

The Dominican Republic Thrives from Tourism



In the 1960 edition of the Fodor guide to the Caribbean, just 9 pages were devoted to the Dominican Republic. This information was not flattering, highlighting the incompetence of the island's only tourist office. However, the new editions offers of completely different picture of the Caribbean Republic, underlining the wonders that tourism has done to the country, the positive changes it has brought to its reputation and strengths.

The Dominican Republic in 1997 is the number 2 destination in the region after Puerto Rico. The country's capital, Santo Domingo, was in 1990 recognised by UNESCO as a site of world heritage.

Many visitors are attracted by fresh and virtually unspoiled golden beaches. La Romana on the south coast boasts a 7,000 acre resort particularly appealing to budget travellers with its low-priced hotels. On the north coast there is the Puerto Plato region, another hot spot for beach lovers and honeymoon makers. Local tour operators often choose to call the island Dominicana in an attempt to boost its image of romance and paradise.

The Dominican Republic has recently been the scene of real estate tourism. Projects aimed at encouraging foreigners to buy property on the island started in the mid 80's and have been flourishing ever since. The country has become a second home for many foreigners. The president of the national hotels and restaurant association, Luis Lopez, has underlined the importance of this area in the country's attempts to develop tourism, stating that foreigners tend to buy in the East of the Dominican Republic.

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