

# Samaná Peninsula & Whale Watching

## Description

---

Like Bayahibe, the northern peninsula Samaná is full of beautiful beaches. It offers a combination of busy tourist towns and “off the beaten path” isolated beaches. The bay is also a mating site for the Atlantic Humpback whales.



There are three main areas that one may visit in Samaná:

- Northern Peninsula: The Las Terrenas area includes the “bustling” town of Las Terrenas, and quieter options on the coast such as Playa Bonita, Las Ballenas, and El Portillo. In this area you will also find the waterfall “Salto del Limón or Las Cascadas del Limón” which is accessible by purchasing a day tour, on-site, in Las Terrenas.
- Southern Peninsula: Samaná, the provincial capital city has some historical sites and hotels. It is most famous for the “cayos” or small islands off of the coast and whale watching tours. Whale watching “season” is from mid January through mid March; February is considered the best time. Tours are available may be purchased locally or at a tourist company in Santo Domingo. Tourists are advised to choose a reputable company for their tour. Some people offer tours in small fishing boats which do not follow regulations, frequently moving too close to the whales and harming them. The following company is considered reputable: <http://www.whalesamana.com/home.html> . Read about whale watching in Samaná at <http://dr1.com/travel/special/whales.shtml>.
- Eastern Peninsula Tip: Las Galeras is a sleepy fishing village with a burgeoning tourist industry. It is most recognized for Playa Rincón, a vast beach with little development. Playa Rincón is accessible by vehicle or boat. Fishing boats leave regularly from the Las Galeras beach and tend to charge \$US 10 per person, round trip. Two restaurants offer food services at the beach. On the road leading to Rincón you will find an iguana “sanctuary”, a new eco-tourism project that protects and breed iguanas in a natural habitat. Villa Serena is the most well known (and nicest) hotel, however, there are many options with a wide range of prices. Las Galeras has several other small beaches that are just as enjoyable.



## **Time Needed**

Estimated travel time will depend on where you go. Las Terrenas and Samaná are approximately 4 hours driving distance. Add an additional hour from Samaná to reach Las Galeras. Las Terrenas and the city of Samaná are connected by road running through El Limón. Despite what the map may reflect, the road is in fairly good condition and the scenery is spectacular.

## **Estimated Cost**

This area of the country has far fewer all inclusive hotels as compared to Bavaro or Puerto Plata. Small hotels may vary from \$US 40 - \$US 100 a night. Samaná Net is a great website and offers information about accommodations, restaurants and tours for all three areas of Samaná.

<http://www.samana.net/sn-english.htm>