

# Aldeas de Paz - Volunteer Guideline

## ¡WELCOME!

***Thank you for your interest and your continued trust! You are planning to volunteer with Aldeas de Paz for a great cause and we hope you will enjoy your stay in the Dominican Republic!***

This guideline has been created in order to help you to get started with the necessary information at hand. We hope it will be helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

***Please make sure you arrive at your volunteer placement location in Samana or Las Terrenas and check-in between Monday and Friday!*** On the weekend's almost all of us are on trips to discover the island and enjoy the weekend mostly out of town!

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC - ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

***A valid Passport is all you need to enter the Dominican Republic!***

***Citizens from Europe, the US and Canada as well as many other countries DON'T need a visa*** to enter the Dominican Republic as a tourist visiting and helping out at Aldeas de Paz! However, a return ticket is required! You receive a tourist stamp in your passport.

***The Tourist stamp is valid for an initial stay of 30 days but you are allowed to stay on and leave the country anytime later by paying an additional fee for every extra month you remain in the country.*** This fee will be paid at the airport ON YOUR DEPARTURE in local currency or Dollar / Euro!

***This one time fee you pay on departure at the airport If you remained in the country for as long as:***

- up to 3 months in the country you pay 2.500 RD\$ (US\$ 44)
- for 4 to 9 months - 4.000 RD\$ (US\$ 70)
- for 10 to 12 months - 5.000 RD\$ (US\$ 88)
- for 13 to 18 months - 6.500 RD\$ (US\$ 115)

***IMPORTANT TO KNOW: Our Volunteers and Interns are considered tourists and are not „working“ in the common sense of paid work and should consequently NOT use the term "WORK" at all when asked why they are here! You can say that you are “visiting a charity“ and are helping out.***

### ***Read on here:***

[Entry Requirements - Immigration & Custom Dominican Republic](#)

[Info Samana Wiki Travel](#)

[Info Las Terrenas Wiki Travel](#)

## HOW TO GET TO SAMANÁ / LAS TERRENAS

### Arrival at the main airport Las Américas / Santo Domingo (SDQ / MDSD)

*Las Americas is the closest airport to your volunteer placement location in Samaná or Las Terrenas. Travel duration: 2,5 hours*

#### **Courtesy Welcome Service:**

*Our driver Jose will be waiting for you just outside the gate from the luggage area! He will hold a big board with your name on it. Jose will bring you to the bus terminal nearby and buy your bus ticket! About 2,5 hours later on your arrival at the placement location in Samana/Las Terrenas local staff and volunteers are waiting for you and will take you to your accommodation!*

#### **Bus departure times from bus terminal near airport:**

*to Samana: 08:30am, 10:30am, 15:00pm, 17:00pm and 18:00pm*

*to Las Terrenas: 09:00am, 10:00am, 11:30am, 14:10pm, 15:30pm, 18:30pm*

**Important note:** *Your incoming flight should arrive before 16:30pm at Las Americas airport because the last connecting bus to your placement location in Samana and Las Terrenas leaves between 18:00pm and 18:30pm!*

*In case your flight arrives after 16:30pm you will have to book a night in Santo Domingo before traveling on to our Foundation's location in Samana/Las Terrenas. Our driver will bring you to the hotel of your choice and the next day in the morning he will pick you up and bring you to the Bus Terminal and purchase the bus ticket for you! We recommend "Island Life Hostel" (<https://islandlifehostel.com/>) in the old town center of colonial Santo Domingo! Please make sure that if you have to spend a night in Santo Domingo and need to travel the next day to Samana or Las Terrenas that you arrive between Sunday and Thursday since we only check-in volunteers from Monday through Friday!*

#### **Bus departure times from bus terminal at the center of Santo Domingo:**

*to Samana: 08:00am, 10:00am, 14:30pm, 16:30pm and 17:30pm*

*to Las Terrenas: 08:30am, 09:30am, 11:00am, 13:40pm, 15:00pm, 18:00pm,*

#### **Taxi service from Las Americas airport to Samana or Las Terrenas:**

*Our driver Jose is also available for the transfer to Samana or Las Terrenas directly from Las Americas airport in Santo Domingo. In that case Aldeas de Paz pays your normal service included in your placement fee and you pay just the difference of the taxi fare to Samana or Las Terrenas. (US\$150) Travel time is 2.5 hours only.*

### Arrival at airport Punta Cana (PUJ / MDPC)

**Punta Cana airport in the heart of a tourist hub in the south-eastern corner of the DR is quite far from your placement location in Samana/Las Terrenas. Travel duration is 5 to 7 hours!**

#### **IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER:**

*Even though international flights to Punta Cana airport are often cheaper than to Las Americas airport near the capital you need to consider additional costs because of the remote location of the airport and the distance to your placement location on the Samana peninsula in the north-east of the DR. **Arrival at Punta Cana often requires an overnight stay** if your incoming flight arrives in the afternoon or at night and there are no more buses until the next day! Extra costs for Punta Cana arrival can be between US\$30 and US\$125 without overnight costs depending if*

you take a taxi/uber (US\$125) or local bus (US\$30) to Santo Domingo from where you catch the bus to Samana/Las Terrenas. (US\$8) We suggest that only experienced travelers with Spanish skills arrive on this route!

**Taxi service from Punta Cana airport to Samana or Las Terrenas:**

Our driver Jose is also available for the transfer to Samana or Las Terrenas directly from Punta Cana Airport. In that case we will pay the normal service included in your placement and you pay the difference to the taxi fare to Samana or Las Terrenas. Travel time is 4.30 hours and this are the special rates: **Taxi from Punta Cana airport to Samana or Las Terrenas: US\$270**

## **HOLIDAYS 2024**

**Holidays during Youth Care & Community development Program:**

There are no children attending during summer holidays **from June 17 until June 28 and July 29 until August 18** as well as during christmas holidays **from December 16 until January 06, 2025**

However, volunteers are welcome to help out at our summer camp from July 01 until July 26 at our attention center!

**Holidays during Early Childhood Development Program:**

The Daycare Center remains closed during summer summer holidays **from June 14 until August 30, 2024**

However, volunteers are welcome to help out at our summer camp **from July 01 until July 26** at our attention center!

**Holidays for the Marine Conservation Program:**

Activities are suspended **from December 16 until January 06, 2025**

**Christmas Holidays 2024/2025:**

All program activities remain paused **from December 23, 2024 until January 06, 2025**

Volunteers are welcome to stay at our accommodations during this period and join Dominican Christmas and new year holidays! Working and business life comes to a halt through this two week period since the whole country is celebrating Christmas. However, Volunteers are welcome to celebrate Christmas and new year together with us.

## **Dominican Public Holidays 2024**

- 01 January - New Year's Day
- 06 January - Epiphany
- 21 January - our Lady of Altagracia Day
- 26 January - Duarte Day
- 27 February - Independence Day
- 29 March - Good Friday
- 01 May - Labour Day
- 28 May - Mother Day
- 30 May - Corpus Christi
- 16 August - Restoration Day
- 24 September - Lady of Mercedes Day
- 06 November - Constitution Day
- 25 December - Christmas Day

## HEALTH / INSURANCE

***While free medical care is available in the Dominican Republic, it is mandatory that you have travel insurance when you volunteer or intern with us!*** Please check with your insurance company before you leave to determine whether or not you are covered during your journey. If not, travel insurance must be purchased for the duration of your trip.

*We expect you to present proof of the health/travel insurance on your arrival by providing us a copy of your insurance details in order to be able to ensure health insurance coverage in case of an emergency.*

## MONEY / LOCAL CURRENCY

***The currency of the Dominican Republic is the Dominican Peso (DOP or RD\$).*** You can exchange € or US\$ to RD\$ at the airport and you can withdraw money from any bank or ATM in local currency. A fee of around 4€/US\$ (200RD\$) is usually charged for the use of the ATM. The maximum amount that can be withdrawn in one go, is 10.000 RD\$. You can also withdraw money over the counter inside the bank.

*The amount of money, which you will need during your stay, will largely depend on your lifestyle and your planned activities. Local groceries are quite inexpensive. Eating out at local Dominican restaurants is rather cheap, whereas a pizza may cost between 5-10US\$. Transportation is comparably cheap whereas tours offered for tourists to main attractions may cost around 50-70US\$.*

## ACCOMMODATION

### ***Volunteer Guest Houses***

***Our guesthouse apartments and rooms in Samaná and Las Terrenas are extremely conveniently located in the center of the village*** and consist of one or more gender divided shared rooms with access to kitchen, bathroom and WIFI. A single room upgrade is available and needs to be booked in advance! All important locations like school, hospital, supermarkets, the Aldeas de Paz offices, the beaches and the Malecon (seaside walk with restaurants, bars and shops) are on walking distance between 5 and 20 minutes from the Volunteer Guest House accommodations.

*Single room upgrade secures the privilege of an individual room all by yourself during your entire placement while other volunteers might be sharing their gender divide room with fellow volunteers.*

Living together cooperatively with volunteers from all over the world is a unique chance for cultural exchange and can be an exciting and new way of living compared to anything you've ever experienced before. It has certainly been a key experience in the lives of many past volunteers! Volunteers work and live together and learn how to be empathetic and to be considerate of the others' needs. They share their free time, house cleaning tasks and cooking (optional). It means that they also get close, have immense fun along the way, and possibly develop lifelong friendships!

### ***Host Family homestay***

***Volunteers with a genuine interest in cultural exchange and language immersion will enjoy this special accommodation option!*** Integrate yourself into these strong communities and enjoy the different pace of life and the fantastic opportunity to make local friends.

*You will enjoy your private room and WiFi. Locals speak Spanish and some speak English as well! The two meals included are shared with the host family. Volunteers are welcome to spend free time with the family and discover the village and its beautiful surroundings.*

## SPANISH LESSONS

**We offer free Spanish language immersion classes** because it is quite possible to volunteer and learn Spanish at the same time! Walk away with capabilities in a new language or learn, expand, or polish your Spanish skills. The focus is on conversational skills and full cultural/social immersion. Lessons focus on developing communication skills so that students are able to put their knowledge to practical use as soon as they step outside the classroom.

*Learn Spanish in a natural and spontaneous way, just as you have learned your mother tongue. Next to traditional classroom lessons, our Spanish classes may also include conversational practises, group games and activities. Our students are encouraged to speak Spanish right from the very first day, using it in typical real-life situations: the basic syllabus is supplemented by special exercises, such as role-play, situational dialogues and work projects. Outside the classroom, the learning process continues as you are immersed in Spanish language and culture. Any extra private lessons can be booked while you are here!*

## LIVING IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

**Located in the center of the seaside towns of Samaná and Las Terrenas**, the foundation's volunteer accommodations are most popular with volunteers and interns. The villages of Samaná and Las Terrenas are both scenic, laid back and peaceful towns, with friendly and easygoing Dominicans, who live their lives working in tourism, agriculture and fishing, all set to the beat and rhythms of Merengue, Bachata and Salsa music. The villages and their surroundings are very safe, and we have lovely neighbors, who constantly look after us. All important locations like our offices, supermarkets, hospitals and the beautiful beaches in Samaná and Las Terrenas are only minutes away.

*The Dominican Republic has electricity with current running 110/120 volts, 60 cycles, short occasional power outages are common. The water supply is subject to inconsistencies as well and cold water is used for showers. Many Dominican communities, however, do not even have water pumped into houses. Rural families, for example, often have to walk to the nearest river or other source for household water. (Our volunteer apartments however have western style bathroom facilities)*

## CLIMATE

**In Samaná, there is generally only one season: summer.** Over the course of the year, the temperature typically varies from 20°C to 31°C and is rarely below 19°C or above 32°C. Sunshine is also consistent throughout the year.

*The average number of sunshine hours per day ranges between 7 in December and 9 in April and from June through September. Water temperature is always between 27 and 29°C. In conclusion, all major weather factors, from sunshine to air and water temperature, are amazingly constant and tropical.*

## **SAFETY**

***The Foundation does everything to make sure volunteers remain safe during their stay*** in the Dominican Republic which on the whole is a pretty safe country compared with other countries in the region and has managed to cut crime by 50% in the last couple of years! Samana and Las Terrenas have one of the lowest crime rates and the tourist police show a strong presence. However, traveling overseas may still entail certain safety and security risks. Nevertheless, numerous risk factors are within your control.

*In many ways, you can behave as you would do if you moved to a new city anywhere: be cautious, check things out, ask questions, learn about your neighborhood, know where the more risky locations are, use common sense, and be aware.*

## **FOOD AND DIET**

***In general, you will be able to find most of the products you are used to from home***, in the local supermarkets and on the market. Along with the traditional recipes, many restaurants also offer international menus. The Dominican diet consists primarily of rice, beans, yuca (casabe), plantains, sweet potatoes, potatoes, and other vegetables, along with eggs, chicken, pork, beef, and some fish. The national dish is sancocho, a rich vegetable-and-meat stew served on special occasions.

*A typical Dominican meal, called la bandera, is a mix of rice, red beans, and meat. Yucca may be boiled, prepared as fries, or baked into rounds of crisp cracker bread called casabe. Empanadas are also very popular and can be served with vegetables, cheese and different types of meat. Dishes are not spicy.*

*Seasonal fruits include bananas, mangoes, papayas, pineapples, guavas, and avocados. Dominicans generally eat small quantities of meat. Bacalao (dried cod) can be found in several areas; fresh fish is typically available only along the coast. Habichuelas con dulce, a sweet dessert made from beans, is popular around Easter holiday.*

*Some of the dishes are fried and quite fatty, and juices, sweets, and desserts contain a lot of sugar. Vegetarians will be able to maintain their diet at the apartments, but they will be offered – and may be expected to accept – traditional foods, including meat, when visiting Dominican families other than your host families. Most Dominicans are not familiar with the concept of being vegetarian, because it is not common; you will have the pleasure to explain them.*

## **COMMUNICATION**

***All our volunteer apartments, host family homes, the NGO management and MultiMedia workplace and office as well as our attention center have access to WiFi.*** In addition, WiFi is very common and available in most buses, taxis, and restaurants. Many communities have computer centers or internet cafés that provide email and internet access. Prepaid SIM-cards and data volume are freely available and cheap.

### ***Telephone***

*Most communication for the organization is via WhatsApp. It is recommendable to buy a prepaid Dominican SIM card. Altice and Claro are the most common providers. At the Altice shop, a prepaid card costs 100 RD\$ (2 \$US) plus the desired credit for data volume. Unless your cell phone can hold two cards at the same time, we advise you to bring a second (old) cell phone for everyday use. Country code: +1*

### ***Mail Letters and packages***

*sent by public post takes from 10 days to several weeks or months to arrive. Some never arrived though! The safest*

*option for post and valuable content is sending it with FedEx, Zoom or DHL or any other private post company! You may want to subscribe at the local CPS or Mailboxes outlet and receive all your mail there for a little fee!*

## TRANSPORTATION

**Transportation is easy in the Dominican Republic.** Most urban travel is by bus and by guagua, although carros públicos (a sort of shared taxi) are available as well. Intercity travel is by bus, while rural travel runs the gamut from air-conditioned mini buses to crowded carros públicos and motoconchos (mototaxis) to lots of walking.

*Most volunteers rely on public transportation such as the guaguas (local bus), motoconchos, carretas/rickshaw or the Caribe Tours buses to get around. For safety purposes, we advise you not to use public transportation alone between 7pm and 7am. Private taxis are a safer means at night. For your orientation: taking a motoconcho in Samaná usually costs 0,50 US\$, and taking a guagua to Las Galeras or Las Terrenas 1,50 US\$.*

**PACKING LIST:** *please check here:* <https://www.peacevillages.org/pack>

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE DOMINICAN CULTURE

**The Dominican Republic is a melting pot of descendants from Spanish colonists, African slaves, and Taino Indians.** This can be seen in the physical characteristics with around 80% being brown skinned (mulatto), and the rest being white or black. Many Taino Indian words are used within the language, and also some of their food. The African elements are found in the dance, and the music such as merengue. The four most important elements of Dominican culture are family, music, religion and food.

Every aspect of life is affected by the fact that most of the population is poor. Many people are desperate to get out of poverty, but it is almost impossible. Many men want to work in tourism, hoping to meet foreign women, who will take them to one of the “promised” countries: USA, Canada or Europe.

*The overall impression for the visitor is a country where people are happy, friendly and always willing to help and to share what they have. Dominicans live for the day, and they are constantly laughing. Neighbors look out for each other, and bring each other fruit or vegetables from their garden. Dominicans also want you to feel happy too, so they will always tell you what you want to hear.*

*Asking if it will be sunny tomorrow will invariably be met with a yes, the garage mechanic will tell you the car is almost ready when he hasn't even started, and if you ask for directions you will always be told the way, even if the person you asked has no idea at all and will send you in the wrong direction. This can be a little frustrating, until you learn to understand the culture of the country. Another cause for frustration can be the timeliness.*

**The Dominican Republic definitely has a “mañana” attitude.** This is not helped by the fact that many people cannot actually tell the time and have no idea what time it is or how long five minutes actually is. You will invite people for dinner and three hours later, when you call them they will say “estoy llegando,” meaning “I am arriving,” when they have not yet left their house! Do not take it personally in any case..... It's cultural!

**Family and children** are very important to Dominicans. When the children are grown up and working themselves, they will almost always support their parents economically. Members of the family often leave to the US and send a part of their wages back to their family in the Dominican Republic (second biggest source of income after tourism, the third source are the free trade zones for international companies). Whilst this has helped a part of the population to escape from poverty, it has also resulted in the fragmentation of families, e.g. mothers leaving young children in the care of other relatives.

*Although the family is important, very few Dominicans actually marry, they just live together. The relationships do not always appear to last long, and it is common for a woman to have several children by different fathers. As there*



is no social security system, no pensions, no state money for the unemployed, disabled or sick, people choose to have many children, hoping that they will provide the family income in the future.

**Music is a very important part of life** to Dominicans and is usually played extremely loud, which many expats find hard, if they happen to live near a Dominican family. The three traditional forms of music are bachata and merengue (both are true Dominicans) as well as salsa (originating from Cuba), but nowadays the American influence has added reggaeton and hip hop. Music is played constantly in every home, in every shop, in the guaguas and in the street. In the evenings, people will dance in the street in front of the colmados.

**The official language of the Dominican Republic is Spanish.** Dominican Spanish is a form of Caribbean Spanish that has been influenced both by native languages as well as by languages brought by Africans during the slave trade. Dominicans are known for speaking quickly and for shortening words. Dominican Spanish has a very distinct vocabulary, including many ancient Spanish words. There is also an abundance of Anglicisms due to American occupation and the proximity to the U.S. Another unique characteristic is the use of tú before the verb in the question form: “¿Cómo tú estás?”.

**Social activities in the Dominican Republic vary depending on the location and the season.** They include taking part in festivities such as carnival, parties, and dances. In Samaná there are cafés, restaurants, bars and clubs. Social life in the Dominican Republic often revolves around the family porch, where people talk while playing dominoes, a national pastime.

Outdoor tables in front of homes, bars, and neighborhood markets are surrounded by men who play for hours, especially on Sundays. Baseball is the country's most popular sport, and rarely does a day go by without seeing people playing baseball with anything they can find to use as a bat and ball. Cockfighting is another national pastime, and the gambling stakes can be high.

**Dominicans also love music and dancing.** What has kept merengue alive over the years is its role in the Dominican Republic's carnival celebrations. In Santo Domingo, carnival occurs twice a year. The first is during the traditional pre-Lenten holiday; the second one celebrates the anniversary of the Dominican Republic's declaration of war against Spain in 1863.

**It is important to understand** the cultural nuances of gender roles in your host country. Dominican society has elements of machismo. Men often hiss, catcall and make comments to women walking by, and the best strategy to deal with this is to completely ignore men who behave in this way and develop a tolerance. Dating for women in the Dominican Republic is also a sensitive subject, as cultural perceptions of dating and male-female friendships are quite different from what you may be used to.

**Religion plays an important part in most Dominicans' lives and is very present in the public.** Most Dominicans will say they believe in God and when speaking will often use the phrase “Si Dios quiere.” (If God wishes it) or “Gracias a Dios.” (Thank God).

The majority of the people of the Dominican Republic claim to be Christians, and practice an eclectic mix of Roman Catholic traditions and African-rooted religions/ceremonies, or Santería. There are many different Protestant churches, Adventist, Baptist, Mormon and also Jewish communities throughout the Dominican Republic as well. Be respectful and don't criticize religion, as this can be perceived as a great offense!

## WHAT TO DO IN AND AROUND SAMANÁ

**Samaná is the name of both the peninsula and its biggest town** (its official name is Santa Bárbara de Samaná), as well as the bay to the south, located in the northeastern part of the Dominican Republic.

It is a dramatically beautiful peninsula, which is an island and still seems to be one, climate and vegetation are slightly different; it is famous for the highest density of coconut trees in the tropical zone, many of them are stretching into the sea. Dozens of fantastic beaches surround the peninsula of Samaná, which can be explored during a day trip or the whole weekend.

**Samaná has a small public beach next to the bridges.** From the bridges you have an amazing view on the town. To go



there by foot takes around 15 minutes from the guesthouses, 5 minutes from the school.

**Las Terrenas is a small touristic town on the northern coast of the Samaná peninsula** with nice beaches and a lot of restaurants, as well as a French bakery and a huge supermarket. To get around by foot takes around 15 minutes from the guest house in Las Terrenas, and the beaches are 5 minutes from the school, where volunteers work. In Las Terrenas there are also two beaches for water sports (Playa Bonita and Playa Coson). Las Terrenas is also known as a great kite spot.

**How to get there from Samaná:** take the guagua at the market to Las Terrenas (leaves every 30 minutes); 100 pesos/ 60min

**Las Galeras is a small fisherman's town with beautiful beaches** (Playa Grande, La Playita, Playa Escondido) surrounded by nature.

**How to get there:** head to the bus stop next to the mercado and get the guagua to Las Galeras, Costs: 100 pesos; Frequency: bus leaves every 25 minutes; Trip time: 60 minutes. From Las Galeras, you can also take trips by boat to the beautiful beaches Playa Rincon and Playa Fronton. Go to Playa Grande in Las Galeras, and there they will offer you boat trips to those beaches. The price varies by the number of people who are going with you. For five people you pay around 700 Pesos to go to Playa Fronton and 500 Pesos to go to Playa Rincon. To reach Playa Rincon you can also take a guagua or moto.

**Cayo Levantado is a little island in the bay of Samaná** with a beautiful beach and the possibility to go snorkeling or diving.

**How to get there:** ADP Volunteers can take the workers' boat to get to the island. The boat normally leaves the port at around 8:30 am and goes back to Samaná at around 4:30pm; Costs: 200 Pesos; Trip time: 20 minutes

**Salto El Limón is a spectacular waterfall of 55 meters height** at around 20 km from Samaná. To get there you have to hike or go by horse for about 30-45 minutes through the rainforest, and after the hike you can go swimming at the bottom of the waterfall.

**How to get there:** Head to the bus stop next to the mercado and get the guagua to El Limón, tell the driver that you want to go to the waterfall; you can leave the bus for example at the bus stop "parada manzana"; costs: 70 Pesos, travel time: 30 minutes. There are guides to hike to the waterfall or to ride a horse; the costs are negotiable and depend on the number of persons (100-500 Pesos/person) plus 50 Pesos for the entrance to the waterfall park.

**Parque Nacional de Los Haitises is a nacional park with mangroves, coves and bays.** Haitises means "highlands" or "mountain range" in the Taino Indian language (the Dominican Republic's original inhabitants). As part of the largest estuary in the insular Caribbean, the national park offers a rich variety of natural wonders to explore, including large expanses of untouched mangrove forests, humid subtropical forest, seagrass beds, pirate hideouts, and pristine keys scattered along the length of the coast; an abundant variety of birds can be observed.

**How to get there:** There are organized boat trips (half day) into the park directly from the pier in Samaná; prices are negotiable.

**Whale Watching from mid January to late March.** Samana bay offers some of the world's best whale watching. Costs: prices are negotiable, 25-60 Dollars OR you go by moto to Punta Ballena, where they can sometimes be observed from a sheltered point on a mountain.

**Playa El Valle is a small fisherman's settlement with a beautiful beach surrounded by nature.**

**How to get there:** take the guagua at the market to El Valle (7am, 11am, 3pm), alternatively take a moto; Costs: 100 Pesos; Trip time: 30 minutes. On the way to El Valle there is the possibility to do ziplining. It is called Samaná Ziplining and costs around 80\$ for the whole day, including food and drinks. Each trip listed above is possible to do during the same day.

**In Las Galeras and Las Terrenas it's also nice to spend a night or a whole weekend.** Please consider that the guaguas don't drive at night, so make sure to be able to take the last one (normally at around 6 pm). Santo Domingo, Puerto Plata or Jarabacoa are nice places to stay for a whole weekend.