

DR CRUISE TOURISM DEVELOPING



The Dominican Republic is a popular destination for the numerous tourists who visit the Caribbean every year. Its citizens live on the island Hispaniola which is a part of the [Greater Antilles](#) archipelago. As other Caribbean states, Dominican Republic depends heavily on the tourism industry and as other local nations it sees the great potential of the cruising sector. This industry is steadily developing here. During the 2007-2008 cruise season, the industry earned 5.6 million dollars in DR. There were approximately 70,000 cruise travelers. Naturally the majority of them were foreigners, 38 per cent of them were Latin Americans, 33 per cent Europeans and 27 per cent of the visitors was from the US.

The upcoming cruise season is expected to be even better than the last one. DR'S experts predict that there could be as many as 82 000 cruise tourists during the season that begins in October. The visitors are expected to arrive on 40 different vessels. The growth is also supported by the government as it cooperates with private developers to make the country more attractive to tourists.

In the past years the numerous steps were taken to improve the country's cruise infrastructure. Ports were modernized and some of them have become "mother ports". International investors have recorded the growth and they start their operations in the Dominican Republic because they see it as a lucrative destination. Florida Caribbean Cruise Association estimates that a tourist visiting Santo Domingo spends about 80 dollars in goods and services.

The tourism ministry expects the tourism industry to continually grow in 2008 and the minister forecasted that by 2012 the republic will receive five million annual visitors. The tourism industry is virtually vital to this island nation. It creates approximately 14 per cent of local jobs. The country indeed is a luring tourism destination. It was here where the first permanent European settlement in the Americas was founded as well as the first cathedral, university or European-built road.

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