



Dominican Republic (DR) Fun Facts

Baseball

- Over 800,000 children play organized baseball in the DR.
- As the U.S. baseball season winds down, the DR annual baseball season is just warming up. Visitors who want to see the future stars of baseball can often find them playing in the nation's Winter League, which is played from October through January.
- Currently, U.S. professional baseball leagues boast more than 100 players who originated from the DR.
- Many of the world's greatest baseball players are Dominican: David Ortiz, Pedro Martinez, Albert Pujols, Hanley Ramirez, Miguel Tejada, Juan Marichal, and Sammy Sosa.
- Third base-man for the New York Yankees, Alexander Rodriguez (aka A-Rod), was born to a Dominican family moved from New York to the DR when he was four.
- Sammy Sosa, a former Major League Baseball right fielder, was born in San Pedro de Macoris.

Culture

- Santo Domingo was chosen as the Cultural Capital of the Americas for 2010. The prestigious nomination is comparable to being selected to host the World Expo or Olympic Games.
- The DR is credited with creating and developing the Merengue style of music, which is fast-paced, rhythmic dance music.
- The Amber Museum in Puerto Plata houses the famous amber stone with a prehistoric mosquito preserved inside, which can be seen in the box office hit, "Jurassic Park." Amber is a fossil tree resin found in only a few places in the world.
- The country's national bird is the Palmchat (Cigua Palmera) and the national flower is the West Indian Mahogany (Swietenia Mahagon).

Ecotourism

- From January through March, Samaná Bay is taken over by humpback whales. For centuries these large mammals have made an annual trip to the DR to spend the winter. A leader in eco-tourism, the DR has created a whale sanctuary around Samaná in order to protect these gentle creatures from being hunted.
- Home to the highest point in the Caribbean, the DR's Pico Duarte reaches 10,417 feet (3,175 meters) and the lowest point, Lake Enriquillo exceeds 129 feet (39 meters).
- The DR is a leader in environmental and sustainable tourism. Approximately 25 percent of the country's land and coastal shores are preserved as national parks, reserves and sanctuaries.

Fashion

- Dominican born Oscar de la Renta is one of the best-known fashion designers of the 21st century. He was born on July 22, 1932, in Santo Domingo, DR.
- World-renowned model, Arlenis Sosa was born in Montecristi, DR and was recently featured as part of *People* magazine's "100 Most Beautiful List." Arlenis has walked shows for some of the most prestigious designers and

fashion houses in the world, including Hermes, Carolina Herrera, Diane von Furstenberg, Oscar de la Renta and Ralph Lauren.

- Rising star and Dominican model, Rose Cordero has graced the pages of *Vogue* and *W* magazines and has walked shows for Burberry, Marc Jacobs, Zac Posen, Louis Vuitton in New York and Paris.

Food & Drink

- The DR is known as the breadbasket of the Caribbean because it grows, farms and catches almost everything that's served for breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- The world's largest pot of Sancocho was prepared at the Seventh Annual Dominican Fair at La Sirena on Feb. 12, 2007. After five hours of cooking, 3,000 spectators got to eat the savory Dominican meal. Eleven chefs and their assistants used 300 pounds of beef, 250 pounds of pork, 150 pounds of chicken and 500 plantains to make the Sancocho. For a recipe on Sancocho, visit: www.GoDominicanRepublic.com.
- Sugar, tobacco, cocoa and coffee are four of the DR's main agricultural exports.
- With distillation and aging processes perfected over the course of a few centuries, the DR is known for its excellent rum. Brugal, Bermúdez and Barceló are some of the world's most well-known brands from the DR.
- Brewed in Santo Domingo, Presidente Beer is the DR's most popular and is served in just about every establishment in the country.
- Mamajuana is a special DR drink that contains a combination of rum, red wine, honey, herbs and tree bark. The taste is similar to port wine and is recognized as an aphrodisiac.

Golf

- The DR boasts over 25 breathtaking designer golf courses with several more expected to open in the next several years.
- The DR was named the "Golf Destination of the Year for the Caribbean and Latin America" by the International Association of Golf Tour Operators (IAGTO). The award affirms that the DR has arrived on the international scene as an important new "It" destination for golf.
- *GolfWeek* selected Punta Espada Golf Course in Cap Cana as the best course of the Caribbean and Mexico for 2010. This acknowledgment marks the second consecutive year that the course has earned the top spot in the magazine's annual ranking.
- The PGA TOUR Cap Cana Championship is held each year at the Punta Espada Golf Club, which is located on the DR's East Coast. Designed by Jack Nicklaus, the course features eight magnificent holes directly located on the ocean.

History

- The DR is the oldest country of the Americas and it was discovered by Christopher Columbus on his first trip in 1492.
- Santo Domingo is North and South America's first capital city, the site of the first catholic cathedral, first university and hospital. Some of the original buildings have been restored and can be visited in Santo Domingo's Colonial City.
- The DR has the only national flag with a bible in it.
- With a population of which 95 percent are Roman Catholic, the DR features many historic churches and cathedrals, including La Catedral de Santa Maria La Menor. This precious gem has survived pirate attacks, earthquakes and was the first cathedral built in the Americas.

Movies

- Director Francis Ford Coppola filmed scenes of the "The Godfather Part II" in the DR's capital city, Santo Domingo.

Recreation

- Cabarete Bay, located on the North Coast of the DR, is the Kiteboarding Capital of the World. The trade winds and warm water make the conditions just right for kiteboarding.
- Nestled between the rolling hills of the Northern Corridor mountain range, the 27 Waterfalls of Rio Damajagua are known as one of the best eco-adventure sites in the DR. Visitors can jump, slide and swim through Mother Nature's water park.
- Formed centuries ago, the Cave of Three Eyes features small pools and is located in Santo Domingo inside of Parque Mirador del Este.
- Altos de Chavón, a re-creation of a medieval European town, features cobbled-stone roads, Roman-styled amphitheatre and the charming St. Stanislaus Church.

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For more information, please visit the Dominican Republic (DR) Ministry of Tourism's official website:

www.GoDominicanRepublic.com. For media inquiries, please contact Vanessa Welter at bvk PR for Dominican Republic Ministry of Tourism, 1(414) 247-3803/vwelter@bvk.com.