



## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



## THE MISSION

Among the total population of the Dominican Republic, nearly one in three Dominicans live below the poverty line, struggling to access the health care they need. Women, children and the elderly are especially vulnerable. The country shares a border with Haiti, the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, and both nations are at risk for hurricanes, earthquakes, severe storms and flooding, as well as mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue fever and Zika. Despite the beautiful scenery, Dominican Republic's environment is extremely vulnerable to disasters that impact the community's overall health and wellbeing.

The Dominican Republic's provinces surrounding Santo Domingo reflect the disparities between Dominican families living in urban communities and those living in peri-urban "batey" communities. These are informal communities that were started by workers of the sugar cane plantations outside of Santo Domingo. While most of the plantations have closed, these communities still exist and are home to many marginalized, vulnerable residents. Unemployment is high and even people with the opportunity to work typically earn approximately \$2 per day. Infrastructure and services are very weak in these communities. Most people living in rural areas are unable to reach government services in other areas and lack access to healthcare facilities, public sewer systems and reliable water sources. It is the children who suffer the most because of poverty and infrastructure problems. Child mortality rates (CMRs) in the rural areas are nearly double the country's national average and 45 out of 1,000 children do not reach their fifth birthday while nationally, 26 out of 1,000 do not.)

While the island does have health centers, many are understaffed and undersupplied and although most of the existing healthcare services are free, many children residing in-group homes and on the streets are frequently unable to obtain care, even on an emergency basis. To help provide quality medical care to the communities, our partners provide quality dental and medical services. Mobile clinics will offer assistance to families in surrounding populations.



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The Dominican Republic is located in the Caribbean and is about twice the size of New Jersey. It is located on the island of Hispaniola, which it shares with Haiti; Spanish is the official language. The country's total population is just over 10.2 million, with 30.5% estimated to live below the poverty line.

You will have the opportunity to learn about the great historic and geological value of this region originating from the volcanic eruptions that took place during Prehistory. It's easy to distinguish the different kinds of volcanic rocks and calcareous sandstone you can find in the area of the Los Haitises National Park.

After a week of service, if you want to add on some fun in the sun in this beautiful country, simply let us know. We also offer a brilliant trip on coral reef science in this region that you may elect to add on after your medical mission.

## LODGING & TRANSPORTATION

Throughout your time in the Dominican Republic, you will stay in hotel accommodations that will be located within a two-hour drive of Santo Domingo and will be safe and clean. While here, you will have easy access to many cafes and restaurants where you can sample the local cuisine. The hotel features a great water park, making this a perfect trip for student groups.

## HIGHLIGHTS

The gratitude that you receive while working with the people of the Dominican Republic will be life changing and may inspire you to continue humanitarian work once you return home. Outside of clinic, your trip highlights will include the exciting ways you decide to spend your free day, the island's culinary delights, and the breezy serenity of palm tree-lined beaches. The Dominican Republic is known for its beaches, and you will have the opportunity to have a beach day on your free day and enjoy the famous crystal clear turquoise waters the island has to offer. Also, you can visit the prairies from San Antonio de Guerra to La Romana, which are trails formed by the action of great glaciers that have left boulders now covered by humus.

It's also interesting to take a look into the caves of Fun-Fun, Doña Ana, and Puerta del Cielo, which are frequented by groups from all over the country.

## ITINERARY AT A GLANCE

Day 1	Arrival & Orientation
Day 2	Clinic
Day 3	Clinic
Day 4	Training Day
Day 5	Clinic
Day 6	Clinic
Day 7	Depart for Home



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### **Day 1 – Dinner included**

Arrive in Santiago, Dominican Republic (airport code STI) by 12 noon to travel to team lodging. After settling in, you will have some time to explore and get ready for orientation. During this team meeting, your team leader will assign roles for clinic, explain protocols, talk about schedules, discuss the communities you will be serving, and much more. In the evening, we will gather for a team dinner and hear more about the week ahead from our local partners.

### **Days 2, 3 & 5 – Breakfast, lunch & dinner included**

Today is your first day of clinic! Expect to see lots of multigenerational families who are all waiting to see you. There will be lots of children and adolescents in the communities we will be working in and you will be providing prenatal care for many young ladies. Your team will treat a wide variety of acute and chronic illnesses, some resulting from malnutrition. One of the major focuses of this mission is dentistry, and you will see many patients in clinic eager to receive dental care.

You are going to love your clinic days caring for the people of the Dominican Republic. The poor water quality throughout the island is responsible for many health problems and increasing infectious disease. More than 2 million Haitian immigrants, most of them undocumented, live in the Dominican Republic working in high labor, low wage, unskilled jobs and receive no services from the government. This is why our partners have been invited to provide care for the people of the Dominican Republic who can't access it.

In the evenings, we have some pool and relaxation time or perhaps a trip to town to meet some of the amazing people in the Dominican Republic. The food here is fantastic!

### **Day 4 - Breakfast, lunch & dinner included**

Today you'll have the opportunity to put your training skills to work by assisting in training local healthcare workers as part of the commitment to long-term, sustainable education. Education is as important as medical and dental care for our patients. Each clinic includes basic health education according to the specialties and skills of the volunteers, as well as the needs of the local people. When communities become empowered to take health and wellness issues into their own hands, they become self-sufficient. Our partners provide learning opportunities for the local communities through classes and hands-on learning to sustain their well-being beyond our visit.

After our training session, the day will be yours to explore the area and enjoy the beach.

### **Day 6 – Breakfast, lunch & dinner included**

The last day of clinic will be bittersweet as you reflect back on all your hard work and the patients whose lives you were able to touch. You'll debrief upon returning to your hotel and enjoy a lovely dinner.

### **Day 7 - Breakfast**

Enjoy one final breakfast with your team! Depending on the time your flight leaves, you can explore more of the island before you head back to the airport for your international flight home. Thank you for your service!



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## MISSION INCLUSIONS

International flights  
Transportation  
Lodging  
Costs associated with the clinic  
Food & Beverages  
All logistics, including translation services and security as needed  
2 sets of scrubs per person  
Travel pack with water bottle, journal, luggage tags and more  
Personal Tour Ambassador assigned to your group

## NOT INCLUDED

Passport fees, visa fees, and transit fees if required  
Luggage fees if not included with airline ticketing  
Fully comprehensive insurance (mandatory)  
Coach transfers to/from home airport  
Meals on travel days other than what is specified  
Single occupancy supplement fees  
Vaccinations and medications common for travel  
Spending money for souvenirs and personal purchases  
Required mission supplies or personal equipment  
COVID-related fees such as testing, vaccinations and quarantines  
Additional Sightseeing / Entertainment Options  
Any gratuities – Tour Ambassador, local guides

**Each team is responsible for carrying medical supplies for the deployment.  
All fees associated with transport are the responsibility of the volunteer.**

This mission is offered through our partnership with International Medical Relief. As always, our staff are always available to answer any questions you may have regarding programming. If we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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