

Hope for Hispaniola- Welcome Packet



Hope for Hispaniola (H4H) is a non-profit, mission organization that supports several missionaries in the Dominican Republic (DR). Our goal is to Glorify God while coming alongside the local Christians in the DR to help them reach the lost in their country. H4H has spent much time in the Haitian villages in the DR. One of the main focuses of H4H over the past 6 years has been the Children's Center in La Higuera. This is a small Haitian village outside of Higuey, the 4th largest city in the DR. H4H supports Pastor Lydia who runs the Children's Center as well as Eliezer and his wife who teach at the center. Funding from H4H pays for their salaries as well as for food, utilities and upkeep for the center. The Children's Center now continues to expand and currently has classes for Kindergarten through 2nd grade. The children receive Biblical training as well as the usual classes of math, science, social studies and language arts. During the evening, the center also provides meals for the homeless elderly population of the village that have no one to care for them.

About the Dominican Republic-

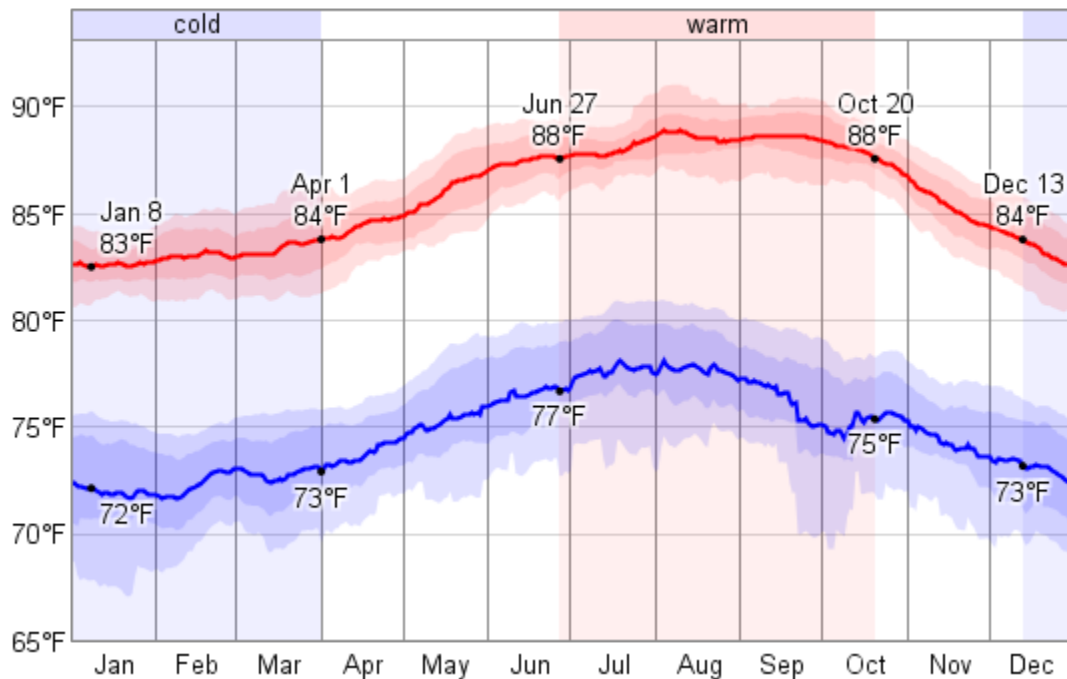
History-

The Dominican Republic is a Caribbean country that occupies the eastern two-thirds of the Caribbean island of Hispaniola. The western one-third of Hispaniola is occupied by the country of Haiti. To the north lies the North Atlantic Ocean, while the Caribbean Sea lies to the south. It was explored and claimed by Columbus on his first voyage on December 5th, 1492. Over the next few centuries, both Spain and France lay claim to the island while colonizing its opposite

ends. The DR gained independence from Spain in 1844 and endured turbulent dictatorship rule until 1996 when international pressure led to regular competitive elections. The economy of the DR is one of the fastest growing in the Western Hemisphere.

Weather-

The tropical climate gives little seasonal variation in temperature but does have specific dry and rainy seasons. Average temperatures are seen below:



Food-

Due to its diverse cultural heritage, the food in the DR includes a combination of Spanish, indigenous Taíno, and African influences. Common elements include rice, beans, eggs, plantains, chicken, and seafood. Our hosts graciously include some typical American elements in the meals including breakfast cereals, bread, rolls, and peanut butter & jelly.

Culture-

The people and their customs have origins mixing of Spaniard, African and Taino roots. This blend creates a distinct cultural entity all its own. Dominicans are proud of their history. Music is a dominant force in daily life with a merengue-like quality to most of their songs. Their worship is energetic and powerfully contagious.

Religion-

Historically Catholicism was the dominant religious force in the DR. Brought in from Europe by the Spanish, Catholicism quickly spread. It replaced (and melded with to some extent) the native Dominican Voodoo and animism that was present prior to Columbus' discovery of the

New World. Currently, many Protestant denominations such as the Assembly of God, Church of the Brethren, Baptist and some Pentecostals have active churches in the DR. Other religious sects like the Mormons and Jehovah's Witness have their footprint in the DR as well.

Voodoo is more prevalent in the Haitian villages where H4H ministers. Voodoo oppresses the people spiritually and creates an atmosphere of fear. Witch doctors control much of what goes on in the villages through their use of Voodoo. Even "Christian" Dominican mothers will seek protection for their babies from illness and death by paying the Witch Doctor to keep the "evil spirits" away. A baby dedicated in this manner wears a red bracelet on their ankle. In essence the baby's mother has made a pact with the devil. The fear of the losing their baby is greater than the fear of losing their own soul. This is why we need to reach them with the Good News of the freedom that comes through Christ and break the shackles that Voodoo has placed on them.

How to Prepare-

Pray-

Please pray:

- that God will prepare your heart for the experience you will have in the DR
- that He will soften the hearts of those we will be ministering to and that the Holy Spirit will move in the lives of the Dominicans
- for the health and safety of all those going on the trip
- for the coordination and logistics of the trip
- that we will be an encouragement to the local churches in the DR

Immunizations-

You will need to make sure that your immunizations are up to date and complete prior to leaving for the Dominican Republic. To ensure the most benefit, see a health-care provider 8-12 weeks before your trip to allow time for your vaccines to take effect. You may need to visit a special Travel Medicine center or go to your county health department to get some of the more specialized vaccines. Make sure you are up to date on your routine shots, such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine, etc.

Other recommended vaccines include:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Typhoid

Malaria-

Malaria is a parasitic disease spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Prevention of malaria starts with the avoidance of mosquito bites. Ways to avoid mosquito bites include:

- Using insect repellent (bug spray) with 30%-50% DEET
- Sleeping in beds covered by mosquito nets (+/- treated with permethrin)
- Avoiding outdoor activity at dusk when the mosquitoes are more active

Malaria prophylaxis is very important as well. Many different medications can be used to effectively prevent malaria should you be bitten by an infected mosquito. The following are recommended for the DR:

- **Chloroquine**: a once weekly medicine but more costly as well; start 1 week prior to departure and continue for 4 weeks after return
- **Doxycycline**: a daily medicine but can make your skin more sensitive to the sun; start 1 week prior to departure and continue for 4 weeks after return
- **Malarone**: a daily medicine that is costly but only needs; start 2 days prior to departure and continue for 1 week after return

****Doxycycline is free at Giant Eagle pharmacies and only \$4 at Wal-Mart pharmacies****

Malaria symptoms may include:

- fever
- chills
- sweats
- headache
- body aches
- nausea and vomiting
- fatigue

Malaria symptoms will occur at least 7 to 9 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Fever in the first week of travel in a malaria-risk area is unlikely to be malaria; however, you should see a doctor right away if you develop a fever during your trip.

Medicines to Bring:

Make sure to bring all prescription medications you are currently taking. Traveler's diarrhea is a common illness encountered in the DR. It is recommended to get prescriptions for the following antibiotics to bring with you as well:

- Cipro 500mg twice daily for 7 days
- Zithromax 500mg for one day, then 250mg daily for 4 more days

Additionally, many over-the-counter (OTC) medications are helpful to have along with you. Consider bringing the following:

- Ibuprofen and/or Tylenol for minor aches and pains
- Imodium for diarrhea
- Cough and cold medicine
- Athlete's foot cream or spray

What to Pack-

Clothing:

- comfortable closed toe shoes (sneakers, boots etc)
- shower shoes
- Ear Plugs *****
- Appropriate shorts and t-shirts
- scrubs (for medical personnel only)
- hats for sun avoidance
- dress clothes for church (plan on attending 3-4 church services)
 - Men: dress pants or Kakis, shirt with collar
 - Women: pants, skirt or dress, shirt, blouse (Just be modest)
- undergarments
- socks
- swim suit
- towels

Toiletries:

- soap
- shampoo
- Shaving items (razors, shaving cream, etc.)
- toothbrush and toothpaste
- feminine items if needed

Other items:

- Bible
- journal
- pens/pencils
- flashlight and extra batteries
- sunscreen (SPF 50 or greater recommended)
- sunglasses
- insect repellent (30-50% DEET recommended)
- mosquito net if desired
- bedding (twin sheets and pillows) as we will be sleeping on bunk beds with mattresses
- snacks (non-perishable)
 - Beef jerky, hard candy, peanuts, granola bars, drink mix
- refillable water bottle (metal or plastic)
- cell phone
 - service is available but expensive...check with your service provider first. Text packages are usually available for a reasonable price.
- Minor Permission Sheet (if under 18 and not with both parents) Keep in your possession
- Air Mattress - Optional

Do's and don'ts of the missions field:

Do come prepared to serve and not be served

Do come with a willing heart to do whatever God calls you to do

Don't come with an attitude of superiority

Don't drink the water

Do try new foods

Do remain open to beginning new relationships

Don't make the new relationships romantic

Do PRAY without ceasing throughout the week

Do talk to strangers

Don't wander off by yourself

Do stay in groups and let the leaders know where you are

Don't drink any alcohol

If you must smoke, please be discrete – **Talk to Jake about this**

Don't judge other cultures for being different

Do Praise the Lord continually for this experience

DON'T FORGET YOUR PASSPORT

Don't bring expensive electronics unless necessary

Don't invite anyone to the US until you have considered the cost and responsibility
Talk to Jake about this