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&  
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**Your traveling companion!**

# **The Dominican Republic** FOR **DUMMIES**

**A Reference  
for the  
Rest of Us!**

**Everything you need to  
know about your  
ministry trip in the  
Dominican Republic  
and more!**

**Let them give glory and  
proclaim his name in  
the islands.  
Isaiah 12:12**



***Nelson & Rennae de Freitas***

**Your missionaries to Dominican Republic**

**The  
Dominican Republic**

FOR  
**DUMMIES**

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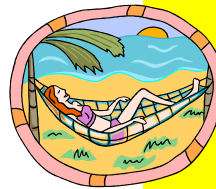
## ***The Dominican Republic an Introduction***

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The Dominican Republic is a study in contrasts. It is a third world country rich in history, struggling to find it's place in the fast paced, high-tech twentieth century. The ease with which Americans may enter the D.R. may obscure the fact that this country is vastly different from the United States in history, customs and standards. Since your ministry trip will bring you in to direct contact with the Dominican nationals in far different circumstances than if you were traveling as a tourist, it will be helpful to have some background regarding the Dominican Republic. When you know the history of a country and what the people have been through to get to where they are now, it helps you to understand and love the people.

### ***In this section...***

- 🌴 Snapshot***
- 🌴 History***
- 🌴 People***





## An Introduction

### Snapshot



**Population:** There are over 9.2 million people in the Dominican Republic. Over seventy percent of the population is mulatto, while Haitian and Spanish peoples form the largest minority groups in the country.

**Land Area:** Covering 18,703 square miles, the Dominican Republic is approximately the size of Vermont and New Hampshire combined.

**Major cities:** Santo Domingo is the capital with a population of 2.7 million. Santiago de Los Caballeros is the second largest city with 1 million residents. Fifty-two percent of the country's population live in towns of more than 10,000 people.



**Languages:** Spanish is the official language.



**Location:** Bounded by the Atlantic Ocean on the north and the Caribbean Sea on the south, the Dominican Republic occupies the eastern two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola. The West Indies republic shares a common border with Haiti that runs for 193 miles on the D.R.'s western boundary. Located between Puerto Rico and Cuba, the country has a coastline of more than 1,000 miles and many islands lie along its shores.

**Terrain:** Four mountain ranges run almost parallel across the country from east to west. The principal one is the Cordillera Central which crosses the middle of the country. One of the range's peaks, Pico Duarte (3,087 meters or 10,094 feet above sea level) is the highest point in the Caribbean. The Valley of the Cibao, nestled in the upper central part of the country, is considered the Dominican Republic's "food basket" and produces fruits, vegetables and sugar cane.



**Climate:** Ocean currents and year-round trade winds moderate the tropical heat and the temperature varies little with the seasons. At lower elevations, temperatures range from 60 to 90 degrees while it is slightly cooler at higher altitudes. The rainy season lasts from May to October with an average annual rainfall of 55 to 60 inches.



**Government:** A representative democracy with three independent branches of government: the executive, legislative and judicial. Elections for congressional, municipal and presidential offices are held simultaneously every four years. The Supreme Court has nine members appointed by the Senate. Each of the 29 provinces is headed by a presidentially appointed governor.

**Religions:** All religions are tolerated but 95 percent of the population is Roman Catholic, which is the state religion.



**Industry:** With an agriculturally based economy, the most important export crops are sugar, cacao and coffee. The principal industrial activity is processing agriculture products. Tourism is also a leading source of income in the D.R.

**Flag:** The Dominican flag is divided into four sections separated by a white cross. Its upper left section is dark blue; the lower left is red. On the right side of the cross, the colors are reversed. The national coat-of-arms appears in the center.



## History



Christopher Columbus landed on the island of Quisqueya, as the original Indians called their island, on December 6, 1492. The Spaniards virtually wiped out the Indian inhabitants and made the island the first seat of their New World Empire.

Dominican history is a story of conquests by such countries as: Spain (three times), France (twice), Haiti (twice), and the United States (twice). From 1916-24, the country was under the administration of the U.S. to help collect custom fees for the payment of the national debt. Marines were sent to the D.R. in 1965 to maintain order, protect U.S. citizens there and to keep communists from taking over the country. In 1874, the U.S. almost accepted an offer to annex the country. Four periods of national independence have been known, the most recent beginning in 1924.



Santo Domingo, the capital city has the distinction of being the first city in the Western Hemisphere founded by Europeans. To put this city in proper historical perspective, consider that Santo Domingo was already 75 years old when William Shakespeare was born. When the Mayflower landed on Plymouth Rock, Santo Domingo was well into its second century. Harvard University was founded a full 100 years after Santo Domingo's University which was the first to be chartered in the Western Hemisphere. Today Santo Domingo is a thriving metropolis, larger than all but three cities of the U.S. It possesses most of the advantages of a large metropolis, and more than a few disadvantages of urbanization.

The capital city has been pillaged by the likes of Sir Frances Drake. The entire nation was held under the thumb of the cruel dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo for some thirty years. His reign ended in 1961 when he was assassinated.

## People



The population is a mixture of European, African, Middle Eastern, and North American people. Their influence has combined to produce a unique society and people. Some descendants of ex-slaves from the United States live near Samana in the northeast. A small group of European Jews settled near Puerto Plata in the north about 1940. Dominicans love music that mixes that rhythmic pounding of the African drums with the rattle of the Spanish maracas. Dominicans enjoy dancing the merengue, the national dance. Most Dominicans are Roman Catholics. Thus they have a reverence for the Word of God, and are generally open to the gospel.

Many Dominicans lead a simple, rustic life in remote, often barely accessible countryside (campo). Agriculture is the source of livelihood for those who live in the campo. Many farmers live in small thatched roof huts with cement floors which are being slowly replaced by small cinder brick houses built by the government.



## An Introduction

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### *"People" ...continued*

Most city dwellers earn a living as factory workers, government employees, or office workers. Many live in Spanish-style apartment buildings. Dominicans dress much the same as people in the United States with the drastic exception that Dominicans generally are more formal in their dress. For example, Dominican men in the city seldom would go to public places in shorts. Wearing shorts would indicate a poorer person or an uneducated person.

The contrast between the rich and the poor is striking. Extreme poverty and great wealth can often be seen within the same neighborhoods. Although a middle class is rising rapidly, the "haves and have nots" are clearly visible. The poverty may come as a shock to most first-time visitors, but it is never appropriate to show negative attitudes toward the people or the conditions for any reason! The nationals are to be loved, respected, and accepted as equals. There are no second-class human beings!



Nearly 2 million Dominicans live in the U.S., some 600,000 live in New York City alone. This means that every 10th citizen of the D.R. is Dominican-American with strong attachments to both countries. Therefore, you will find many nationals speaking English or wanting to learn English. Americans are well-liked, and the American culture is not totally "foreign."

There is little crime of the random, violent type that plagues other tropical vacation spots. Felonies of preference are burglary and auto theft. The many armed guards stationed before businesses, homes and construction sites may give the impression of an armed camp. The security consciousness may be the reason that the per capita crime rate is one of the lowest in the world.

The Dominicans are some of the most loving and gracious people you will ever meet. At first they may appear aloof, but they are simply checking you out. A smile is sure to break down any walls. The welcome they give a first-time visitor is touching and can be overpowering. Their demonstrative cordiality will often take the reserved types aback, and may take some getting used to, but its sincerity should not be doubted.

A general rule is: be courteous to everyone -- at all times -- under all circumstances. It is an offense to the Dominican people to ignore them or leave the impression that we are better than them. Unfortunately, the "ugly American" image has left its imprint because of the thoughtlessness and false pride of many American tourists. We must strive to erase this error by exhibiting genuine and loving respect for them.



One way to achieve this is to shake hands with everyone. In the D.R., a handshake is one of the most common forms of a friendly greeting. Be prepared to shake many hands, even with the children. Yes, especially the children! And-----SMILE!

## ***Rx for Culture shock:***

### ***"Be in the know"***

There is one disease you may encounter for which there is no vaccination--Culture Shock. Simply put, culture shock is the feeling of helplessness one experiences when they feel that all the rules of the game of life have been changed, and no one has given you a clue what the new rules are. This disease can express itself in feelings of extreme discomfort, often accompanied by hyper-irritability, bitterness, resentment, homesickness, and depression.

There are positive steps you can take to minimize the impact of culture shock. Part 2 will explain some of the things that you should know about the Dominican Republic in order to reduce any unnecessary culture shock.

### ***In this section...***

- 🌿 Rx for Culture shock***
- 🌿 Mosquitos***
- 🌿 One-Day Spanish Course***
- 🌿 Food and Drink***







## Rx for Culture Shock



There are positive steps you can take to minimize the impact of culture shock. The following is the Rx for culture shock:



1. Know your host country. One of the best antidotes is knowing as much as possible about where you are. This is the purpose behind this packet of information.

2. Look for logical reasons behind everything in the host culture which seems strange, difficult, confusing or threatening. Even if your "reason" is wrong, it will reinforce the fact that there is a logical explanation behind the things that you observe in the host culture. Relax your grip on your own culture a little. There is no way that you can lose it (any more than you could forget to speak English), but letting go a bit may open up some unexpected avenues of understanding.

3. Don't succumb to the temptation to disparage the host culture. Resist making jokes and comments ("Well, what else would you expect from these people?") which are intended to illustrate the stupidity of the "natives". Commiserating with people who make such comments will only reinforce your unhappiness.



4. Above all, have faith in God who brought you here to use you for His glory and the furtherance of His Kingdom. Believe in God, in the essential good will of your hosts, and in the positive outcome of the experience.

## Mosquitos



The D.R. is a haven for very hungry mosquitos. These little pests show a marked preference for visitors. They are especially numerous in June, July and August. Whatever time of the year you come, don't forget your mosquito repellent. These pests will be anxious to greet you. Malaria, however, is not a problem in this country.

## One-Day Spanish Course

hola.....	hello
iglesia .....	church
tratados.....	gospel tracts
hombre.....	man
mujer.....	woman
niño.....	boy
niña.....	girl
amigo .....	friend (male)
amiga.....	friend (female)
no.....	no
sí.....	yes
hermano.....	brother
hermana.....	sister
biblia.....	bible
Dios.....	God
Jesús .....	Jesus
Dios lo bendiga.....	God bless you

uno .....	one
dos.....	two
tres.....	three
cuatro.....	four
cinco.....	five
seis.....	six
siete.....	seven
ocho.....	eight
nueve.....	nine
diez.....	ten
buenos días.....	good morning
buenas tardes.....	good afternoon
buenas noches.....	good evening
me llamo .....	my name is
¿Cómo se llama?.....	What is your name?
¿Cómo está? .....	How are you?
¿Dónde está el baño?..	Where is the bathroom?



## Food and Drink in the Dominican Republic

**Food requirements** for your visit will be different than those in the United States. Although food will be purchased in the D.R., it will be carefully supervised. The following "food rules" **must be rigidly observed**:

1. All food will either be supplied directly or approved by the missionary.



Do not eat fresh vegetables or fruit unless approved by the director. **Exceptions:** If you can peel it and throw away the peel, you can eat it. This includes bananas, citrus fruits, etc. Do not buy "cut" fruit from stands, even if the peel is still on it. When in doubt, ask.

2. Soft drinks with familiar United States trade names, such as Coca-Cola, Pepsi-Cola, 7-up, etc. may be consumed if these soft drinks are provided in **bottles or cans**.

**Important:** Wipe the top of bottled drinks dry before drinking. See "Safe Water" section.

3. Dairy products, including ice cream, must be approved by the directors--no exceptions. Milk may be available as part of our daily meals, and may be consumed as part of those meals when eating with the entire group.



**Note:** It may be very hot and you might be tempted to buy just one little slush or snow cone. **Don't do it!** You can get a serious case of diarrhea by consuming contaminated frozen refreshments.

### Safe Water

All water in the DR, except certified purified bottle water, is contaminated with microscopic organisms call "amoebae". Their presence in your body will cause severe diarrhea. Some nationals can drink this water without adverse effects because their bodies have developed immunity to the amoebae. But visitors to their country have no such protection, and very serious problems can develop. **There is absolutely no danger for those who obey some simple rules.**



#### The following rules will help you:

1. The only water you may drink is certified, purified water provided by the missionary.
2. Do not use **any ice** unless it has been approved. Freezing does not kill amoebae.
3. Do not use "tap water" for **brushing your teeth**, or for taking medications.
4. When showering, avoid getting water in your mouth.

## ***Adventure upon Arrival***

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When Neil Armstrong landed on the moon, he was probably a little nervous but at the same time he knew that he was about to have the greatest adventure of his lifetime. Your new frontier isn't exactly the moon but it may probably seem just as alien to you. You may also be a little nervous about your landing in the Dominican Republic, but don't worry, just like Neil, you are about to embark on a great adventure.

### ***In this section...***

- ✿ Important Travel Information***
- ✿ Travel tips***
- ✿ Bringing in Items***
- ✿ The Airport Adventure***



## Important Travel Information



**Register with National Assemblies of God MAPS or AIM office:** In order to receive world missions giving credit, the church must register their trip with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri calling (417) 862-2781. This process involves filling out liability waiver and proof of insurance forms. Insurance may be purchased for the trip through headquarters.



**Required Documents:** U.S. Passport and tourist card required. Tourist card, valid 90 days, is purchased upon your arrival at the airport in the Dominican Republic. The fee is \$10. Vaccination certificate not required.



**Health:** Tap water is not potable. Health requirements change; check latest information.

**Weather and Clothing:** Lightweight clothing suitable for hot, humid weather is appropriate year round.



**Telephone:** When dialing to the Dominican Republic from the U.S., dial 1 + 809 + local number. **While in the DR, the most economical way to make a phone call is by purchasing a phone card that is available here in the country.**



**Time:** The D.R. is in the Atlantic Time Zone. However, during daylight savings time in the US, Dominican time is equal to the Eastern Time Zone due to the fact that the D.R. does not participate in it.



**Electric Current:** 110V, 60-Cycles, AC. Power outages are common.

### Travel tips

#### What you can bring back from the DR



Each visitor in the DR may bring back to the United States duty-free articles not exceeding \$400.00 in retail value. It is important to keep all receipts and sales slips of items purchased in the DR.

#### What you cannot bring back from the DR



The United States Department of Agriculture quarantine bans the importation of certain plants, fruits, or vegetables. In addition, no birds or other animals, dead or alive.

**Suggestions:** Use small containers for toiletries. Pack clothes you can leave, someone there will be glad to wear them and you'll have a lighter bag for souvenirs.

**Team limit on baggage:** Due to the space factor in transportation, **please limit your personal luggage to 50 lb.** That is one medium sized suitcase and one carry on bag.



## Adventure upon Arrival

### A Helpful Checklist

Item	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Item	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Item	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Passport		Lightweight suitcase or duffel bag		Work shoes (tennis shoes are fine) and dress shoes	
Flip flop sandals		Clothing: sports, sleeping attire, jeans		Church Clothes	
Canteen/ bottle for water		Towel and washcloth		Toiletries	
Insect repellent		Pepto-Bismol or Kaopectate tablets, Imodium		Pain Reliever	
Camera/ film		Small flashlight		Sunglasses or hat or both	
Spanish/ English dictionary		Alarm clock		Snack food, such as granola bars	
Small Bible		Paper and pen		Sun Screen- <b>very important</b>	
Beach towel		Swimsuit (One piece only for the girls)		Work gloves, if on work team	
Hand Sanitizer		Small pillow & case, if not staying in a hotel		2 bed-sheets, if not staying in a hotel	



### Helping the missionaries

#### Bring items into the country:

The most effective way for missionaries to order items from the United States and receive them, is through ministry teams. Items bought in the U.S. and brought in, can save the missionaries 50% to 100% of their costs. Teams that bring in items help in three ways: 1. Items purchased at a better price in the US or items purchased that are not sold in the DR. 2. Mailing costs of the items are extremely high and teams help save these costs. 3. The customs at the airport give more liberty to items carried in than the customs at the ports or the post office. Generally, the missionaries will ask for or need two kinds of items: work and personal. Some items are sent to you in boxes and at other times you will be asked to purchase items.



The **work items** may be office supplies, hard to find parts for equipment, ministry equipment (lights, cords, etc.) or ministry books (curriculum, text books, etc.) The missionary may ask the group leader to buy the items and bring them with the group. The missionary will reimburse the cost of the items when the group arrives, unless other plans have been made.



The **personal items** may be: toiletries (such as shampoo, rinse, hair spray, etc.), hard to buy food items such as packets of salad dressing mix, taco mix, burrito mix, peanut butter, chocolate chips (large packages or container), or cold medicine, vitamins, etc. Contact could be made with the individual missionary to see what their particular needs may be.



### The Airport Adventure

If possible, arrange for a group check-in. Have the suitcases identified as a team (a colored ribbon). You will be responsible for advancing the suitcase to the front of the line where it will be tagged. The director will obtain all boarding passes and distribute them to you, if it is a group check-in. Have all your documents ready (in hand). The director may choose to collect all documents (passports, etc.).



Generally, the airlines allow two check-in bags and one carry on. If you desire help with your luggage, there will be baggage handlers once you clear customs in Dominican Republic. They will also be ready to serve you on your day of your return home. Expect to pay something (tip) if you need their help. **The baggage handlers in the Dominican are very anxious to assist you but will expect a tip. Therefore if you are not prepared to tip them clearly express that you do not need their assistance.** An acceptable tip would be between \$1.00 or \$2.00 per bag. You may also use the luggage carts available near the luggage carousel and use those to transport your bags all the way out to the parking lot.



## Adventure upon Arrival

### The Airport Adventure continued...

When you arrive in the Dominican Republic, you'll first purchase your tourist card (\$10 in US currency) at the booth located in the area before going through immigration. One person can buy the tourist cards for the whole group. After filling out the tourist card, you can proceed to immigration. Once you clear immigration then go on to baggage claim. You'll then gather your luggage. Get organized **as a team**. At that point, be ready to clear customs **together**. Customs may ask you to open one or more suitcases. The best strategy to clear customs easily is:

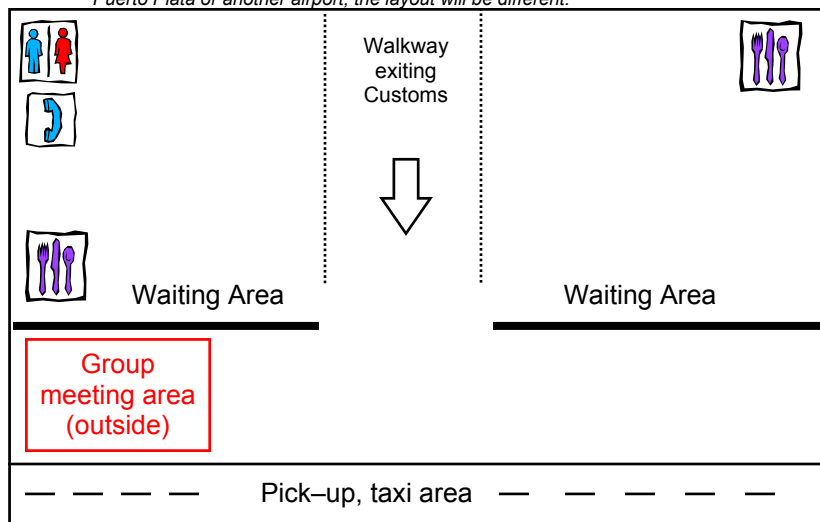
"Don't worry you can speak English. They will understand ya."

1. Clear customs as a team, not individually.
2. Go through the line marked "Tourist".
3. Carry any item that may draw attention, i.e. electronic items, etc., in your carry on bag, not your suitcase.
4. If you are bringing in an item for one of the missionaries that you purchased new, **do not leave the item in its original packing**. Custom taxes can run as high as 150% of the original cost of the item. Wrap the item in soft towels, etc. and pack it in a large suitcase or duffel bag, if possible.

\* **Note:** Items packed in cardboard boxes or plastic containers draw the attention of the customs officers. That is not to say that you cannot pack in these containers, but be aware that you may be asked to open them. **Important:** **Make sure that you check with the airlines for any box embargo and/or excess baggage embargo that may be imposed for your time of travel**

When you've cleared customs, you will be directed through a door and walkway leading to the outside waiting area and food court. If you do not see the missionary, gather at the meeting area shown in the drawing below and wait together, as a team.

*This is a diagram for the Santo Domingo Airport (Las Americas) only. If you arrive in Puerto Plata or another airport, the layout will be different.*



## ***Set an Example***

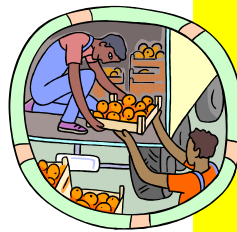
***"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers, in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity." J Timothy 4: 12***

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Dominicans will be taking careful note of the attitudes among the team. You will be on "dress parade" throughout the ministry trip. All team members must accept the responsibility for their own Christian conduct at all times. Something to remember: You represent the Lord Jesus Christ as well as the Assemblies of God. You are the Lord's witness in action as well as in message. Remember, you only have this opportunity to make a first impression!

## ***In this section...***

- ✿ Conduct***
- ✿ Rules for the Road***
- ✿ Dress Code***



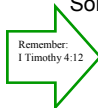




## Set an Example

### Conduct

Some points regarding conduct:



A. There will be no alcoholic beverages consumed by any team member.

B. There will be no smoking permitted at any time.

C. Dominicans generally have high respect for those in authority. They will be disappointed if they observe anyone in the group showing disrespect to those in charge.

D. Public display of romantic affection is prohibited at any time between members of the team. This includes during the ministry as well as during the shopping or the recreation time. There will be no coupling off by unmarried couples.

E. The guidelines governing display of romantic affection also applies to the Dominican nationals.

F. It is important to be in groups of two or three when away from the team. No one should be on the streets alone. Furthermore, girls should have a male accompanying them.



### Rules For The Road

If you get separated from the group for whatever reason, communication is the key to safety. Have a contact person at home who has the missionaries' telephone numbers. Stay where you are until the missionaries or team leaders and the home contact person know where you are!!!! Carry the phone numbers with you at all times.



1. Weariness can produce unpleasant attitudes such as irritableness, bad tempers, and impatience. This makes the trip unpleasant for others. Don't let your feelings dominate you.

2. Luggage responsibility: Each person is responsible for their own luggage. Don't expect someone else to handle yours. If it's too heavy for you to carry comfortably, don't bring it! **There is a limit on how much luggage you can bring!** The limit is one medium bag and one small hand bag.

3. Personal items: Everyone will be responsible for their own possessions. Do not expect someone else to 'look after' your things. Be aware of theft, especially in public places that are crowded (such as shopping).

4. List your address on your tourist visa as: Concilio Evangelico de las Asambleas de Dios, Km 12 1/2 Autopista Duarte, Ens. Alameda, Santo Domingo, Tel. 809-564-3454



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***Dress Code***  
***and some things you should bring***



Lightweight, wash-and-wear clothing (cotton and cotton-blends) are recommended. The Caribbean sun is very strong. You may want to bring a hat to protect your head from the sun, if you are sun sensitive.

A different standard for dress exists for the Dominican Christians than for Christians in the U.S. Since you are here to work with the national church, please respect their standards. You will want to relate to the Christian community, so dress conservatively.



Ladies:

During ministry times conservative skirts and blouses will be worn. During ministry times, pants, shorts, sleeveless sundresses or blouses where shoulders are exposed, should not be worn. Jewelry should be small and inconspicuous. Makeup must be natural looking. Bring beach/play outfits for free times (long Bermuda shorts or pants).

If you are on a construction team, please dress as conservatively as possible. Pants or shorts may be worn on site after consulting with the team leader or missionary. Some areas of the country are extremely sensitive and breaking the cultural expectations can cause problems and resentment. When in doubt, please ask.



Men:

Same rules above apply. OK, OK...you can wear pants! No earrings or necklaces. Extreme hair styles are not acceptable Long pants must be worn during ministry times. Bring a collar shirt for Sunday services. (If you are doing pulpit ministry you need to wear a coat and tie) Bring beach/play outfits for free times.

The electrical current is the same as in the U.S., but the Dominican light company is notorious for having blackouts for undetermined amounts of time. Some places where you will be staying are equipped with electric generators, however, some places do not. To deal with this problem, you may want to bring battery or butane devices (such as hair iron, flashlights, etc.)

## Show me the Money

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Many of you have worked hard to raise the dough needed to minister on our island. It takes a lot of money to make your trip successful. Therefore, we want to make sure that we are good stewards of that the money that God has provided to make your trip possible. In the following pages we will discuss some guidelines to be financially prepared.

### In this section...

- 🌴 **Costs**
- 🌴 **Advance Funds Needed**
- 🌴 **Personal Money Exchange**
- 🌴 **Shopping Guide**





## *Show me the Money*

---

### *Costs*



There are many factors that can vary the price but typically the cost for lodging, meals, and ground transportation can range from **\$50/day** (staying in the Bible School and eating there) to **\$80/day** (nice Hotel and restaurant food). The size and the expectations of the group will determine the price. This rate also covers expenses for our staff, Master's Commission students, and/ or local pastors and nationals that are helping with our outreach. We believe that it is extremely important to work in partnership with Dominican brothers and sisters. Short term teams are successful and beneficial when they are serving with our ministry team.

If you want to spend your free day and night at a beach resort, this is not included and must be worked out with us ahead of time.

We suggest an offering of \$50 per person to cover costs of administration, tracts, prizes, and maintenance of our evangelistic equipment.

Besides the airfare you will also need to budget \$10.00 for the tourist card.

We will issue one receipt for the per diem funds that are used to cover expenses for lodging, food, and transportation. Any leftover per diem funds will be invested back in the local ministry.

### *Advance Funds Needed*



Team funds and the voluntary ministry offering may be sent to the missionary bank account. Exchanging US\$ to pesos takes time and advance funds are needed for deposits on hotels, bus contracts, etc. Funds should be sent to us ahead of time. **Please contact us to get bank address and account number information.**

### *Personal money exchanged*



Exchanging money takes time and is often difficult. No money should be exchanged on the streets!! It is dangerous. It is recommended that each member exchange \$20 at the airport after clearing customs to purchase items such as drinks, snacks and calling cards. Often it is possible to exchange money at the hotel. Before the team's shopping day, the team should appoint a team treasurer to handle the exchange of personal funds and make only one exchange. You should take into account that it is not always possible to exchange your Dominican pesos back into US dollars when you decide the amount to exchange. Many tourist markets will accept US dollars and credit cards.



### Shopping Guide

When shopping in an open market, the price is not set and some of the fun is negotiating the price. A rule of thumb is whatever price the vendor first gives you, you will probably be able to buy for 40% of that price. Find an item you want to buy, negotiate the price, then walk away if you are not satisfied with that price. You may want to find an identical item with another vendor and negotiate with them. If the price is the same after negotiating with two or three vendors, chances are you have reached the lowest price for the item.

Some items to look for:

☞ Ambar, petrified tree sap made famous in the movie, “Jurassic Park”. It is a light golden jewel that is more valuable if the sap has captured an insect in it. Beware of resin imitations when buying Ambar.

☞ Larimar, a blue colored stone mined in Barahona. You will find beautiful jewelry with larimar.

☞ Paintings: The paintings with very bright colors and scenes reminiscent of African Art is probably painted by a Haitian immigrant. The less active the paintings with one central theme are probably from the Dominican Republic. They capture country scenes, the historic cities, as well as their people and culture.

☞ Machete knives can be purchased in the open market. They come with wood or resin handles on non-decorative working machete knives. The sheath is leather carved with artwork.

☞ Porcelain plates or casitas (little houses). The Taino Indians once lived here and left part of their culture in art form. Their art is depicted in clay-baked plates. In addition there are casitas made of clay that hang on the wall styled after the Spanish colonial period

☞ Lime (pronounced “lee-may”) doll. There are two varieties: clay and also a cornstarch resin material known as porcelana. The original doll is faceless depicting the inability of the artist to capture the multi-racial population with one type of face.

☞ Other items people like to buy here are coffee, fruit preserves, real vanilla extract (very good price), and rhythm instruments.

Check out [Oanda.com](http://Oanda.com) for a handy currency converter that you can print and put in your wallet. Click on “FXCheatsheet”.

## ***Last but not Least*** ***...some miscellaneous stuff***

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This section contains some very important phone numbers. Make sure that you leave a copy for the folks at home.

We have also included a few questions to think about. Coming to minister on the mission field can be a life-changing experience. We hope that you will not let this opportunity pass you by.

“The opportunity of a lifetime must be seized in the lifetime of the opportunity.” *Leonard Ravenhill*

### ***In this section...***

- ✿ Medical & Emergency Information***
- ✿ Web sites***
- ✿ Debriefing***





## ***Last but not least***

### ***Medical and Emergency Phone Information***

#### **Medical Information:**

1. All team members must be in good health. **Please consider your physical limitations as it pertains to rigorous walking, climbing, and heat** Those who are taking prescription medications, or are otherwise under the care of a physician, must have written authorization from their physician and must consult with the group leader of the team. This is covered in the process of registering your team with the Assemblies of God headquarters.
2. Vaccinations for typhoid and malaria are not required in the DR. However, it is advisable to consult your local Health Department. A tetanus shot or booster shot is suggested to minimize infection dangers.

#### **Insurance Requirement:**

We require that all teams obtain short term travel insurance through the National Assemblies of God AIM department or MAPS Builders department. You can contact their offices in Springfield, MO at 1-417-862-2781.

#### **Emergency Information:**

In case a family member must contact you in an **emergency**, the following people/offices may be contacted on the field. Please note that this is for emergencies only. Some ministry situations in the country are of such a nature that contact with the team is *very difficult* and needs to be done on an **emergency basis only**.

#### **Nelson and Rennae de Freitas**

Home: 1 (809) 547-1247  
Cellular phone: 1 (809) 729-1247  
King's Castle Office: 1 (809) 560-4287  
Fax: 1 (809) 560-4438  
E-mail: nelson.defreitas@agmd.org with cc to info@castillodelreyrd.org

#### **National church telephone (Spanish spoken)**

General Council of A/G (Central office): 1 (809) 564-3454  
Fax 1 (809) 560-1953  
Bible School camp grounds, office 1 (809) 560-6314  
Director's home (Nersido Borg) 1 (809) 560-1952

**CIMA del Rey—Kings Castle ministry center** 1 (809) 325-3242

Note: Since making phone calls may be difficult, depending on the circumstances of the trip, it is recommended that one person from the trip calls a contact person at home to let everyone there know you arrived safe. **The most economical way to make a phone call is by purchasing a phone card that is available here in the country.**



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## *Surfing the Web*

The Internet is full of resources to help you prepare for your trip. We tried to put together some of our favorite links to help you get ready for ministry on our island.

**General information in English about Dominican Republic:**

<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/dr.html>

CIA World Fact Book: Brief, largely statistical information on geography, people, government, economy, and more.

<http://www.webdominicana.com>

This is a tourist site with general information about the country.

<http://www.dr1.com>

Dominican news and current events in English speakers

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/dotoc.html>

U.S. Library of Congress Country Study for the Dominican Republic.

**Ministry sites:**

<http://www.defreitasfamily.org>

Our ministry website for general consistent information about our ministry

<http://www.defreitasfamily.blogspot.org>

Our blog with day-to-day testimonies about our family life and ministry in Dominican Republic

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<http://www.operationworld.org>

This is a great prayer resource with information to help you know how to better pray for the Dominican Republic.

**Assemblies of God:**

<http://worldmissions.ag.org>

The official website for Assemblies of God World Missions.

<http://youth.ag.org>

Features AIM (Ambassadors In Mission) and Speed the Light information.

**Money:**

<http://www.oanda.com>

This site has a Currency Converter for travelers that prints to a handy size that you can fit in your wallet. To find it on from the home page, click on "FXCheatsheet".





## *Last but not least*

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### ***Debriefing***

A major priority of AIM and MAPS is to give you the opportunity to learn about other cultures and meet other people. You have been involved in a church that expresses their Christian life according to their culture. Perhaps you noticed a few differences...

To encourage you to think about these differences and similarities, and to help you understand your own cross-cultural experience, here are a few questions for you to answer.

1. If you lived in a slum area like you have seen here, how would you earn money and live?
2. When you were in a city, what impressed you most about the people? In a rural setting? What did you like about the city/country? What was different than the U.S.?
3. As you traveled through the Dominican Republic, what were some of the prominent land marks you noticed?
4. Was there a difference between the schools in the U.S. and the Latin America ChildCare schools you visited? (or the public schools you saw or visited?)
5. As you visited the church, what do you think was most important to the people that you met?
6. How do the churches of the Dominican Republic compare to the churches in the U.S.? Worship? Preaching? Fellowship? Attitude?



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***Debriefing ...continued***

7. What do you think the people in the church you visited thought of you?

Your style of worship?

The way you looked?

Your nationality as a U.S. citizen?

8. What impressions did the people have of you during your work/ministry in the D.R.?

9. What source of information did you use to prepare for your visit to Dominican Republic? Would you prepare if you came again?

10. What was the most important thing that you learned while in Dominican Republic? About others...yourself...and the ministry?

11. When you get home, all your friends are going to want to know what it was like in Dominican Republic. What are you going to tell them?

12. Was the Dominican Republic different than you expected? ·In what ways? ·How?

13. If you were a full-time missionary, what do you think your work would be?

What does a missionary do?

Is missionary work the place of ministry or the people?

14. What will change in your life because of your experience in the Dominican Republic?

15. What will your favorite memory be of the Dominican Republic?