

BOKANA TRAVEL

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC · CARIBBEAN

TRAVEL GUIDE 2026

PUNTA CANA

Under three hours from Bogotá or Medellín, Punta Cana and Bávaro pair long beaches with protected islands and a day trip to Santo Domingo's Colonial Zone.

Travel. Discover. **Connect.** bokanatravel.co

THE ESSENTIALS

TURQUOISE WATER, PROTECTED ISLANDS, A COLONIAL CITY

Punta Cana and Bávaro sit at the eastern tip of the Dominican Republic, in La Altagracia province, where the Caribbean meets the Atlantic. The coast runs for mile after mile of white sand, and most hotels are all-inclusive, which makes group travel much simpler: meals, drinks and beach activities are covered from day one, and you decide how much time to spend by the pool and how much to spend exploring.

The best of it lies outside the resort. To the southeast, Cotubanamá National Park protects Saona Island and its natural pool of shallow water. Off La Romana, Catalina Island is a natural monument with a coral wall for snorkeling and diving. To the north, Macao still feels like a true public beach, with surf schools on the sand. And just over two hours away by road, Santo Domingo's Colonial Zone, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1990, is home to the first cathedral in the Americas.

WHERE IT IS

Eastern tip of the Dominican Republic, in La Altagracia province. Punta Cana International Airport (PUJ) is right in the area.

GETTING THERE

Nonstop. Bogotá to Punta Cana takes about 2 h 50 min (Arajet, Avianca, Wingo); Medellín to Punta Cana, about 2 h 40 min (Arajet, JetSMART). There are also nonstop flights from Cali (JetSMART) and Cartagena (Arajet).

WEATHER

Warm year-round: average highs run from 28.5 °C (83 °F) in January to 32 °C (90 °F) in August, with lows of 21 to 24 °C (70 to 75 °F) (NOAA, 1991–2020). Most rain falls from May to November; September is the wettest month.

DOCUMENTS

For Colombian passport holders: a valid passport, no visa, the free e-Ticket form and a tourist card, which is already included in your airfare.

MONEY

Dominican peso (DOP). Hotels, tour operators and tourist shops accept US dollars and cards; carry pesos for colmados (corner stores), markets and small purchases. Exchange money only at banks or licensed exchange houses.

LANGUAGE

Spanish

TIME ZONE

UTC-4, no daylight saving time: one hour ahead of Colombia.

PLUGS

Types A and B (flat pins, as in Colombia), 110 V, 60 Hz. You won't need an adapter.

DON'T MISS

HIGHLIGHTS

01
SAONA ISLAND

The most visited island in Cotubanamá National Park, formerly called Parque Nacional del Este. Tours arrive by speedboat or catamaran and stop at the natural pool, a sandbar with waist-deep water. Admire the starfish without lifting them out of the water.

02
HOYO AZUL AT SCAPE PARK

A turquoise cenote (a natural sinkhole pool) ringed by tropical greenery, inside Scape Park in Cap Cana, about 5 km (3 mi) from Juanillo Beach. The park is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; arrive early to swim with fewer people around.

03
MACAO BEACH

A public beach facing the Atlantic, north of Bávaro, with golden sand and steady waves. Surf schools run beginner lessons and kiosks serve seafood. It's the best way to see the coast beyond the resort circuit.

04
CATALINA ISLAND

An uninhabited natural monument off La Romana, about 9 km^2 (3.5 sq mi). The real draw is underwater: the Wall, a coral face that drops in steps toward the seabed. The shallow top suits snorkelers; the deep section is for certified divers.

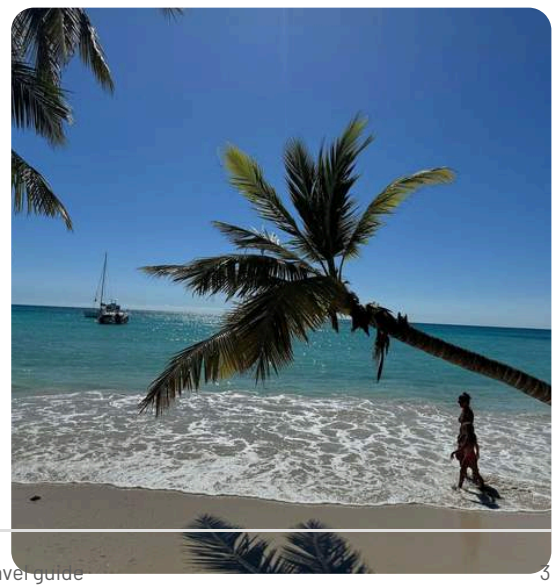
05
SANTO DOMINGO'S COLONIAL ZONE

A UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1990. Walk Calle Las Damas, dating from 1502, and visit the Cathedral of Santa María la Menor, the first in the Americas, plus the Alcázar de Colón and the Ozama Fortress. It's just over two hours away via the Autopista del Coral.

06
BÁVARO BEACH, EARLY

Walk Bávaro Beach first thing in the morning, before the sun bites and while the sea is usually calm. It's the best time for photos and an easy swim. In sargassum (seaweed) season, ask your hotel which stretch they're cleaning.





PLAN YOUR TRIP

WHEN TO GO

The best time is December to April: it's the driest season, the heat is easier to handle and sargassum seaweed is usually at its lowest. From May to November it rains more, and the Atlantic hurricane season runs June 1 – November 30, peaking from mid-August to mid-October (NOAA). Sargassum peaks in June and July, and 2026 has been a heavy year.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

BEST

DEC – APR

The best time to go.

GOOD

JUN – JUL · NOV

A good time, with a catch on weather or crowds.

RAINY

MAY · AUG · OCT

More rain: keep plans flexible.

AVOID

SEP

Hurricane peak and wettest month.

WHAT YOU NEED TO TRAVEL

For Colombian passport holders: no visa has been required for tourist travel to the Dominican Republic since May 15, 2015. You need your passport, the e-Ticket form and the tourist card, which is already included in your airfare. The initial authorized stay is 30 days. Traveling on another passport? Requirements differ, so message us and we'll check yours.

- Valid Colombian passport. The general rule calls for 6 months of validity, but under a temporary exception (December 1, 2024 – December 31, 2026), Colombians entering as tourists are accepted with a passport that's valid for their entire stay.
- No tourist visa: the exemption no longer depends on holding a US, Canadian, UK or Schengen visa, as it did before 2015.
- Tourist card (USD 10), included in every airline ticket issued outside the Dominican Republic since April 25, 2018. It's good for a single entry and a stay of up to 30 days.
- e-Ticket electronic form, free and mandatory for both entering and leaving the country, at eticket.migracion.gob.do. You no longer have to complete it 72 hours ahead: just do it before you check in at the airport.
- Departure tax of USD 20, included in your airfare.
- Stays longer than 30 days require a paid extension; the fee depends on your total time in the country.

Checked in September 2026 with Dominican Republic Ministry of Tourism: entry requirements. Rules change, so confirm with the official source before you travel, or message us and we'll help.

WHAT WE'D TELL A FRIEND

BOKANA TIPS

1 A stress-free e-Ticket

Fill it out for free at eticket.migracion.gob.do before you head to the airport; it covers both entry and exit. Have your flight number and your hotel's exact address handy. Don't pay third-party sites to do it.

2 The tip is already on the bill

At restaurants and bars with table service, the law adds a 10% tip plus 18% ITBIS (sales tax). Anything extra is optional; check the bill so you don't tip twice.

3 Dollars and pesos

Bring dollars for excursions and hotel tips, and change some into pesos at licensed exchange houses, never on the street. ATMs charge a fee per withdrawal, so make fewer withdrawals.

4 A plan B for sargassum

Between May and September, ask your hotel which stretch of beach they clean daily and keep a few excursions up your sleeve. The University of South Florida publishes a monthly sargassum outlook for the Caribbean.

5 Santo Domingo in a day

Leave early: it's just over two hours via the Autopista del Coral. The Colonial Zone is best explored on foot, so bring comfortable shoes, water and a hat; the midday heat hits hard.

6 Serious heat

From June to October, highs hover around 31 to 32 °C (88 to 90 °F). Stay hydrated, wear a hat and broad-spectrum mineral sunscreen, and reapply every time you get out of the water.

7 Hurricane season

If you're traveling between June and November, buy travel insurance with cancellation coverage and follow the NOAA National Hurricane Center's advisories in the days before your trip.

TRAVEL MINDFULLY

At Saona's natural pool, admire the starfish without taking them out of the water: out of it, they can die within minutes, and the island is part of a protected national park. On Saona and Catalina, use mineral sunscreen and never touch or stand on the coral.

WHERE TO EAT

OUR RESTAURANT PICKS

Chosen for their food, their track record and what past diners say. Price: $ budget · $$ mid-range · $$$ splurge.

EL RINCÓN DEL MARISCO $

Dominican, fish and seafood · Avenida España, behind Banco Popular (Bávaro)

★ **4.4** · 528 reviews on Google Maps

Home-style Dominican cooking at local prices, away from the hotel strip. Residents recommend it for its fresh seafood and its mofongo (mashed fried plantain).

What diners love: Reviewers single out the ceviche, lobster soup, fried fish with plantain and coconut crab. The atmosphere is family-style and the servers are friendly; it gets hot, since there's no air conditioning.

Order: Mofongo or fried fish with tostones

Closed Mondays, and it closes early in the evening. Take a taxi.

CAPITÁN COOK $$$

Dominican fish and seafood · El Cortecito Beach (Bávaro)

★ **4.2** · 2,059 reviews on Google Maps

An El Cortecito classic with tables on the sand: pick your fresh fish and they grill it for you. A good way to eat by the sea away from your hotel.

What diners love: Diners praise the fresh fish, the carpaccio, the seafood soup and the beach view. The recurring complaint: prices run high for what you get.

Order: Whole grilled chillo (red snapper)

Ask the price of the fish per pound before you order.

JELLYFISH BEACH RESTAURANT $$$

Caribbean, seafood, international · Bávaro Beach, Arena Gorda area (Bávaro)

★ **4.5** · 4,866 reviews on Google Maps

A two-level, open-air restaurant right on Bávaro Beach, and one of the best known in the area. Ideal for a special dinner at sunset.

What diners love: Reviewers highlight the beachfront setting and fresh seafood, especially lobster and fried chillo (red snapper). Some find the kitchen inconsistent for the price.

Order: Fried chillo or lobster

Book a table for sunset.

HERMAN 311 $$

Seafood, Caribbean and international · Plaza Victoriana, Avenida Italia, across from the Gran Bávaro Princess (Bávaro)

★ **4.4** · 856 reviews on Google Maps

One of Bávaro's top-rated independent restaurants, with traveler awards several years running. A good pick for a night off the all-inclusive.

What diners love: Diners rave about the lobster, grilled octopus, paella and ceviche, plus well-made mojitos. The staff get high marks.

Order: Lobster or grilled octopus

Open late; the terrace has a DJ some nights.

PEARL BEACH CLUB $$

Mediterranean and Caribbean, beach club · Cabeza de Toro Beach (Punta Cana)

★ **4.5** · 2,212 reviews on Google Maps

A beach club and restaurant in Cabeza de Toro, a quieter area than Bávaro. Spend the day with a pool, daybeds and food by the sea.

What diners love: Guests love the view of the turquoise sea, the plating and the attentive service. Some criticize the loud music and the minimum spend.

Order: Catch of the day and a cocktail

Minimum spend of about USD 50 per person, redeemable on food.

LA PALAPA BY EDEN ROC $$$

Seafood, Mediterranean and Caribbean · Caletón Beach, Eden Roc (Cap Cana)

★ **4.7** · 463 reviews on TripAdvisor

A palm-thatched beach restaurant in Cap Cana, open to the public even though it's inside a hotel. For a high-end meal with your feet near the sand.

What diners love: Reviewers praise the grilled seafood, the lobster, the crispy tuna and the view. There are occasional complaints about slow service and billing mistakes.

Order: Grilled lobster or frittura mista

Book ahead and check the bill before you pay.

Ratings and review counts checked in October 2026; they change over time. Review summaries are our own. Hours and prices vary, so check before

LOCAL FLAVORS

WHAT TO EAT

LA BANDERA

White rice, stewed beans and meat, almost always with a salad. It's the everyday Dominican lunch; try it at a comedor, a casual local eatery.

SANCOCHO DOMINICANO

A thick stew of several meats with cassava, yam, plantain and squash, served with white rice and avocado.

MANGÚ CON LOS TRES GOLPES

Mashed green plantain topped with pickled red onion, served at breakfast with "the three hits": fried cheese, salami and egg.

PESCADO FRITO CON TOSTONES

Whole fried fish with tostones (twice-fried green plantain), found at beachfront kiosks like the ones at Macao.



BOKANA
TRAVEL

PICTURE YOURSELF IN PUNTA CANA? LET'S PLAN IT TOGETHER.

Join one of our groups on your own, or bring your people on a private trip.
Scan the code or message us.

Chat with us on WhatsApp

WhatsApp +57 315 817 6079

bokanatravel@gmail.com

bokanatravel.co/en/destinations/punta-cana/

SOURCES

Cancillería de Colombia: lista de países que exigen visa a colombianos (actualización 12 de agosto de 2024)
Ministerio de Turismo RD (Go Dominican Republic): requisitos de entrada
DGII República Dominicana: sobre la tarjeta de turista
Dirección General de Migración: servicio e-Ticket
Consulado dominicano: listado de países y condiciones de visado
El Tiempo (8 de mayo de 2015): República Dominicana ya no exigirá visa a los colombianos
Migración Colombia: requisitos de entrada y salida del país
KAYAK: ruta Bogotá-Punta Cana
Wikipedia: Aeropuerto Internacional de Punta Cana (aerolíneas y destinos)
El Tiempo: Arajet abrió ruta directa Punta Cana-Medellín
El Colombiano (14 de septiembre de 2026): crecimiento de Arajet entre Colombia y RD
Valora Analitik: JetSMART lanza vuelos directos a Punta Cana desde Medellín y Cali
NOAA National Hurricane Center: climatología de la temporada
Wikipedia: Punta Cana (tabla climática con datos NOAA 1991-2020)
USF Optical Oceanography Lab: Sargassum Watch y boletín de agosto de 2026
Revista Mercado: estado del sargazo en Punta Cana, julio de 2026
Hoy (RD): propina legal, cuándo pagarla
Scape Park Cap Cana: Hoyo Azul
Wikipedia: Parque Nacional Cotubanamá
Diario Libre: Parque Nacional Cotubanamá, turismo y conservación
Wikipedia: Isla Catalina (República Dominicana)
Wikipedia: Ciudad Colonial de Santo Domingo
Rome2rio: Punta Cana a Santo Domingo
Plughopper: enchufes en República Dominicana

Photos: Joe deSousa (CC0), Wikimedia Commons (cover) · Oleg Yunakov (CC BY-SA 4.0), Wikimedia Commons · Oleg Yunakov (CC BY-SA 4.0), Wikimedia Commons · Desox7x (CC0), Wikimedia Commons · LittleT889 (CC BY-SA 4.0), Wikimedia Commons.

Bokana Travel. In compliance with Colombian Laws 679 of 2001 and 1336 of 2009, Bokana Travel rejects the exploitation, pornography, sex tourism and any form of sexual abuse of children and adolescents.