

# FREESTYLE Ashore



## Port Information Guide SAMANA, Dominican Republic

### History

The most prominent geographic feature of the Dominican North Coast is the Samana Peninsula. Christopher Columbus arrived here in 1493, but was so fiercely attacked by the Ciguayo Indians that he left. He gave the bay the name *Golfo de las Flechas* which means the gulf of arrows, a fitting name for his experience there. A cultural oddity in a country usually associated with Columbus and Spanish domination, Samana was founded by English-speaking U.S. slaves in the 1820's. This came about through the efforts of U.S. abolitionists and a Haitian general who worked to relocate thousands of slaves who had escaped Southern plantations via the Underground Railroad. Descendants of the original settlers - called *Americanos* - still live in the area, and some of them speak English as their first language. They continue to have a noticeable impact on the area's food, churches and architecture. Much of Samana was destroyed in 1946 by a fire. As a result, there is little evidence of its past history. Instead you will find modern churches, restaurants and hotels.

For more port and shopping information please tune in to the "Destination Channel" on your stateroom television.

### Highlights

Samana has long attracted certain regular visitors - and not only the human kind. For many generations humpback whales from the North Atlantic have migrated every winter to the warm and protected waters of the Bay of Samana. It is a destination for nature lovers and adventurers. Green mountains, long beaches, solitude, lively little towns in between, and turquoise waters await visitors. Samana and the surrounding area in the Dominican Republic is popular with eco-tourists (whale-watchers, advanced scuba divers, rock climbers and horseback riders) and is home to various environmental conservation groups. They work with locals and the tourism industry to preserve and protect the natural beauty and bounty that makes Samana such a lovely destination.

### People

The Dominican Republic (which is slightly larger than twice the size of New Hampshire) has a population of almost 9 million. As with the rest of the Dominican Republic, you will notice that the Samana locals make up a rainbow range of complexions, this may be more apparent here than any other region. This variety stems from the mixed background of the region. The freed American slave settlers and the European immigrants combined with the people already living in the rest of the Dominican Republic makes for a varied cultural and social makeup. You'll find that many people speak English. Traditional Dominican dishes include *sancocho* (a stew made with meat and native root vegetables) and *chicarrones de pollo* (Dominican-style fried chicken).



**SAMANA**

To see the most while ashore we always recommend taking one of the ship's organized tours.

NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE

Norwegian Cruise Line 2/17/2006 ©

To see the most while ashore we always recommend taking one of the ship's organized tours.

## ACTIVITIES

**Scuba diving** in Samana features the best adventure on the north coast of the Dominican Republic. This rocky coastline with high cliffs leads to an exciting underwater world of sheer drop-offs and pinnacles that rise from 165 feet to within 15 feet of the surface. Underwater visibility in this region can range from 100 to 150 feet.

**Self Drive 4X4 Adventure** excursion will visit a typical Dominican farm featuring native fruits, coconut, coffee and chocolate. From the farm you will travel to Playa El Valle, a virgin and untamed, white-sand beach. You will have some time to wade, explore the rocks that form small caves and to play in the fresh cool water. Leaving the beach behind, you will re-board your safari vehicle for the brief trip to La Cascada El Valle, a beautiful cascade-type water fall. You will have sometime to take a dip in the natural pool.

**Whale-watching** excursions typically run from January 15 - March 15 for the best viewing of the migrating humpback whales. Most tours are lengthy and unsuitable for a day trip, but there are shorter excursions better suited for a brief visit.

**Horseback riding, historical walks and cave exploration** are also popular and are offered in NCL's guided tours. These activities allow for an unspoiled perspective of the beautiful natural surroundings and are the best way to see Samana up close.

### Beaches/Beach Day Package:

Cayo Levantado Key is located at the entrance of the Samaná Bay. It is reached by boat from the village of Samana harbor. It offers mellow turquoise water and powdery white sand beaches that are considered one of the most beautiful in the Caribbean.



In this exceptionally beautiful place, water sports abound. Go SCUBA diving or snorkeling, ride the big, yellow "water banana", swim in the crystal-clear waters, play on the beach, enjoy the amazing views of the picturesque island or just relax to a sun kissed breeze. Dance to the seductive frenzy that mixes the color and sound of our music, Merengue, which you find in every corner.

Take it slow, and enjoy untamed white sand beaches or explore the. Cayo Levantado offers a diversity of attractions that will make your trip an unforgettable experience.

## ATTRACTIONS

**El Limon Waterfall:** Featured on the Horseback Riding Tour. The waterfall is about 300 meters above sea level and has a 40 meter drop that ends in a very deep but swimmable pool of crystal clear waters.

**Samana City,** at the tender pier, claims an unusual history and, as a result, an unusual character. It was settled by two shiploads of freed American slaves around 1824 and, to this day, many residents speak English as a first language. The US cultural influence is also apparent in many of the last names of the settlers of this area. Urban renewal is improving the overall look of Samana city and the locals are eager to share their city with tourists year-round.

## GETTING AROUND

You can get around on foot in Samana City, by moto-concho (motorcycle taxi) or by limited taxis. The town is small & easy to navigate on foot.

## CURRENCY

The official currency of the Dominican Republic is the Dominican peso. However, the U.S. dollar is widely accepted and preferred in most instances all over the country. *Important to note,* Samana is one of few tourist areas in the Dominican Republic where credit cards are not as readily accepted as the other parts of the country. It is best to bring cash or travelers checks.

## PORT AGENT

Agency: Fredric Schad, Inc.

E-MAIL: [mail@fschad.com](mailto:mail@fschad.com)

TEL: (809) 221-8000, FAX: (809) 688-7696

ADDRESS: Jose Gabriel Garcia #26 Corner Arz.Merino P.O. Box 941 Santo Domingo, Dominican Rep

Contact: Mr. Frederic Schad, President

### PLEASE NOTE:

The above information is correct at the time of going to print. However, Norwegian Cruise Line cannot be held responsible for any changes in price, opening times etc. of local establishments. Furthermore, Norwegian Cruise Line cannot accept responsibility for the availability or tariffs of local taxi drivers.