

7-Day Dominican Republic Itinerary

Punta Cana, Santo Domingo & the Samaná Peninsula

DURATION

7 Days

BEST TIME TO GO

Dec – Apr

dry season, peak whale season Jan 15 – Mar 31

FROM

\$1,495 USD / person

for 2 people

Day 1

Arrive in Punta Cana

Land at Punta Cana International Airport (PUJ) and head straight for the beach — most hotels in the Bávaro/Cap Cana corridor are a short, well-marked drive from arrivals.



Private Airport Transfer — Punta Cana Airport (PUJ) to Bávaro

~20–30 minutes · \$35 USD one-way per vehicle (1–4 people)

Prearranged private transfers meet you at arrivals with a driver holding your name — the standard way in from PUJ, with WhatsApp booking and 24/7 support.

Punta Cana Transfer · +1 (849) 654-2047 · puntacanatransfer.com.do



Overnight — Tortuga Bay Puntacana Resort & Club

From \$600–750 USD / night, for 2 people

A gated, beachfront enclave within the larger Puntacana Resort & Club — Oscar de la Renta–designed suites, a private beach, and a level of quiet the bigger all-inclusives up the coast don't have.

Puntacana Resort & Club · puntacana.com



Dinner on Your Own — Puntacana Resort & Club

Est. \$30–50 USD / person

On your own the first night — the resort's own restaurants (or a short golf-cart ride to La Cana Beach Club) cover everything from ceviche to steak without leaving the property.

Day 2

Saona Island Day Trip

One of the most-booked excursions in the country — a full-day catamaran run down to the protected waters of the East National Park.



Saona Island Catamaran Cruise — “Saona Classic”

9:00 AM–4:00 PM (full day) · \$66.70 USD adult / \$46.70 USD child, hotel transfer included

Catamaran down to Bayahibe, a swim stop at the natural pool of La Palmilla, then a beach buffet lunch on Saona Island itself before the return sail — book a weekday to dodge the biggest crowds.

XPO Tours · xpotours.com



Overnight — Tortuga Bay Puntacana Resort & Club

From \$600–750 USD / night, for 2 people

Second night at the same resort — no need to pack up before an early tour pickup.

Puntacana Resort & Club · puntacana.com

Day 3**Punta Cana to Santo Domingo**

Trade the beach for the capital's 500-year-old colonial core — it's a two-and-a-half to three-hour drive west, worth doing in daylight for the changing scenery.

**Private Transfer — Punta Cana to Santo Domingo**

~2.5–3 hours · \$160 USD one-way per vehicle (1–4 people)

A door-to-door private transfer across the country's southeast on the direct highway route, with hotel pickup arranged the night before.

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**Overnight — Hodelpa Nicolás de Ovando, Zona Colonial**

From \$130–170 USD / night, for 2 people

A 16th-century former governor's residence turned boutique hotel, steps from the Alcázar de Colón and the oldest paved street in the Americas — the best base for exploring the Zona Colonial on foot.

Hodelpa Nicolás de Ovando · hodelpa.com

**Dinner — Pat'e Palo European Brasserie**

Est. \$30–50 USD / person

Set on Plaza España in a 1505 merchant's house — reputedly the oldest restaurant building in the New World — with a French-Caribbean menu and views over the Ozama River.

Pat'e Palo · patepalo.com

Day 4**Santo Domingo: Zona Colonial**

The Zona Colonial is compact enough to see on foot in a day — start with a guided walk to get the history straight, then wander back through on your own.

**Colonial City Guided Walking Tour**

~2.5 hours, departures 9:00 AM–3:30 PM · \$45 USD / person, includes museum entries

A local guide walks the Catedral Primada de América, the Alcázar de Colón, and Calle Las Damas — finishing with a traditional mamajuana toast.

Urbano Tours · +1 (829) 837-1252 · urbanotoursrd.com

**Free Afternoon — Museo de las Casas Reales & the Malecón**

Museum entry ~\$4 USD · self-guided

Duck into the Museo de las Casas Reales for a deeper look at colonial-era artifacts, then walk the Malecón waterfront as the city's boardwalk lights come on for the evening.

**Dinner — Mesón D'Bari**

Est. \$20–35 USD / person

A Zona Colonial institution since 1974, tucked into a converted colonial house — Dominican home cooking (sancocho, mofongo) in a room hung with local art.

Mesón D'Bari · Calle Hostos, Zona Colonial

Day 5**Santo Domingo to Samaná**

The Samaná Peninsula sits on the northeast coast — the drive over on the DR-7 toll highway takes about two and a half hours and clears mountains and coconut plantations along the way.

**Private Transfer — Santo Domingo to Samaná**

~2.5 hours via DR-7 toll highway · \$240 USD one-way per vehicle (1–4 people)

The same DR-7 corridor tour operators use, cutting what used to be a 4+ hour drive down to under three — arrange through your hotel or book direct.

Punta Cana Transfer · +1 (849) 654-2047 · puntacanatransfer.com.do

**Overnight — Gran Bahía Príncipe Cayacoa, Samaná**

From \$150–200 USD / night, for 2 people, all-inclusive

A hillside all-inclusive over Samaná Bay, with a private cable car down to its own beach club — a restful base for the two very different landscape days ahead.

Gran Bahía Príncipe Cayacoa · bahia-principe.com

Day 6**El Limón Waterfall & Cayo Levantado**

A day split between the peninsula's rainforest interior and one of its postcard-famous beach islands.

**El Limón Waterfall Horseback Tour**

Tue/Fri/Sun, 8:00 AM–1:00 PM · \$55 USD / person, includes horse & guide

A horseback ride through farmland and rainforest to the base of El Limón, a roughly 165-foot waterfall with a swimmable pool — book through your resort or direct; wear shoes you don't mind getting wet.

Sublime Samaná · sublimesamana.com

**Cayo Levantado Beach Excursion**

Half-day · boat transfer from Samaná town, from \$20–30 USD / person

A short boat ride to the small island known locally as “Bacardi Island” for its old rum-ad shoots — white sand and clear water, best visited before the afternoon cruise-ship crowds arrive.

Day 7**Whale Watching & Departure**

Samaná Bay is one of the best places in the Western Hemisphere to see humpback whales — if you're traveling mid-January through March, this is the day to build the trip around.

**Humpback Whale Watching Tour (Jan 15–Mar 31 only)**

~3 hours · \$65 USD adult / \$35 USD child, +\$5 to add Cayo Levantado

A 55-foot double-deck boat heads into Samaná Bay, one of the North Atlantic humpback's main winter breeding grounds — outside the January 15–March 31 season, swap this slot for a second visit to Playa Rincón instead.

Whale Samaná · +1 (809) 538-2494 · whalesamana.com

**Private Transfer — Samaná to El Catey International Airport (AZS)**

~35–45 minutes · from \$35–45 USD one-way per vehicle (1–4 people)

El Catey is the closer airport for a Samaná departure — confirm your flight actually routes through AZS before booking a transfer here rather than back to Punta Cana or Santo Domingo.

Prices and hours are estimates based on research at time of publication and can change — confirm current rates and availability directly with each business before booking. © I-Journey — i-journey.com