

# MAKING A GETAWAY

*High-octane adventures on the Dominican Republic coast*

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They spend most of their time enclosed in a giant block of ice, so it makes perfect sense that hockey stars looking to toast their frosty buns would opt for the transparent waters and silky sands of Punta Cana.

The 100-kilometer paradise, located on the archipelago's easternmost tip, remains the crown jewel of Dominican Republic beach towns. Since gaining popularity in the early '70s, Punta Cana has seen its share of famous faces (and their other



equally famous body parts) splayed out in varying states of relaxation.

Long a favourite of baseball legends Sammy Sosa, David Ortiz and Alex Rodriguez, NHLers have started to discover Punta Cana's simple charms, although rumours of a Sens centre Mike Fisher spotting last year proved just that when the celeb in question turned out to be a German actor with the same name.

For a place that's managed to stay relatively low on the paparazzi radar, mistakes like this are bound to happen. And it's part of the reason you may

stumble upon Julio Iglesias cranking out one of his signature tunes during happy hour karaoke, or Oscar de la Renta having sample sales on the lawn of his beachfront home. Well, maybe not. But the state of dreamlike bliss you will experience during your stay lends itself toward such elaborate fantasies. Hey – we're not used to all that heat up here!

Still, it's not all sunburns and pina colodas. Abdalah Castillo, head of the Dominican Republic Tourist Board, put together this exclusive list for more adventurously inclined TFP readers. All of these excursions can be booked through your hotel, although you may save some pesos by reserving on your own.

#### ➔ **MOTO-SAFARI**

Strap yourself into an ATV and roar through inland Punta Cana. You'll tear through dirty roads, sugar cane fields, Dominican ranch houses and pristine beaches at 20 miles per hour, you animal. Stop for lunch and clean all that grime off your sweaty body with a refreshing swim before getting back on your bike and doing it all again. Backwards. Jeep tours are also available for those who prefer to drink and have someone else do the driving.

#### **YOU SHOULD TRY**

Outback Safari | 809 455-1573  
outbacksafari.com.do

#### ➔ **ZIP IT GOOD**

Shoot through the skies at (semi)-breakneck speed, and fly from one canopy to the next with a view typically reserved for be-winged and be-feathered creatures. Not as intense as the zip lines in Costa Rica, but should get your heart pumping nonetheless.

#### **YOU SHOULD TRY**

Bavaro Runners | 809 455-1135  
bavarorunners.com

#### ➔ **YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE**

Steer your own jet-propelled boat down the Bavaro coast, puffing on a Cuban cigar with one hand around your imaginary girlfriend: You're James Bond on this baby and there is no room for reality. Park at a local coral reef and suit up for a few hours of snorkeling. Your cigar – and babe – will unfortunately have to remain on dry land.

#### **YOU SHOULD TRY**

Bavaro Splash | 809 688-1615  
bavarosplash.com

#### ➔ **DJ PLAY THAT SONG**

After you've showered and cleaned yourself up, it's time to embarrass yourself on the dance floor. While you won't find the same bone-shattering bass lines you're used to back home, Castillo recommends checking out the town's three most famous clubs: Disco Mangu, Areito, and The Cave. All three dot the coastline, and are open most nights of the week. Just keep your guard up: Despite the Dominicans' excellent reputation for hospitality, tourists have been known to overpay for drinks. Make sure you ask someone how much a vodka soda costs before handing over all your traveler's checks

#### **STILL NOT CONVINCED?**

*What the hell is wrong with you?! Hit up the official Dominican Republic Ministry of Tourism's website at [godominicanrepublic.com](http://godominicanrepublic.com), and sift through endless images of pristine beaches. Then get off your ass and go*

