



Dominican Republican Information

Travel documents

U.S. citizens traveling to the Dominican Republic must have a passport that is valid for six months after their expected return date. No entry visas are required for U.S. citizens. Please check travel.state.gov to confirm passport validity requirements prior to your tour. Citizens of all other countries should contact their appropriate embassies to find out what specific documentation is required for them to travel.

For travelers under the age of 18, parents or guardians will be asked to sign a liability waiver. This allows the Group Leader to assume limited power of attorney and sign liability releases for certain included activities. If the traveler's parent or guardian does not submit this waiver, the traveler cannot participate in those specific activities.

Vaccinations and health precautions

For information on necessary vaccinations, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) or consult your physician for the most updated information.

Tour Director and driver

You will have the same Tour Director during your entire tour—they may also act as a local guide during sightseeing tours and guided activities. You will typically have the same bus driver throughout the entire tour, as well.

Tipping

It's customary to tip your Tour Director and bus drivers as a token of appreciation at the end of the tour. We recommend:

- \$6–8 per person per day for your Tour Director
- \$3 per person per day for your bus driver
- \$1–2 per person for each guided activity (like ziplining, whitewater rafting, etc.)

We recommend using U.S. dollars or local currency for tipping. We suggest you deposit the tip money into your bank account and withdraw it at the end of the tour, then present it to your Tour Director and bus driver in the tip envelopes provided by EF.

Currency

The Dominican Republic's currency is the Dominican peso, but in some cases the U.S. dollar is also accepted. We recommend withdrawing money from a bank or ATM instead of using credit cards or traveler's checks. Most shops don't take credit cards. Traveler's checks are usually not accepted in the Dominican Republic and we highly discourage the use of them. Using ATMs is more convenient, but be sure to plan ahead because certain project sites will not have easy access to ATMs. You should notify your bank of your travel plans to avoid service interruptions and inquire about charges when withdrawing money abroad. Visit xe.com for more currency information

Transportation

Many transfers on your Dominican Republic tour may take between three and four hours, depending on road conditions and the season. The country's topography includes curved roads and many steep hills. Those prone to motion sickness may consider bringing medication. Groups will often be accompanied by a police escort when transferring from place to place. This is a standard practice set by the Dominican Republic Board of Tourism for EF groups.

Accommodations

While you are in the big cities in the Dominican Republic, you'll stay in chain hotels that are simple but clean and modern, with amenities like Wi-Fi and television.

Outside of the large cities you'll stay in smaller, family-run establishments or more rustic lodges. Be aware that tropical conditions in the Dominican Republic make insects and other small animals (such as ants, mosquitoes, lizards, spiders, and frogs) more prevalent.

Students under the age of 20 will share rooms with two or three other travelers of the same gender. These rooms will have single or shared double beds (or a combination of the two). Students may share rooms with students in the tour group who are not from their own school.

Adults will share twin rooms with other adults of the same gender. They may share rooms with adults in the tour group who are not from their own school. Groups may not all have rooms next to each other (some may even be on different floors) and that hotels may be located outside of the city center. Please note that electrical voltage and outlets in the Dominican Republic are the same as in the U.S., so you will not need an adapter or converter.

Bathrooms

Many hotel and public bathrooms have old plumbing and ask that you dispose of toilet paper in waste baskets rather than flushing. Water pressure in the Dominican Republic is often lower than in the U.S. and the amount of hot water can be limited, so be prepared for short showers. In more remote sites, hot water may not be available.

Phones and internet

If you plan to use your personal cell phone on tour, contact your wireless provider to see what fees you may incur for calling, texting, or using data abroad. Wi-Fi may not be available at all hotels in the Dominican Republic and may be unreliable when available, even on the road. Travelers should plan to be without Wi-Fi for 1–2 days at a time. Consider buying a phone plan for more consistent and reliable connectivity.

Local food

Dominican food is flavorful but not spicy. Typical dishes include: rice and beans, plantains, yucca, vegetables, chicken, and fresh fruit. In addition to water, fresh fruit juices will often be served with meals. Travelers should not drink the tap water in the Dominican Republic and should only drink water from pre-sealed containers. Bottled water will cost 50 cents to a dollar.

Safety

Always inform your Tour Director if you should need to leave the group at any point. Store valuables in hotel safe deposit boxes and refrain from carrying large sums of money or wearing valuable jewelry. Although hotels in coastal areas may be located near the beach, swimming is only permitted in certain areas designated by EF for safety reasons. Please be sure to read EF's *Travel & Safety Guide* before going on tour.

Weather

The Dominican Republic has a tropical climate with two seasons: wet and dry. The wet season begins in May and lasts through November. During the wet season it will rain frequently (anything from a light rain to a downpour). The dry season begins in December and lasts through April. That being said, the Dominican Republic has many microclimates because of its diverse topography, so these patterns will often vary locally. Temperatures remain fairly constant throughout the year but vary according to region. Mountainous regions of the Dominican Republic can be very warm in the day but cool in the evening. Please check weather.com for your destinations and travel periods.

Packing

We suggest bringing the following items: a light jacket or windbreaker, rain gear, comfortable walking shoes, water shoes, hat, sunscreen, a swimsuit and beach towel, insect repellent, and binoculars. You may also want to have a small backpack you can carry during the day to hold extra clothes in case the weather changes or you get caught in the rain.

Luggage

Many airlines charge fees for the first checked bag to the Dominican Republic, so be sure to verify with your airline before you depart or ensure your suitcase fits the allowances for carry-on luggage. Fees for checking bag on the international flights between the United States and the Dominican Republic are not included in the price of your tour. Travelers may pay to check their bag(s) at the airport when checking in or avoid paying any baggage fees by traveling with only carry-on luggage. Please contact the airline for baggage restrictions and regulations.

Notes on specific activities

In Jarabacoa, groups will experience difficulty levels of 2–3 while whitewater rafting (depending on whether it's dry season or rainy season). Groups will be divided into smaller groups of five to seven travelers per raft, each with their own local guide. All travelers must wear closed-toe shoes or sandals with straps—flip flops are not acceptable footwear for this activity.

For those travelers participating in ziplining and/or whitewater rafting, there is a weight limit of 200 lbs for safety reasons. Before ziplining, operators will need to confirm that travelers approaching this weight restriction fit comfortably into the ziplining harness before being allowed to participate.

Additional Information

Some groups may visit a regional school or interact with local students on tour. We ask that you do not bring any donations for these visits. EF has sustainable partnerships with the schools and organizations already, so our travelers can focus on having meaningful interactions in the Dominican Republic instead.