

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Missions Trip

**PRE-DEPARTURE
GUIDE**



FAST FACTS

Location/Geography

The Dominican Republic occupies the eastern two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola, which it shares with the Republic of Haiti. The country is the second-largest island in the Caribbean, with a surface area of 48,198 square kilometers. Its area equals that of Vermont and New Hampshire combined. Duarte Peak, at 10,417 ft (3,175 m), is the highest



point in the West Indies. Located in the heart of the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the north and to the south by the Caribbean Sea.

Population

The population of the Dominican Republic is more than 11.4 million people.

Time Zone

Local time is Caribbean Eastern Time (GMT -0400). In the winter it is an hour ahead of Eastern Standard Time in the United States. The Dominican Republic does not practice daylight savings time, as is customarily done in the United States.

Capital City

The capital of the Dominican Republic is Santo Domingo, which is the oldest city in the new world. It has a population of almost 3.7 million people.

Government

The political structure is based on democratic principles. Every four years the country elects its president, vice president and legislators.

Language

Spanish is the official language. However, you'll be surprised how many speak English, French, German and Italian.

Climate

The Dominican Republic enjoys a tropical climate year-round. Its average annual temperatures range from 66° to 93° F (19° to 34° C). In February the temps average 82° daytime and 70° at night.



2025 DR Information

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for choosing to travel with AOCLI on your journey to the Dominican Republic. We're confident you'll find the DR as beautiful, captivating, and intriguing as we do. A mission trip to a developing country is an awe-inspiring experience that will be transformative, life-changing, and memorable. You'll witness firsthand how God uses people just like you to create change and impact lives. This spiritually enriching journey will be filled with smiles, laughter, tears, and wonderful surprises.

To assist with your travel arrangements, we have prepared the following pre-departure information. Please read this carefully before you travel and keep these suggestions in mind while you're on the road.

Whether you're traveling independently with us or joining our local team, we want to ensure you have an exceptional experience. Our team leaders will accompany you throughout your time in the DR and attend to your needs on the ground. Until then, we hope this information helps you make the best possible preparations for your mission experience.

On the following pages, you'll find useful travel facts, background information, and our recommendations to make your journey the best it can be. Please note that conditions change rapidly in our destination country, so use this document as a guide containing information that is subject to change.

We're confident you'll have an amazing journey with us. Until then, happy reading!
The AOCLI Team

P.S. Tell your friends and family to keep track on Facebook: Dominican Republic 2025 Mission Trip



PROPOSED ITINERARY

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC MISSIONS TRIP
JANUARY 31–FEBRUARY 07, 2025

31

DTW AIRPORT

6:00 AM / Leave Detroit
2:10 PM / Land in Santo Domingo
and bus ride to Restoration Ranch
6:00 PM / Dinner
7:00 PM / Relax and take it all in

31-JAN

3

CHURCH SERVICES

7:00 AM / Breakfast
8:00 AM / On the Bus
10:00 AM / Morning Service
1:00 PM / Lunch
3:00 PM / Leadership Training/EG
5:00 PM / Dinner
7:00 PM / Night Service

03-FEB

6

CAPITAL DAY

7:00 AM / Breakfast
8:00 AM / Load on Bus and head to
the Capital
10:00 AM / Visit Colonial City
12:00 PM / Lunch
1:00 PM / Outreach / Pastor Esdras
5:00 PM / Dinner
7:00 PM / Church Service
9:00 PM / Group Time

06-FEB

1

BANI OUTREACH

8:00 AM / Breakfast
9:00 AM / Ministry at La Curva
12:00 PM / Lunch
1:30 PM / High School Visit
5:00 PM / Dinner
7:00 PM / Night Service

01-FEB

4

IGUANA OUTREACH

8:00 AM / Breakfast
9:00 AM / Worship Service
12:00 PM / Lunch
1:00 PM / Drive to Iguana
3:00 PM / Community Ministry/EG
5:00 PM / Night Service
7:00 PM / Dinner
9:00 PM / Load the Bus
11:00 PM / We are tired now!

04-FEB

7

HEADING HOME

8:00 AM / Breakfast
10:00 AM / Load on Bus and head
to the Market
1:00 PM / Lunch
3:10 PM / Flying home with
incredible memories.

07-FEB

2

VBS AT RANCH

8:00 AM / Breakfast
9:00 AM / Welcome Children
9:30 AM / Morning Program
12:00 PM / Lunch
1:00 PM / Afternoon Program
5:00 PM / Dinner
7:00 PM / Night Service

02-FEB

5

VILLAGE OUTREACH

7:00 AM / Breakfast
8:00 AM / On the Bus
10:00 AM / Beans & Rice
1:00 PM / Visit Villages/EG
6:00 PM / Dinner
7:00 PM / Back to the Ranch

05-FEB

\$

APPROXIMATE COST: \$2,300.00

Price includes lodging and
food at Restoration Ranch
near Bani. Price is based
upon 10 people and can
change as a result of flight
cost and the number of
people in our group. Once
flights are secured money
is non-refundable.

#Worth
Every
Penny

+

SAFETY & PREPARATION

This trip will be moderate in difficulty because of impoverished conditions. Also, there will be some walking, rides on bumpy roads, and long days. You will have a light work element during your stay on the ranch.

Your safety is a priority so we will make any adjustments necessary to keep you out of potentially dangerous situations. We believe it is important to provide a safe ministry environment, traditional meals and reliable transportation so that you can focus on what God is teaching you and the impact of the experience rather than concern for your safety and well-being. Therefore, a change to our proposed itinerary is very much possible!

#Safety
First

First Rule of Travelers...

**"BLESSED ARE THE FLEXI-
BLE FOR THEY SHALL NOT
BE BENT OUT OF SHAPE."**

(Because things rarely go as planned)



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT AOCLI

contact@aocli.org

ABOUT OUR TRIP

This year we are attempting a brand-new program called 'Illuminate'. It's Iluminar in Spanish. The goal is to be a beacon of light in the darkest of places. We will present the Gospel through song, drama, the preached Word and prayer. Every team member will have a role in the program. We believe God has power over the darkness and that the enemy will flee when the light of Christ is illuminated!

ABOUT OUR ACCOMMODATIONS

During our stay in the Dominican Republic, we'll be housed in a spacious residence capable of accommodating all 16 team members under one roof. This arrangement provides us with a perfect setting for community living and ministry work, including conducting baptisms on the property.

Each evening, we gather under the pavilion for a time of debriefing where team members share their experiences from the day's ministry activities. These nightly sessions have proven to be transformative moments where our bonds with one another deepen through shared stories, challenges, and victories.

On Saturday, our team will host a VBS for local children on the grounds of our property. In the evening of the same day, we will conduct a night service for the surrounding community.

The communal living environment enhances our mission experience by fostering unity and providing immediate opportunities to process what God is doing through our team. The shared meals, prayer times, and fellowship create a supportive atmosphere where everyone can grow spiritually while serving others.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

The Essentials

There are several important things to arrange before you depart for the DR. The following is your essential pre-departure preparation checklist.

Passport

Ensure you have a valid passport with at least six months remaining validity from the end of our trip. Make sure you have blank pages available for entry stamps.

Visa Requirement

Entry Requirements Entry to the Dominican Republic requires two steps:

1. Tourist Card: The tourist card fee for the Dominican Republic is typically included in your airfare for most airlines. [Dominican Republic Entry Requirements For US Travelers In 2025: Important Rules You Need To Know - Travel Off Path](#) This \$10 fee is automatically added to your ticket price, so no separate purchase is necessary.
2. E-Ticket (Electronic Entry/Exit Form): You must complete an electronic form, or E-ticket, to enter and exit the country. You will need a new E-ticket every time you travel to the Dominican Republic. [Travel advice and advisories for Dominican Republic](#) You can fill in the form up to 7 days before you arrive in the country. You'll get a QR code, which you may be asked to show at check-in, or when you arrive in or leave the country. [Entry requirements - Dominican Republic travel advice - GOV.UK](#) Complete this mandatory form at the official Dominican Republic government website before your flight.

Airline Tickets

For those traveling with us from Detroit Metro Airport, an AOCLI team member will complete all travel arrangements through a group ticket purchase. For those meeting us at connecting airports, it is your responsibility to contact the AOCLI office to ensure you have the correct airline information and to secure round-trip travel arrangements to your gateway airport.

Health & Fitness

Travelers to the DR should take precautions as they would elsewhere in the Caribbean. We are not qualified to provide detailed medical information appropriate to your individual needs. We recommend consulting with your medical center for current health information on vaccinations and medications for your trip at least one month prior to departure.

We suggest you bring (though not necessary):

· Aspirin · Antihistamine · Hand sanitizer · Sunscreen · Wet wipes · Cold & flu tablets · Anti-diarrheal medication · Nausea medication · Rehydration sachets · Insect repellent · Antiseptic & bandages · Antibiotics (discuss with your doctor) · Medications/Prescriptions (it's advisable to have a doctor's letter if you're carrying a large amount of medication)

It's always wise to pack a few snacks you enjoy. Keep in mind there isn't a corner store available for late-night cravings, and remember that chocolate will melt in the tropical heat. As part of our registration process, you will be asked to declare any serious pre-existing medical conditions or allergies.

Time to Pack

We strongly recommend packing your luggage in a compact wheeled bag or soft-sided luggage. Your baggage should be clearly labeled and kept to a reasonable minimum. Airline luggage limits are strictly enforced, and space on our transportation is limited. Most flights from Miami to Santo Domingo have a 40-50 pound weight limit.

For those traveling with us from Detroit: You will check one bag containing items for village distribution (this bag's cost is covered by AOCLI). Your personal belongings must be packed in a carry-on suitcase. Please refer to the airline's website to review carry-on size and weight restrictions. A packing party will be scheduled prior to the trip, and all distribution bags will be transported to the airport on departure day by a AOCLI team member. Every piece of luggage traveling with us will be marked with a "Missions Tag." It is your responsibility to arrive at Detroit Metro Airport at least 2 hours before departure with your passport. Once at the airport, we will check all luggage together.

You should be capable of carrying your own bags up and down stairs. Keeping your luggage manageable ensures your safety and comfort, as well as that of your fellow travelers.

Clothing Guidelines

General Rule: Ladies should bring at least one skirt and a blouse with sleeves for church services. During work at our accommodations, capris or long shorts are acceptable. For local outreach or school visits, wear jeans, khakis, or capris—no shorts. Dominicans generally don't view shorts as respectful attire, so except for beach day and work time, it's better to wear jeans, khakis, or similar clothing, regardless of gender. Comfortable casual clothes made of cotton work best in tropical and semi-tropical climates. Laundry services are available at our accommodations, but electricity is not reliable.

Suggested Packing List

Footwear & Accessories:

- Flat walking shoes & sandals/work shoes
- Hat & sunglasses
- Swimming attire
- Lightweight travel towel
- Money belt
- Water bottle
- Basic first aid kit

Electronics & Equipment:

- Alarm clock
- Small flashlight
- Camera (plus necessary equipment—print film is still available in main towns)
- Earplugs/eye mask

Clothing Specifics:

- Day pack and/or shoulder bag for touring days
- Church clothes: long pants (men) & long skirts (women), long-sleeve tops, shoes that are easy to slip on and off
- Women's sanitary products



Important Note: Airlines require all sharp items to be packed in checked luggage.

Personal Items

Bring personal items such as shampoo, bath soap, toothpaste, deodorant, lip balm, and other toiletries. This list is not exhaustive—think in terms of items you would take on a normal vacation. The DR doesn't have all the same products available in the US, so if you really need something specific, make sure to bring it!

Bedding

While towels, sheets, and pillows are provided at our accommodations, we're always eager to replace worn items. If you prefer to bring and use your own towel from home, our hosts would gladly accept it as a donation when you leave. Twin or queen sheet sets would also be greatly appreciated donations.

Electricity

The electrical standard in the DR is 110V. While electricity is available at our accommodations, it's not reliable. Power outages occur daily for periods of time. Important: Charge cell phones only in designated common areas, not in sleeping rooms. Excessive electrical use can disable fans during the night, making for an uncomfortable sleep!

Communication

Throughout the entire trip, remember that you're in a developing country. You will NOT have continuous access to internet or cell phone service. Available internet runs at very slow speeds. In case of emergency, cell phone service is available. Family members can also communicate with travelers through our Facebook page, where a AOCLI team member will post daily updates allowing loved ones to keep up with exciting news. You'll receive Facebook page information prior to the trip.

Sanitation

Remember—we're in a developing country. There are clean restroom facilities at our accommodations; however, **NO SANITATION PRODUCTS OR TOILET PAPER CAN BE PUT IN THE TOILET.** There is a basket next to every toilet where all paper and sanitary products must be placed. While traveling in villages and small cities, restroom facilities may not meet your usual standards.

Our Responsible Travel Policy

AOCLI practices a thorough, realistic, and responsible travel policy. We believe travel should involve an exchange of knowledge and perspectives, a sharing of resources, and genuine appreciation of the beautiful natural environments found in the Dominican Republic. This philosophy supports the heart and soul of our travel style, drives all we strive to deliver to our travelers, and shapes our contact with partners in the DR.

We recognize that poorly planned itineraries or poorly informed tourists contribute less to cross-cultural understanding and less to the livelihoods of local people. We also acknowledge that we work in a developing part of the world where political and social factors sometimes impede short-term implementation of responsible travel initiatives. We don't make unrealistic statements about achieving our goals—doing so would make us "irresponsible." We aspire to short or medium-term implementation of our policies where realistic and incremental change where governmental or cultural constraints exist.

Rule #1: "Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not get bent out of shape."

ON THE GROUND



Arrival

Arrival (and departure) transfers are included for all trip members. On arrival in the DR, a team leader will escort you through customs and baggage claim (the tourist card fee is already included in your airline ticket). Once everyone clears customs, our local transportation will be waiting to meet you outside the airport. We will eat lunch together at the airport and then load onto the bus for our journey to our accommodations.

Safety & Security

Tourist areas in the DR are safe by world standards, but usual common-sense safety precautions should be followed. Tourists should stick to planned travel arrangements and avoid unfamiliar areas. It is not safe to walk the streets of the capital or at the market by yourself. We recommend keeping jewelry to a minimum and leaving valuable items at home. Always keep photocopies of your passport, airline itinerary, and credit card numbers.

While in the villages or smaller cities, you will be tempted to give money or gifts to people, especially children. Please **DO NOT DO IT!** This is the quickest way to start a chaotic situation that could result in someone getting hurt. There will be designated times to distribute items in a controlled atmosphere. If you feel compelled to give to a particular person or family, we will coordinate this through a local pastor.

Your Accommodations

Our accommodations are quite comfortable and spacious, housing all 16 team members under one roof. The facility is located in a safe area, and your personal items will be secure. While we cannot guarantee nothing will ever go missing, we maintain a trustworthy environment. There are showers with warm water (most of the time) and self-service laundry facilities available.

Transport

Our primary form of travel is bus. It's air conditioned, has four wheels and has the capacity to move forward. That's about the best we can offer. On a serious note, the transportation service we use is very reliable and the drivers are professional. It's always a good time trying to communicate with the driver. He does not know any English...except that which various teams have taught him!

Respecting local customs

Service levels in the DR are more relaxed than those in more established travel destinations; it is best to treat this as a cultural nuance and enjoy the ride. People are generally honest and eager to please; however, miscommunication can often occur due to language and cultural barriers. Showing anger is never a good idea; it will not assist you in achieving your goal and will cause you to 'lose face'. Exercising patience, tolerance and good humor is therefore essential. Remember, you are the visitor – respecting local customs is not only polite, but will also lead to a more rewarding travel experience.

Shopping

During our trip we will take time to go to the market for shopping. This is a fun experience but be careful as to which stores you go to. Our Restoration guide will suggest certain stores that are honest and provide the best prices.

A few guidelines to follow when shopping:

- Except in department stores, bargaining is the norm. To get the best price you will have to haggle some
- Etiquette also needs to be exercised when shopping. Do not bargain for any items you have no intention of purchasing
- Never venture off alone. Ensure you are always with somebody from our team.

Disclaimer

Information herein was correct at the time of preparation; however the tide is always changing and it has the potential to make some of the information in this guide irrelevant. This information is intended as a guide only and AOCLI is not responsible for inaccuracies. Please contact us with your comments if, during the course of your travels, you find that the information in this guide is incorrect or out of date.

Flight Information

2025 - 8 Day Trip

American Airlines:

(Include all travel flights to the DR and back here)

EMERGENCY CONTACT: