



Dominican Republic A Haven For Whales And Ecotourism

(NAPSA)—The idea of whales making an annual migration to the Caribbean may sound like a fish tale, but it's not. In fact, it turns out that one of the best places for whale watching is a destination many consider a tropical paradise.

With 25 percent of its lush green land and pristine coastal areas protected as national parks, reserves and sanctuaries, the Dominican Republic—also known as the DR—is thought to be the most biodiverse country in the Caribbean and is a major destination for ecotourists, most notably for whale watching along the Samaná Peninsula.

A migration destination

Each winter, 3,000 to 5,000 whales migrate to the warm crystalline waters of the Bay of Samaná. Whale-watching season begins in mid-January and continues through the end of March; however, excursions are available as long as whales remain in the bay.

These gentle creatures migrate with intentions of mating and giving birth. While the males assertively romp in the outer bays competing for females, the females reside along the shallow waters of the inner bay to provide a nursery for their young.

Whale-watching tours are offered along the Northeast Coast and in Samaná Bay, a part of the Marine Mammal Sanctuary of the Dominican Republic. The sanctuary surrounds the Peninsula of Samaná and is considered one of the first whale sanctuaries in the world. There, visitors can observe



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the humpback whales and listen to their song at close range without endangering them or risking their own safety.

An ecotourism leader

For decades, the DR has been a leader in the preservation of sensitive ecosystems in the region. It has developed partnerships with leaders such as The Nature Conservancy, the United Nations and the Smithsonian to establish powerful environmental protections.

“Our reserves, magnificent sanctuaries and pristine beaches are a vital tourism draw. The DR offers an array of eco-friendly activities for travelers to pursue adventures that best promote conservation and preservation,” said the Dominican Republic Ministry of Tourism.

For example, along the North Coast, travelers will discover the scenic 27 Waterfalls of Damajagua and Cabarete Bay, thought to be an ideal location for kiteboarding, cascading, scuba diving, surfing, boogie-boarding and more.

To learn more, visit www.GoDominicanRepublic.com.