

Budget Travel Readers Name Dominican Republic (DR) Best Value Destination

Over 160,000 Budget Travel Readers name eco-diverse Caribbean island, Dominican Republic, the Best Value

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, Aug. 2 /2010 PRNewswire/ -- Thousands of readers from around the world elected the Dominican Republic (DR) as the Best Value Destination, according to *Budget Travel's* "Readers Choice Awards." *Budget Travel's* Editor in Chief, Nina Willdorf, stopped by NBC's "The Today Show," on Thursday, July 29, to announce winners of the magazine's "Readers Choice Awards" and recognize DR as an affordable and easily-accessible destination for U.S. travelers.

The DR Minister of Tourism's Vice Minister of International Promotion Magaly Toribio mentioned, "We are honored to be voted a 'Best Value Destination' by *Budget Travel* readers. The award is so meaningful to us because it comes from savvy travelers who have visited the DR and experienced firsthand our refreshing offerings and lively culture. The DR Ministry of Tourism will continue to exceed expectations so that visitors can enjoy our country's diverse eco-activities, magnificent nature, world-class beaches and sophisticated accommodations to suit every budget and taste."

Nina Willdorf, *Budget Travel* editor, noted, "*Budget Travel* readers are always looking for affordable, exotic vacation ideas and the DR was the clear front-runner in the category for best value destination. The DR is an easy island escape that's close to home."

"With eight international airports, the DR is an easy, direct flight from most major U.S. gateways. With sophisticated cities, resort communities and charming towns and villages in a country with warm, friendly people, the DR is receiving accolades from many top travel organizations as a must-see destination," Toribio added.

The DR's luxury accommodations, unique culture, rich history and natural beauty have not gone unnoticed. Other top rankings and honors for the DR in 2010 include:

Lavish Accommodations & Locations

- *USA TODAY* included Excellence Resorts' Excellence Punta Cana on its "10 Great Places to Get Everything Under the Sun" and "10 Great Resorts for Warm-Weather Escape."
- *Conde Nast Traveler* named the Peninsula House in Samana on the DR's stunning Northeast Coast as the most luxurious place in the Caribbean and the top-scoring property in the Americas on its venerable Gold List 2010 issue.
- *Travel Agent Magazine* named Barcelo Punta Cana one of the top five green resorts in the Caribbean, the Bahamas and Bermuda in 2010.
- *USA TODAY* included the Golden Dolphin Villa in Cabrera on the DR's North Coast on its list of "10 Great Places for a Family Reunion" in 2010.
- Punta Cana Resort and Club's posh Tortuga Bay Hotel in the DR received the AAA *Five Star Diamond Award*.
- *Luxury Living International* mentioned Coson Beach in Las Terrenas, DR and Juanillo Beach in Punta Cana, DR on its list for the "Top 10 Beaches to Live on in Paradise," in 2010.

Teeing Off

- *GolfWeek* selected Punta Espada Golf Course in Cap Cana as the best course of the Caribbean and Mexico for 2010. This acknowledgment marks the second consecutive year that the course has earned the top spot in the magazine's annual ranking.
- *GolfWeek* has included nine Dominican golf courses on its "2010 Best Courses of the Caribbean and Mexico:" Teeth of the Dog Golf Course (Casa de Campo) in La Romana; Dye Fore Golf Course (Casa de Campo) in La Romana; Playa Grande Golf Course in Rio San Juan; Roco Ki Faldo Legacy Golf Course in Macao, Punta Cana; La Romana Country Club (Casa de Campo); Guavaberry Golf & Country Club in Juan Dolio; La Cana Golf Course (PUNTACANA Resort & Club); and Links Golf Course (Casa de Campo) in La Romana.

Top Travel Destinations

- Santo Domingo received the *2010 Cultural Capital Award* from the American Capital of Culture. (www.cac-acc.org)
- *Budget Travel* named Samana Peninsula, DR one of its "Top Budget Travel Destinations for 2010."
- CNN included the DR as one of its recommendations for "Affordable and Accessible Vacations in 2010."
- *Travel + Leisure* named the DR and Los Haitises National Park on its list of "30 Romantic Dream Trips 2010."
- Orbitz.com listed Punta Cana, DR as number eight on its list of "Top 10 Spring Break Destinations for 2010."
- *Coastal Living* named Saona Island in the DR on its list of "Top 31 Best Beach Vacations," in 2010.

The Dominican Republic's first tourist was Christopher Columbus in 1492. Rich in history, the DR has developed into a diverse destination offering both Dominican and European flavors to more than one million U.S. visitors each year. Named *#1 Golf Destination in Caribbean & Latin America* by the International Association of Golf Tour Operators, the DR boasts 25 designer golf courses, upscale resorts, pristine nature, and sophisticated cities and quaint villages filled with warm Dominican people. The DR features the best beaches, fascinating history and culture, and is a chosen escape for celebrities, couples and families alike. Visit the Dominican Republic Ministry of Tourism's official website at: www.GoDominicanRepublic.com.

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