. www.procigar.org

**LOS CAÑEROS MARATHON:** Mountain Bike Marathon celebrated in March through the sugar cane fields of La Romana. The purpose of this major marathon is to raise funds for the MTB Cañeros Foundation, an institution that helps underprivileged children of the region's Batey Cacata.

**CASA DE CAMPO SPRING SHOOTOUT:** Every April the Casa de Campo Spring Shootout takes place at Casa de Campo's famous Pete Dye-designed golf courses. The 54-hole stroke play tournament includes net and gross divisions and the winners of each category compete in a shootout. Packages typically include accommodations in deluxe or elite rooms, daily meals, unlimited drinks and restaurants.

**CASA DE CAMPO POLO TOURNAMENT:** An annual event held at the world-class Casa de Campo Resort. The country's top polo players gather every spring for the event, which is sanctioned by the International Polo Federation. www.casadecampo.com.do

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**PATRONALES DE BAYAHIBE:** Bayahibe's Patron Saint Festival is held for nine days as a dedication to the Divine Patroness of Bayahibe. Celebrated between the months of April and May, it includes a variety of artistic, cultural and sporting activities, thus becoming one of the most anticipated celebrations for both locals and visitors.

**BAYAHIBE FISHING TOURNAMENT:** Held each May for a period of three days, where fishermen from Bayahibe, Isla Saona, Boca de Yuma, La Romana and other surrounding areas compete for the biggest fish in different categories and winners are rewarded with great prizes.

**INTERNATIONAL TENNIS TOURNAMENT:** Local and international amateur and professional tennis players meet every September at Casa de Campo's country club style La Terraza tennis courts to compete in the Casa de Campo Cup. The event, which typically includes nearly 250 participants, includes activities such as practice, doubles and singles tournaments, an awards ceremony and a reception.

www.casadecampo.com.do

**10K BAYAHIBE:** This 10K Marathon, held in September, has become one of the most anticipated events in Bayahibe, as a way to promote fitness and good health. 600 runners participate through a route of 6.2 miles (10 kilometers), including a stretch with spectacular views over the Caribbean Sea and the lush natural beauty of the area.

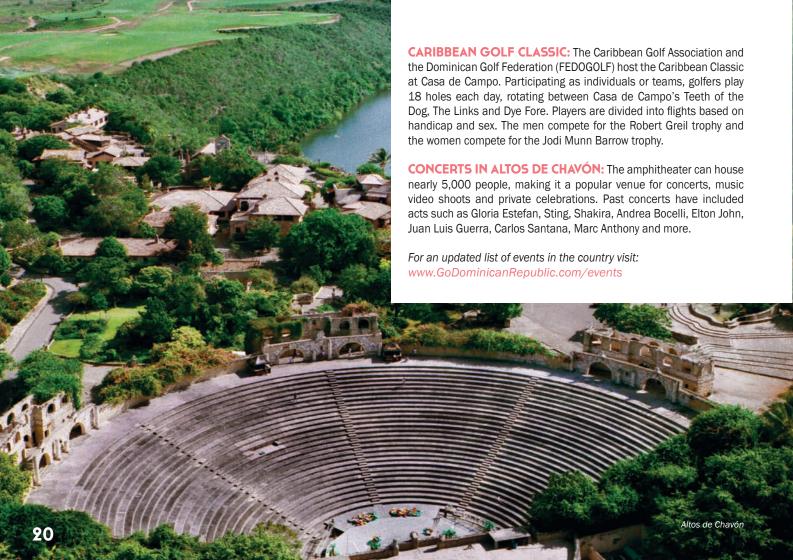
CASA DE CAMPO GOLF OPEN: The Dominican Golf Federation (FEDOGOLF) hosts the Annual Dominican Republic International Golf Open in September, typically welcoming more than 200 players from around the globe. The event caters to amateur golfers as well as the more elite crowd. www.fedogolf.org.do

**BASEBALL:** The action is located in La Romana at Estadio Francisco Micheli, home to Los Toros del Este, when the Winter Professional Baseball Championship season starts mid-October and run through the first week of February. In December and January, Dominican Major League Baseball greats join their local teams to close the regular season and commence league season finals. The championship winner represents the country in the Caribbean Series – Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Mexico and Venezuela rotates hosting the Series every year. www.lidom.com.do

**LA ROMANA-BAYAHIBE GOLF TOURNAMENT:** This annual event is held every November at Casa de Campo and it is organized by the Association of Hotels and the La Romana-Bayahibe Tourism Cluster. The tournament offers attractive prizes and the pleasure of playing in one of the best golf courses in the country.







# **GOLF**

La Romana is the ideal destination for golf lovers who seek upscale golf amid breathtaking scenery. The destination offers five championship golf courses, four of them designed by Pete Dye.

### **CASA DE CAMPO RESORT:**

TEETH OF THE DOG
DYE FORE
THE LINKS
\*LA ROMANA COUNTRY CLUB
www.casadecampo.com.do

## **BAHÍA PRÍNCIPE LA ROMANA:**

PLAYA NUEVA ROMANA GOLF CLUB www.playanuevaromana.com

\*This is a private club; you must be accompanied by a member to play.



## **TABLE OF DISTANCES:**

La Romana Airport to -

Bayahibe 20 minutes

Isla Catalina 30 minutes\*\*

Punta Cana 45 minutes

Juan Dolio 50 minutes

Boca Chica 1 hour

Santo Domingo 1 hour 30 minutes

Samaná 3 hours

Santiago 3 hours 30 minutes

Jarabacoa 4 hours

Barahona 4 hours 30 minutes

Puerto Plata 5 hours

Bayahibe to -

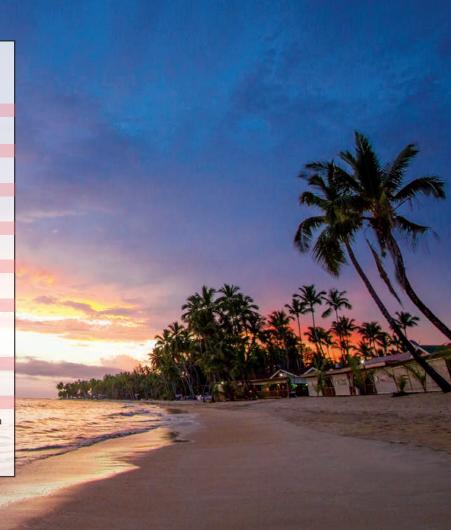
La Romana 20 minutes

Isla Saona 45 minutes (by boat)

Punta Cana 45 minutes

Other destinations add 20 minutes to times from La Romana

\*Times may vary according to traffic conditions. For emergencies contact Road Assistance 829-688-1000



<sup>\*\*</sup>By boat from Minitas beach

# DOMINICAN REPUBLIC





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