

**DR FACTS AND FIGURES**

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<b>Capital:</b>	Santo Domingo
<b>Climate:</b>	Maritime semitropical, with an average yearly temperature of 80 F
<b>Currency:</b>	Dominican peso
<b>Ethnic groups:</b>	European - 16% African origin - 11% Mixed - 73%
<b>Government type:</b>	Representative Democracy
<b>Independence:</b>	February 27, 1844 (from Haiti)
<b>Language:</b>	Spanish
<b>Phone Code:</b>	International access code – 1 / Area code – 809
<b>Political parties and leaders:</b>	Dominican Liberation Party (PLD) - Leonel Fernandez Reyna Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) – Ramon Alburquerque Social Christian Reformist Party (PRSC) – Federico Anton Batlle
<b>Population:</b>	8,950,034 (as of July, 2005)
<b>Religion:</b>	Official - Roman Catholic (95%) Other - Protestant, Seventh Day Adventist, Baptist, and Mormon

Tourism accounts for 24% of GDP for the DR, but this number is growing. The DR has nearly 60,000 hotel rooms and 674 hotels, compared to neighboring Puerto Rico with 12,700 rooms and 145 hotels.

The DR is now the number one Caribbean destination according to a September 2006 study released from the World Tourism Organization. It states that in 2003, both DR tourism dollars generated and number of tourists hosted surpassed that of Puerto Rico –which held the coveted spot for 40 years. Since 2003, DR tourism continues to be record breaking for the country.

According to the Central Bank, during the first seven months of 2006 the Dominican Republic (DR) welcomed 2.17 million foreign visitors, which is an increase of 9.42% over the same period in 2005 and the first time the DR has broken the 2 million mark in the first half of the year. In 2005, the DR had 3.69 million foreign visitors, which was an increase of 6.96% over 2004.

Also for the first time, the DR is receiving the majority of its foreign visitors from North America at 51.48%. The next largest group is 39.46% from Europe. (These numbers are both from the first seven months of 2006.) In 2005, 47.12% came from North America and 45.18% from Europe.

From January through August, 2006 the DR airports had the following arrivals:

- Punta Cana International: 494,315 arrivals, a 19.5% increase from first quarter 2005
- Puerto Plata International: 215,367 arrivals, a 2% increase from first quarter 2005
- La Romana International: 95,089 arrivals, a 5% increase from first quarter 2005
- Las Americas International (Santo Domingo): 149,163 arrivals, a 9% decrease from first quarter 2005
- Cibao International (Santiago): 14.7% increase from first quarter 2005

**Of foreign tourists:**

Through the end of 2005, the DR had the following changes:

<b>United States:</b> up 8.25% 2004: 933,017 2005: 1,010,012	<b>France:</b> up 3.02% 2004: 300,441 2005: 309,529	<b>Italy:</b> up 8% 2004: 123,904 2005: 133,954
<b>Canada:</b> down 4.8% 2004: 448,926 2005: 427,074	<b>Germany:</b> up 0.7% 2004: 233,090 2005: 234,800	<b>United Kingdom:</b> up 10.06% 2004: 197,964 2005: 217,945
<b>Venezuela:</b> up 33% 2004: 25,424 2005: 33,888	<b>Spain:</b> up 11% 2004: 228,035 2005: 255,675 ###	

**NOTE TO EDITOR:** Be sure to visit the new Dominican Republic Ministry of Tourism website [www.godominicanrepublic.com](http://www.godominicanrepublic.com)

