

# Spotlight on Santo Domingo



# SANTO DOMINGO

## PORT & SHOPPING MAP



### HISTORY

The city of Santo Domingo was founded by Spaniards who wished to plant a permanent settlement along the northern coast of Hispaniola. Christopher Columbus' brother Bartolomeu founded the city on the east bank of the Ozama River, christening the town Nueva Isabela.

In 1502, Nicolas de Ovando was appointed governor and chief justice of the colony. Ovando decreed that the city be moved to the west bank of the river, and renamed it Santo Domingo. The new city would soon become the site of many "firsts" in the New World, including the first cathedral, the first government buildings, the first customs houses and the first European-style palaces.

As the first outpost of the Spanish Empire in the Americas, Santo Domingo became the port from which all other expeditions embarked. And for a short-but-prosperous period in its history, it was literally the capital of a vast new territory.

Santo Domingo's prestige began to decline after Hernan Cortes' successful conquest of Mexico in 1519, followed by Pizarro's brilliant campaign in Peru. These events proved disastrous to the young colony, particularly after its own alluvial deposits of gold and silver were exhausted. The final blow

came with the rapid annihilation of Hispaniola's Indian labor force due to deplorable working conditions and disease.

By the end of the 16th century, Spain virtually abandoned the colony and focused its attention on the larger, richer lands on the continent. The relative peace that prevailed in the colony was interrupted on several occasions by English and French attempts to break Spain's profitable monopoly in the Caribbean.

Neighboring Haiti ruled the Dominican Republic until almost the mid-19th century. On February 27, 1844, the Dominican Republic declared itself free from Haiti, the culmination of Juan Pablo Duarte's La Trinitaria movement. Aside from a short period in the early 1860s when revolts led government leaders to place the island once more under Spanish control, the Dominican Republic has been an autonomous republic.

### LOCAL FLAVORS

One of the surprising things about Santo Domingo is the variety of restaurants it offers visitors. The selection is truly international: French, Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, Mexican, Indian, Cuban, Argentine and, of course, American cuisine are all well represented here. Add to this a score of typically Dominican eateries serving up the best of their natives dishes, and you have a dinner's delight.

#### DOCKING/TENDERING

The ship docks in Santo Domingo.

#### SHORE EXCURSIONS

Please check your tour ticket for the correct meeting time and location for your tour. Your cruise line representative will direct you to your transportation.

#### TRANSPORTATION

There are four types of taxis in the Dominican Republic

- Regular Taxis (government-regulated)
- Radio Taxis (convenient if you wish to be picked up at a certain hour - the fare is settled over the phone)
- Carros Públicos (public cars, or private cars whose drivers hire themselves out)
- Conchos (collective taxis, or taxis that ride up and down major thoroughfares). Always agree on a fare before getting departing.

#### HOW TO GET TO TOWN

All shops are within walking distance from the pier.

#### SHOPPING

In the capital, the downtown stores are mostly concentrated along El Conde Street, although Duarte Avenue and Mella Avenue have their share of shops. Most are open from 8:30 am to noon and, after closing for the traditional siesta, re-open at 2:30 pm and close again at 6:00 pm. Along La Atarazana, in the Colonial Sector, you'll find a delightful row of 16th-century houses that are now boutiques and galleries selling original works of art, jewelry and other exclusive items. In the newer sectors of the city, you'll find several large shopping complexes with modern boutiques, jewelry stores and curio shops featuring handicrafts from all over the country.

#### STORE HOURS

Most shops are open from 8:30 am to noon and, after closing for traditional siesta, re-open at 2:30 pm and close again at 6 pm. Recommended stores are open whenever a ship is in port.

#### BANK HOURS

Exchanges of foreign currency are done from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.

#### POST OFFICE HOURS

The post office is open from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

#### GOLF

Golf is available at the Santo Domingo Country Club. For further information, dial 809-530-6606 or 809-530-6571.

#### TENNIS

Tennis is available at the Santo Domingo Country Club. For further information, dial 809-530-6609 or 809-530-6571.

#### AIRPORT

The airport is 30 minutes from the pier. A taxi is approximately \$15.

#### PHONE LOCATIONS

Phones are located on the pier as well as in town.

#### EMERGENCY

In case of an emergency, dial 911.



#### CAPITAL

The capital of the Dominican Republic is Santo Domingo.

#### LOCATION

The Dominican Republic is located on the eastern side of the island Hispaniola, which it shares with Haiti. Santo Domingo is located in southern Dominican Republic on the Caribbean Sea.

#### SIZE

The Dominican Republic occupies approximately the eastern two thirds of Hispaniola. Santo Domingo is the largest city in the Dominican Republic.

#### POPULATION

Approximately 7,511,000 people live in the Dominican Republic, with approximately 1,610,000 people living in Santo Domingo.

#### LANGUAGE

The official language of the Dominican Republic is Spanish, but English is widely spoken.

#### CURRENCY

The Dominican Peso (RD\$) is the official unit of currency. United States dollars, credit cards and travelers checks are widely accepted.

#### TIME ZONE

The Dominican Republic is on the United States Atlantic Standard Time from autumn to spring, which is one hour ahead of Eastern Standard Time. During the summer, it follows the United States Eastern Standard Time.

#### TOURIST INFORMATION

The local tourist office is located at 156 Arzobispo Merino across from the cathedral.

## SIGHTSEEING

Though there are interesting sights throughout the city of Santo Domingo, the major historical attractions are concentrated in what is known as the Colonial Sector. Its main thoroughfare is the Calle de las Damas ("Street of the Ladies"). Behind the name is a charming story. When Diego de Colon, the great Admiral's son, was named Viceroy of the Indies in 1508, he arrived in Santo Domingo with a dazzling entourage of nobles and their wives. The local people, impressed by the pious grandeur of these European ladies, gave the street its current name.

The best place to begin the tour is at the Fortaleza de Santo Domingo, a 16th-century military complex built to guard the entrance to the Ozama River and the city. Next to the fortress is a prime example of a grand 16th-century colonial home (the House of Bastidas). This palatial structure was built for Rodrigo de Bastidas, the patriarch of one of the most influential families in the New World. Today the building houses several cultural institutions, including a library and a school.

For an interesting glimpse into the past, you should not miss the former home of the founder of Santo Domingo, Fray Nicolas de Ovando. Located down the street from the House of Bastidas, the structure is a

magnificent example of colonial architecture. It is now a small, intimate hotel called the Hostal Nicolas de Ovando.

Nearby is the Capilla de Nuestra Señora de los Remedios ("Chapel of Our Lady of Remedies"). Originally, the chapel was part of a palatial 16th-century house built for the powerful Davila family. The house has since been annexed by Hostal Nicolas de Ovando, but the tiny stone chapel remains intact. And directly across the Ozama River is the Chapel of the Rosary, the oldest church in the country, dating back to the 16th century.

Across from the chapel of Our Lady of Remedies is an early 18th-century Jesuit church that today serves as the National Pantheon. Here lie the remains of the Dominican Republic's greatest heroes, including General Pedro Santana, the five-time president of the republic.

The remarkable Museum of the Royal House (Casas Reales) is located close by. This splendidly restored 16th-century complex originally housed the official headquarters for the government of the New World.

## GUARANTEE

Shop with confidence, knowing that all merchants on this map have been carefully selected and each offers a 30-day guarantee to cruise line guests. This guarantee ensures buyers that all recommended merchants will repair or replace any unsatisfactory item, excluding buyer's negligence, buyer's remorse and lost or stolen merchandise. For purposes of determining quality and value of jewelry related to a buyer's complaint, only appraisals secured by a buyer from independent graduate gemologists, not affiliated with any retail jeweler, will be acceptable. Please inquire about individual store return policies before finalizing any purchase.

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Please send a letter and include the name of the ship, cruise date, store name and merchandise problem. Also enclose a copy of the sales receipt and any relevant documents relating to the sale. Onboard Media will contact the recommended store on your behalf for repair or replacement, and you will be notified accordingly.

**Tune in to Shopping Channel 22**

