

THE
RONAN MCMAHON
REPORT



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Real Estate Buyer's Guide

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WHY THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Imagine a Caribbean dreamscape, and you're likely picturing the Dominican Republic.

Palm trees sway in the breeze...crystal-clear azure waters lap the serene shoreline...the glimmering white sand feels powder-soft underfoot.

The calm waters here are perfect for paddleboarding, diving, and snorkeling...the coral reefs offshore are home to a rich and vibrant marine life (whale watching is big here from January to March). The island's north coast is popular with surfers, windsurfers, and kiteboarders, and if you're into deep-sea fishing, marlin, sailfish, and mahi-mahi all call the waters around this island home.

If you're after a more relaxing experience, you can lounge on the soft sand and listen to the gentle waves lapping the shore. Or spend the day at one of the island's many resort spas or wellness centers.

But this island paradise is so much more than just beaches and relaxing...

It's one of the most geographically diverse nations in the region and is home to Pico Duarte, the Caribbean's tallest mountain peak, and Lake Enriquillo, its largest lake.

Here you can zipline, explore caves, mountain bike, or hike the many trails in the island's interior.

In the Dominican Republic's capital, Santo Domingo, you'll find street after street of historic buildings. The city was a model for many across the Spanish American empire. It's where you'll find the first university, the first cathedral, and the first castle in the Americas.



The Dominican Republic is also well known for its high-end resorts with amazing amenities and luxury services. There you'll find something for everyone—golf...a catamaran cruise down the coast...lunch at the sushi bar...dinner at a steakhouse...

And wherever you go, you will hear music, which will normally be bachata, merengue, or salsa. There is music on the local buses, in the shops and supermarkets, and bars. With all this on offer, it's no surprise that the Dominican Republic is becoming increasingly popular with North Americans. The climate is tropical, the lifestyle is easy-going, and the beaches are beautiful.

And if you're thinking of spending more than just a couple of weeks here, you'll find all modern services and amenities, including top-class healthcare, high-speed internet, and shopping. The residency process is straightforward, too. Property is affordable. And with six international airports, it's easy to get to from North America. Only a two-hour flight from Miami, this is one of the Caribbean's busiest tourist destinations.

Some of the most popular hotspots in the Dominican Republic are found along the southern coast between Santo Domingo and La Romana. Here, you'll find Boca Chica, where you can wade 100 yards from shore in crystal-clear waters, and still be only waist-deep with nothing but soft, clean sand underfoot.

On the eastern tip of the island is Punta Cana, the second most popular tourist destination in Latin America with more visitors than any other city in the Caribbean region. This is also where you'll find the vast, ultra-luxurious master-planned community of Cap Cana, with its high-end resorts, blinding white-sand beaches and emerald-green Caribbean waters (more on Cap Cana later in this report).

On the northern Atlantic Coast, the 30-mile stretch from Puerto Plata to Cabarete has long been popular with expats, too.

After Mexico's Riviera Maya, the Dominican Republic gets the most tourists in the entire region. And just like Mexico's Riviera Maya, the Dominican Republic has seen a huge surge of visitors post-pandemic, thanks in no small part to its easy access from the U.S.

The country is smashing tourist number records. If you've never been to the Dominican Republic before, then you probably know someone who has. The small Caribbean country is a tourism juggernaut, breaking another record by attracting 11 million tourists in 2024. This represents a 6% increase compared to 2023.

A New Luxury Haven in the Caribbean



The Dominican Republic's strategic location has turned it into a tourism powerhouse. By owning prime real estate there, you profit from the country's incredible growth story...

Historically known as a mass-market tourism destination, the Dominican Republic still attracts tourists looking for affordable all-inclusive resorts, but it's been steadily increasing its share of the luxury travel market within the Caribbean, positioning itself as a premier destination for the wealthy.

The busiest private jet terminal in the Caribbean is in St. Maarten, which serves as the gateway to nearby luxury destinations like St. Barts, Anguilla, and the British Virgin Islands.

The private jet terminal in Punta Cana is one of the busiest and best-served private terminals in the region...

This key hub for private jets in the Caribbean has a dedicated VIP terminal designed for private jet passengers, offering high-end amenities, expedited customs and immigration services, and private lounges. The airport has multiple private-jet operators providing comprehensive services, including aircraft parking, refueling, maintenance, and concierge services.



In recent years, there's been something of a scramble across the Caribbean to upgrade and develop private jet facilities.

Luxury travel has boomed globally post-pandemic, and nowhere is that more obvious than on the beaches and in the exclusive resorts of the Caribbean.

Destinations across the region have worked hard to cash in, but the Dominican Republic was always poised to be a new leader...

The luxury travel market has changed. Today wealthy vacationers tend to look for experiential and personalized travel, sustainability, wellness tourism...there's a growing emphasis on top-tier dining experiences...and cultural tourism...

In addition to traditional luxury, there has been a focus on eco-luxury tourism, particularly in areas like Samaná and Jarabacoa. High-end eco-lodges and boutique hotels offer exclusive, sustainable experiences catering to affluent tourists seeking both luxury and adventure.

The country is also investing in culinary tourism, and partnerships with international culinary schools are part of the effort to position the Dominican Republic as a destination for food connoisseurs.

The Dominican Republic was already aligned with all these trends, but more than that, for the past decade the country has been putting the money and planning into the right infrastructure, investment, and marketing to target the affluent market. The government has backed luxury tourism in a big way. Roads have rolled out. Airports have grown in size and sophistication. The big brands of luxury travel are all well established, and more are pouring in, while plenty of smaller exclusive boutique operations have planted their flags.

The Dominican Republic is now competing successfully with traditionally dominant luxury destinations like St. Barts, the Bahamas, and the Cayman Islands. But compared to those other high-end destinations in the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic is competitively priced, offering great value for real estate buyers. You'll find out more about the real estate scene later in this report, including the availability of financing. And, yes, it is perfectly legal for foreigners to own property in the Dominican Republic. But, as you'll soon learn, there are some country-specific guidelines to keep in mind. In this guide, you'll also discover the many visa options available to expats...and the incredible benefits they offer. Safety and security, low-cost/high-quality healthcare, infrastructure, the vibrant local culture...it's all in this guide.

First, let's take a dive into the most appealing expat hotspots in this beautiful Caribbean island.

THE BEST PLACES TO OWN

Expats in the Dominican Republic tend to live where other expats live, which are often also popular tourist destinations. These are places that offer foreign supermarket chains, gated communities, high-end restaurants, healthcare services, as well as access to an international airport. Of course, nearly every sizable expat community is along the coast, so you can expect beautiful beaches as well.

Punta Cana

Punta Cana, located on the eastern coast of the Dominican Republic, is a popular tourist destination known for its stunning white sand beaches and crystal-clear turquoise waters.

The region is famous for its numerous all-inclusive resorts, which cater to visitors from around the world and offer a wide range of amenities and activities.

Punta Cana's climate is tropical, with warm temperatures and plenty of sunshine throughout the year. This makes it an ideal destination for beach lovers and outdoor enthusiasts. In addition to its natural beauty, Punta Cana boasts a vibrant nightlife scene, world-class golf courses, and a variety of water sports and adventure activities, ensuring that there's something for everyone in this Caribbean paradise.



Punta Cana is easily the country's biggest destination. Like Mexico's Riviera Maya, Punta Cana has been benefiting from a decades-long "path of progress" that began here in the late 1960s when it was discovered by a group of American investors who started acquiring and developing beachfront land. (A path of progress is anything that makes a place easier to get to, like new roads, airports, or bridges, or more desirable, say, a 5-star resort in a place that previously only had cheap hostels).

With its bars, restaurants, and, of course, the great beaches, Punta Cana makes a lot of sense as a lifestyle destination.



Cap Cana

Cap Cana is a luxurious resort and real estate community located on the eastern tip of the Dominican Republic, adjacent to Punta Cana. It is a stunning 30,000-acre (twice the size of Manhattan) master-planned community featuring pristine white sand beaches, turquoise waters, and lush tropical landscapes.

This is a veritable city-state devoted to high-end luxury. It has over three miles of white-sand beaches and miles more of coastline. You have schools, world-class golf, a huge inland marina, a university campus, fitness centers, convention centers, one of the Caribbean's finest equestrian facilities...a fire station, a clinic...and the Caribbean's largest water park, its amphitheater inaugurated by Elton John.

Everything in Cap Cana screams luxury.

It's home to a St. Regis. You'll find Hyatt...Secrets...and a stunning Eden Roc. It also has...

- Top-tier golf courses, including Punta Espada, a Jack Nicklaus signature course that has hosted the PGA's Champions Tour.
- More than 30 upmarket dining establishments, including fine dining, steak houses, beach clubs, chic cocktail bars, Spanish and Italian restaurants, sushi and other Japanese cuisine, charming cafes, ice cream parlors and candy shops, and much, much more.
- An adventure park, complete with animal encounters, ziplines, off-road trails for ATVs, and more. The stables offer horseback riding.
- The usual resort-type shops with beachwear and sunscreen and such, but also upscale boutiques offering fashion and home décor.
- An expansive, pristine marina with 150 slips. It can accommodate yachts of up to 150 feet.





It's rated as one of the #1 spots in the world for billfish. You'll also find marlin, sailfish, wahoo, and tuna abundant offshore.

- If you're wanting to get out on the water without fishing, you can take a catamaran cruise from the marina...or a kayak from the beach. There is also world-class scuba and snorkeling in the surrounding waters.

- Not to mention, a tennis club, spa and wellness offerings, a hospital, and a bilingual school. There's even a polo ground and facilities for dressage.

And it's all set against a backdrop of stunning beach...azure Caribbean waters, an expanse of sugar-white sand, all fringed by swaying palm trees.

With its commitment to preserving the natural environment and providing exceptional services, Cap Cana attracts visitors and investors seeking a lavish Caribbean lifestyle. And Cap Cana's proximity to the Punta Cana International Airport, just 20 minutes, makes it easily accessible for travelers from around the world.

Think of Cap Cana as a sort of mini "Caribbean Cabo." Just like in Los Cabos, at the far southern tip of Mexico's Baja California peninsula, you have a top-end marina, pristine beaches, high-end amenities, and world-class sportfishing. Cap Cana even has a beautifully manicured Jack Nicklaus signature oceanfront golf course and a new St. Regis hotel... just like the five-star Quivira resort in Cabo.

The market is also similar to Cabo in terms of demographics and wealth, though Cap Cana understandably draws folks mainly from the East Coast of the U.S. and Canada, rather than the West Coast like Cabo.

If luxury and spectacular beaches are your thing, then put Cap Cana on your shortlist. Cap Cana is a prime place to benefit from the explosive growth of the Punta Cana region and the Dominican Republic.

Las Terrenas

Situated on the Samana Peninsula on the Dominican Republic's north coast, lush and tropical Las Terrenas is a little slice of paradise...

It boasts 19 miles of walkable, public beach, palm trees, warm breezes, and stars so bright that you could pluck them from the sky.

It's a laid-back, cultured getaway. A seaside escape, with plenty of beach bars and restaurants right on the sand, so you feel the breeze and enjoy the views. Las Terrenas is low-rise and low-key. Thirty years ago, it was a rustic fishing village. The town didn't have an electricity supply until the 1990s. But it attracted thousands of Europeans who came as tourists, fell in love with the town, and started businesses: restaurants, cafés, bakeries, art galleries, small hotels...



The beaches here are stunning and varied. Each has its own character, from sheltered reef-protected bays to golden-sand beaches lapped by waves and backed by lush hills.

Unlike other parts of the Dominican Republic, Las Terrenas does not have high-rise buildings, and development is highly restricted.

Outside of town, there are a couple of larger all-inclusive hotels. But that's it. Everything else is boutique. It should stay that way. Expats and locals don't want to adopt the mass-market all-inclusive model. Construction here is generally of a high standard and very sympathetic to the surroundings.

The history of Las Terrenas as an expat destination is what gives it its European flair. The first foreigners—French—started coming to this once tiny fishing village in the 1970s when it was all rough roads and no electricity. Then the Italians came. The town grew, and with that growth came electricity, high-speed internet, cellphone service, good quality medical facilities, and everything else that makes a place comfortable for long-term living.

Today, you can still find excellent French bakeries and Italian restaurants. And the local grocery stores are well stocked with imported (but expensive) wine, cheese, charcuterie, and more. You'll often hear French spoken, as they are still a major expat and tourist presence.



But these days, many folks from the U.S., Canada, and beyond are visiting and deciding to settle in Las Terrenas as well. All are welcomed by the warm and friendly (and exuberant) local people. Las Terrenas has a vibrant, active community.

Access to and from town is through a well-maintained coastal highway. And there is an international airport, El Catey, just 20 minutes away. Santo Domingo, the capital of the country and location of the best shopping and top medical care in the country, as well as a larger international airport, is just two hours away. No wonder so many middle and upper-class Dominicans come to Las Terrenas on weekends and holidays.

Also important, especially to retirees, is the availability of high-quality medical care at a major hospital and a large clinic in town. For very serious cases, many expats go to Santiago de Los Caballeros to the west and Santo Domingo to the south, where the largest and best hospitals in the country are located.



Cabarete

Cabarete is a coastal haven on the north coast, to the west of Las Terrenas.

Although it first gained attention as one of the world's premier spots for kiteboarding and windsurfing, Cabarete has much more to offer visitors and expats. Year-round warm weather, a lower cost of living, friendly locals, a fun lifestyle, and tropical beaches all make Cabarete worth checking out.

Cabarete is a laid-back and relaxed town. And even though it is popular with tourists, you get a small-town vibe thanks to the small but tight-knit expat community where everybody knows everybody. And there are plenty of fundraisers, events, and parties every week.

It is popular with U.S. vacationers, as well as Canadian snowbirds. In the winter season, the town is noticeably busier, and if you plan to come at that time of year, it's best to reserve a rental early.

The closest airports to Cabarete are in Puerto Plata, or Santiago de Los Caballeros where flights tend to be cheaper.

Cabarete has one long main thoroughfare through the heart of town, with condos, shops, and restaurants on either side. The whole town is walkable.



The population is about 15,000, although you will find the larger town of Sosua, with a population of 50,000 and plenty of supermarkets, as well as other shops and services, just a few miles to the west. The second largest city in the Dominican Republic, Santiago de Los Caballeros, with almost a million people in the metro area, is about two hours away.

In Cabarete, the action is on the beach. Each afternoon the winds pick up and the bay comes alive with sails and kites. The scene in Cabarete draws watersports enthusiasts from across the globe, giving Cabarete a distinctly international vibe; it's not uncommon to hear a half-dozen languages spoken just walking through town. As you can imagine, these same spots offer lessons, starting at beginner level, and you'll find people of all ages out on the water.



But you don't have to be into kiteboarding to enjoy life in Cabarete. There's a lot happening on shore too. You can take miles-long walks on the beach, where the development of the town gives way to wild beaches. There are many yoga classes and alternative healers.

Cabarete also enjoys good healthcare, conveniences like high-speed internet, and reliable cellphone service.

There are no large resorts or condo/hotel towers in Cabarete, so the skyline fronting the beach is low buildings and palm trees. No glitz and glamour here. Just a chilled outlook and attitude. If you've been to the major resort areas of the Dominican Republic, like the all-inclusive-filled Punta Cana, this is a whole different world.



BUYING REAL ESTATE

The Dominican Republic is a well-established Caribbean resort vacation destination and benefits from year-round sunny beach weather. It has been called the last affordable place in the Caribbean, and for good reason. Real estate prices here are a fraction of what you'd pay in other, more established islands.

It's no surprise that lots of people are interested in buying real estate in the Dominican Republic, either as a vacation home, investment property, or with an eye on living in the country permanently.

Unlike other parts of the Caribbean, there are no restrictions on foreigners buying real estate in the Dominican Republic. Foreigners enjoy the same rights as Dominican nationals when it comes to buying real estate. As a foreigner, you can buy anything from beachfront villas to apartments, to plots of land.

Keep in mind that to be considered the owner of a property in the Dominican Republic, you must hold a Certificate of Title, issued by the Title Registry Office. And be sure to hire a reputable lawyer before signing any documents or handing over any money for real estate.





Financing Your Property Purchase

Foreigners can obtain loans in the Dominican Republic, and this includes mortgages to purchase real estate.

To secure a mortgage, it definitely helps to be a legal resident with a visa. The process is also easier if you have established ties and a credit history in the country. Non-residents can receive financing between 50% and 70% loan-to-value, while residents are offered up to 80% loan-to-value.

This is what banks typically look for in your application:

- Steady income and solid credit history (this can be from abroad) that shows you can repay the loan.
- Proof of income, including pay stubs, tax returns, and bank statements.
- A debt-to-income ratio (including the mortgage) of under 30% to 40%.

A down payment of 20% to 30%.

The Buying Process in the Dominican Republic

In the Dominican Republic, it's typical to conduct negotiations verbally; when you have an agreement, you can make an official offer in writing.

Once the written offer is accepted, the buyer is usually asked for a "good faith" deposit of a few thousand dollars while the buyer does their due diligence. This is normally refundable if the buyer backs out during the due diligence timeframe, which needs to be agreed upon with the seller before making the deposit.

Promise of Sale Document

The next stage is to draw up the Promise of Sale document. A lawyer or public notary can do this.

It's vital that the buyer has engaged the services of a lawyer by this point. You will want your lawyer to carry out due diligence on the Promise of Sale document and the title deed and permits of the property before you sign anything. However, if you need extra time for due diligence, you can insert a clause into the contract giving you the right to pull out of the deal if you or your lawyer is unhappy with any findings from the due diligence.



The Promise of Sale document is legally binding and signed in front of a notary (this can be done electronically or if your lawyer has power of attorney, they can sign on your behalf if you're not in-country).

The Promise of Sale document will include:

- The full names and passport information of all parties involved in the transaction, including their spouses, if applicable.
- A detailed and accurate legal description of the property being purchased.
- A detailed list of the fixtures, fittings, and/or appliances that will be included in the sale.
- The agreed-upon purchase price and the specific terms of payment.
- The contract should include a default clause that outlines the consequences and remedies in the event of a breach of contract by either party.
- The exact date on which the property will be physically (the keys) and legally (the title deed transferred) delivered to the buyer.

A few more items to note:

The seller must provide representations and warranties within the contract, including clauses that protect the buyer against any misrepresentation by the seller.

The contract must also explicitly state that the seller is legally obligated to execute the Deed of Sale and transfer the title, free and clear, upon receipt of the final payment and the completion of the transaction.

What is RETA?

My name is Ronan McMahon. I'm an international real estate scout. My team of researchers and analysts and I spend a small fortune on research and travel as we search out the best real estate opportunities in some of the most appealing locations around the world, including Portugal.

Often, what we find and the deals we make pay off with potential investment opportunities that I share with members of my Real Estate Trend Alert group. ([You can learn more about my RETA group here.](#))

To be a RETA member is to be first on the very best real estate deals in the world. First to get wind of a big transformation, a big trend or major Path of Progress event, first to get in on the ground floor of that transformation...first to get in on a best-in-class real estate at off-market prices.

The core strength of RETA is our group buying power. It's by acting in unison with like-minded investors—fellow RETA members—that we get the incredible deals that we do.

Over the years, RETA has developed a heavy-hitting reputation in the right circles. Our group buying power is highly respected and sought after. It's how we get deals no one else gets, deals that even the most informed local real estate insiders can't believe. And RETA members will continue to access our pipeline of incredible off-market deals from the world's most desirable locations.

I've been watching Portugal closely and bringing investment opportunities to RETA members for many years, focusing on the appealing beach communities on the Algarve. Let's take a look at our track record.

* In December 2019, RETA members could buy in a community called Santa Maria from €310,500. Two-bed condos available to RETA members for €390,000 now list for €550,000—a boost of €160,000.

* In 2020, I recommended condos in a community called Adega in Lagos. RETA members could get penthouses here for the incredible price of €480,000. Those now list for around €1 million...meaning they've doubled in price.

* In 2021, we had a RETA deal in the luxury community of Dona Maria. One RETA member purchased a penthouse there for €1.1 million. That was recently listed at double that—€2.2 million.

• RETA members could also buy two-bed condos in Dona Maria from €575,000. These now list for about €850,000—an uplift of €275,000.

Nobody I know does the kind of travel and first-hand research we do. Nobody I know has our contacts and ability to negotiate such incredible, off-market deals for members.

And nobody I know has RETA's track record of being ahead as destinations experience major transformations.

Members of Real Estate Trend Alert are the only people who get all my research reports... the inside scoop and contact information for some of the top experts in real estate...and the hottest off market opportunities from around the world.

[Click this link to learn more about RETA and to join today.](#)

Closing Costs on Real Estate in the Dominican Republic

In the Dominican Republic, closing costs are typically paid by the buyer, apart from the real estate agent's fee, which the seller pays. Closing costs typically run up to 5%. They will be lower if the property has the Confotur approval/exemption.

Confotur, also known as Tourism Incentive Law No. 158-01, is a specific program set up by the Dominican government to promote investment in tourism development. Some (but not all) newer real estate projects in tourist areas, such as Punta Cana and Las Terrenas, have Confotur approval. Confotur tax benefits include an exemption for the 3% transfer tax, which is detailed below.

Real Estate Taxes

Transfer Tax

Transfer tax is a single payment to be made upon the transfer of the title. Transfer tax is 3% of the value of the property.

The amount is based on either the purchase price stated in the promise of sale contract or 70% of the property's market value as assessed by tax authorities, whichever is greater.

So, if your contract price is lower than the tax authority's assessed market value, they'll charge you transfer taxes against that higher appraised amount.

Property Tax

Known as Impuesto Patrimonio Inmobiliario (IPI), this tax is an annual payment of 1% of the property value over and above RD\$10,190,833, which is currently USD \$161,251.

Tax Exemptions

Property owners who have purchased a Confotur-certified property have an up to 15-year tax exemption, including transfer tax, annual property tax, and income tax on the annual 20% tax on rental income.

Capital Gains Tax

When you sell a property in the Dominican Republic, you must pay a 25%-27% capital gains tax (Impuesto Sobre la Renta) on any profit you make. This is based on the difference between the amount you paid for the property and the amount you sold it for.

Tax on Income from Your Property

If you're making money by renting out your property in the Dominican Republic, you'll have to pay an additional tax. This tax is a flat 27% of your rental income after subtracting allowed expenses like maintenance and utility costs.





HEALTH CARE

Expats in the Dominican Republic have several healthcare options, ranging from private hospitals and clinics (paying cash or using international or local insurance coverage) to public healthcare services.

Public Healthcare (SENASA)

The Dominican Republic has a public healthcare system, offering free or low-cost services. However, the quality of care, wait times, and availability of medications can be inconsistent. It is not recommended for expats who can afford private care.

Private Healthcare

There are well-regarded private hospitals and clinics, especially in tourist areas and larger cities, such as Santo Domingo, Santiago de los Caballeros, and Punta Cana. Private healthcare is affordable compared to the U.S., but costs can still be high for major procedures.

Many expats opt for private insurance to cover hospital visits, specialist care, and surgeries. You can take on local Dominican insurance or use an international policy. For a short-term visit, travel insurance is a good option. Pharmacies are widely available, and many medications can be purchased over the counter. Prices are generally lower than in the U.S., but it's good to check if your specific prescription is available. If not, be sure to bring extra from your home country or ask your physician for a possible alternative.

Typical costs for healthcare:

- A doctor's visit at a private clinic: \$30 to \$60
- Specialist consultation: \$50 to \$100
- Hospital stay per night (private hospital): \$100–\$300
- Major surgery: Costs vary but are significantly lower than in the U.S.

VISAS & RESIDENCY

To live as an expat in the Dominican Republic, you'll need a residence visa. There are several options, as you'll see below. You're sure to find one appropriate for your situation.

Retiree: You can obtain residency if you receive a monthly pension or retirement income of at least \$1,500, plus an additional \$250 per dependent.

General Investment: You can invest in the Dominican Republic through contributing to the capital of a Dominican entity, a fixed-term deposit, stocks, or securities.

Passive Income: You can obtain residency by proving a monthly passive income from a foreign source of at least \$2,000 for five years, transferrable to a local bank. This can come from deposits, investments, remittances, yields from real estate abroad, or interests from securities in foreign currency.

Residency Through Real Estate: One of the most popular and efficient residency options if you're looking to live in the country long-term is investment in real estate. To be eligible for residency through real estate investment, applicants must meet certain criteria, including being at least 18 years old, possessing a valid passport, having no criminal record, and demonstrating good health. Additionally, applicants must prove they have sufficient financial resources to support themselves and their families while living in the Dominican Republic.

The investment amount required for residency via real estate investment starts from \$200,000. This residence through an investment route can also eventually lead to citizenship/second passport.

The Application Process: The process begins in the embassy in your home country where you provide a range of documents to show you qualify. The embassy then stamps your passport with a residence visa, and you have 90 days to come to the country and upgrade it at the immigration office to temporary residence. You will also be issued with a Dominican identity card known as a cedula. This temporary visa is then renewed annually. After four years it becomes permanent.



INSIDER TIPS

Water Sports

Water sports are big in the Dominican Republic. Some expats make a daily swim in the sea a part of their island-life routine. You'll find kitesurfing in many parts of the Dominican Republic, with some of the best conditions in the world for the sport in Cabarete. Also near Cabarete is Encuentro Beach, home to the best board surfing in the country. And there's good scuba diving and snorkeling in many parts of the country, too.

Learn Spanish

There are enough English-speaking expats and bilingual locals in the Dominican Republic that you could get by without learning any Spanish. However, learning some Spanish can be fun and will make your life easier. Besides that, you can get to know your new Dominican neighbors and their vibrant culture. And it's definitely worth the effort to learn some Spanish so you can show respect. Even just a few phrases can go a long way!

One way to learn Spanish is to hire a local teacher. Another way is to study with an online home course and then practice when you're out and about as is watching TV in Spanish with English subtitles.

Golf

The Dominican Republic is a leading destination for golf tourism, with over 30 golf courses, many designed by legendary architects. Cap Cana, for example, already has Jack Nicklaus course, named #1 in the Caribbean and Mexico, and there are plans for two more.





Imported Goods

While the cost of living is generally lower in the Dominican Republic, imported foods, electronics, and such can be the same price or more expensive than they are “back home.”

So, it pays to shop local. And with abundant fresh fruits and veggies at the markets, fresh-caught seafood (which can be bought directly from fisherman on the beach in some areas), and local alternatives to many of your favorite “box” products, it’s pretty easy to do so.

Hurricane Season

Hurricane season runs from May to November, and serious storms happen just about every year somewhere in the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and/or Atlantic Ocean. So be prepared for potential storms.

If you’re from a state that experiences hurricanes, you know the drill. Otherwise, be sure to have an evacuation/emergency plan, gather emergency supplies like water and food, and pay attention to the news so you’re ready in case a storm is forecast to hit your area.