

VISIONS Dominican Republic

June 29 - July 26 (28 days / 4 weeks) • \$4,600

August 3 - 22 (20 days / 3 weeks) • \$3,700

SANTO DOMINGO AREA
IMMERSION IN VISIONS'S OLDEST SPANISH-LANGUAGE SITE
JARABACOA, DOMINICAN ALPS, HISTORIC SITES
BEACHES, MARKETPLACES, MERINGUE
65 TO 95 HOURS SERVICE CREDIT

The island nation of the Dominican Republic is one of the most culturally vibrant and historically rich countries in the Americas. The warmth and resilience of Dominicans have charmed and inspired VISIONS participants since 1991. VISIONS's history in the communities where we live is one of mutual respect, deep friendships and enduring partnerships such as with the Sabana Perdida Lions Club with whom we collaborate every summer.

Poverty is a fact of life in the Dominican Republic. So precarious are resources that electricity is rationed in the poorest neighborhoods by turning off power for up to 10 hours daily. Our home base currently is in San Luis, about one hour from Santo Domingo's center. Santo Domingo is the DR's most populous, prosperous city, and arguably one of the nation's most impoverished regions. San Luis is a *batey* town, built up around a once-prosperous, now defunct sugar cane factory whose closure collapsed the economy.

Service in the DR is demanding, eye-opening and immensely rewarding. Projects are primarily masonry construction. We work with *maestros*, often the families themselves whose homes we build, and Dominican friends. Past participants have built over a dozen homes, a medical clinic, public schools (our Sabana Perdida home base was a past VISIONS project), renovated housing and created a public park, constructed playgrounds and picnic pavilions. Every summer we organize and supervise *Campamento de Juvenile*.

The counterpoint to our intensive labor is the time we spend exploring and playing. Afternoons, evenings, and weekends are occasions for enjoying Dominican life. We visit marketplaces to bargain for fruits, vegetables and other goods, and stroll through the historic colonial district of Santo Domingo, the oldest Western city in the hemisphere. We dance to pulsing *merengue* music at renowned *Guacara Taina Discoteque* built within enormous deep caverns underneath the capital city. We relax and play on white sand beaches with clear blue waters perfect for snorkeling and swimming. In the country's interior, you will summit one of the Caribbean's highest peaks in the Dominican Alps. Days in the DR always include time spent with Dominican friends—perhaps a game of dominoes, or *bitilla*, played with a broomstick and a plastic bottle cap, the skill-sharpening precursor to baseball.

Participants in this language immersion program must have a minimum of two years of high school Spanish or the equivalent proficiency.

WORK HARD PLAY HARD LIVE DYNAMICALLY CONNECT DEEPLY SERVE PURPOSEFULLY SEE DIFFERENTLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE

<http://www.visionsserviceadventures.com/programs/dominicanrepublic.htm>