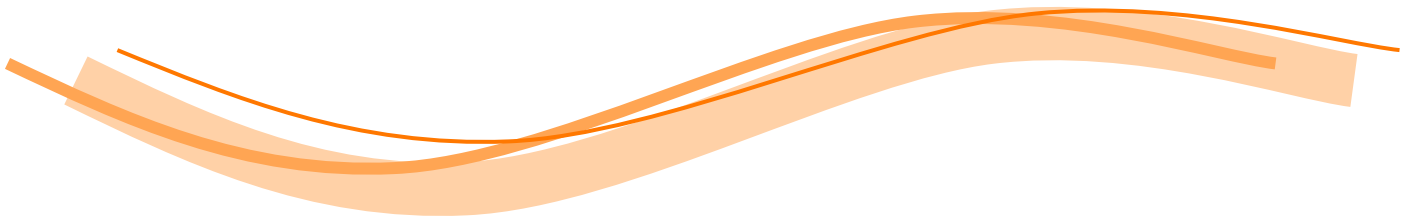




# BARCELO RESORTS & TRANSAT HOLIDAYS





<b>TRAVEL NOTES SECTIONS</b>	<p>To help you find what you are looking for, these Travel Notes are organized in the following order:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Barcelo Hotels and Resorts</li> <li>2. Transat Holidays and Nolitours</li> <li>3. Dominican Republic</li> <li>4. Cuba</li> </ol>
------------------------------	---

<b>BARCELO RESORTS</b>	<p>Discover <b>Barceló Hotels and Resorts</b>, one of the world's most respected names in all-inclusive vacations. Barceló has a knack for making every place, the best place, and always providing the best holiday. They take the very essence of the local culture and invite you to discover everything it has to offer.</p> <p><b>Transat Holidays and sister company Nolitours</b> offer vacation packages at Barceló Resorts. Be sure to pick up their winter brochures at your Travel Agent! These three great names together translate into a vacation cocktail of carefree days in the sun for you. Barceló Hotels and Resorts are located in Punta Cana, Puerto Plata, Cancun, Riviera Maya, Cayo Santa Maria, Varadero, Costa Rica and many other destinations.</p> <p>Transat Holidays features Barceló resorts in its <b>Transat Distinction Collection</b>, an outstanding line of luxury hotels offered exclusively to Transat Holidays clients. With Prestige Class, guests enjoy exclusive privileges, enhanced services and fabulous facilities – at resorts that are already renowned for their attentive service and their wide array of activities for couples and families.</p>
------------------------	--

<b>Barcelo History</b>	<p>The name of Barceló, which began as a small transportation company, is today associated with one of the most prestigious holiday groups. Behind this lies the determination and hard work of three generations for seventy years.</p> <p>1931: Creation of Autocares Barceló (a transport company), founded by Simón Barceló in Felanitx (Majorca, Spain).</p> <p>1962: First hotel of the chain opened in Majorca, Spain. This stage culminates in 1965, with the development of a new concept of hotel: the Barceló Pueblo Palma</p> <p>1985: The international hotel operations begin: opening of the first hotel in the Caribbean (Barceló Bávaro Beach Resort, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic). Thus, Barceló becomes the pioneer Spanish hotel company in the area</p>
------------------------	---

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>1999: Opening of the Barceló Maya Resort complex, in the Mayan Riviera in México, and purchase of two hotels (Ixtapa and Huatulco) on Mexico's Pacific coast</p> <p>In 2011 they have over 160 resorts in 16 countries.</p> <p>Barcelo believe that they have a great responsibility that includes social and environmental aspects, so Barceló Hotels &amp; Resorts has explicitly confirmed its commitment to society and the environment by signing the United Nations Pact on Human Rights and the Environment</p>
<b>Websites</b>	<p>Have fun exploring:</p> <p><a href="http://www.barcelo.com">www.barcelo.com</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.barcelobrochures.com">www.barcelobrochures.com</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.barceloweddings.com">www.barceloweddings.com</a></p>
<b>Barcelo Resorts in Bavaro Beach, Punta Cana</b>	<p><b>In the Transat Holidays 2011 -2012 brochure:</b></p> <p>Barcelo Punta Cana Prestige Class</p> <p>Barcelo Bavaro Palace Deluxe Prestige Class</p> <p><b>In the Nolitours 2011-2012 brochure:</b></p> <p>Barcelo Bavaro Beach</p> <p>Barcelo Punta Cana</p> <p>Barcelo Dominican Beach</p>
<b>Barcelo and Transat Holidays 2010-2011</b>	<p><b>Transat Holidays offers 11 Barcelo resorts in 9 destinations:</b></p> <p>Barcelo Cayo Santa Maria Beach Resort Prestige Class, Cayo Santa Maria, Cuba</p> <p>Barcelo Habana, Havana, Cuba</p> <p>Barcelo Marina Palace Prestige Class, Varadero, Cuba</p> <p>Barcelo Puerto Plata Prestige Class, Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic</p> <p>Barcelo Punta Cana Prestige Class, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic</p> <p>Barcelo Bavaro Palace Deluxe Prestige Class, Punta Cana, DR</p> <p>Barcelo Ixtapa Beach Resort, Ixtapa, Mexico</p> <p>Barcelo Karmina Palace Deluxe, Manzanillo, Mexico</p> <p>Barcelo Puerto Vallarta, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico</p> <p>Barcelo Maya Colonial Prestige Class, Riviera Maya, Mexico</p> <p>Barcelo Maya Palace Beach Prestige Class, Riviera Maya, Mexico</p>
<b>Barcelo and Nolitours 2011-2012</b>	<p><b>Nolitours offers 13 Barcelo resorts in 9 destinations:</b></p> <p>Barcelo Langosta Beach, Liberia, Costa Rica</p> <p>Barcelo San Jose Palacio, San Jose, Costa Rica</p> <p>Barcelo Tambor Beach, San Jose, Costa Rica</p> <p>Barcelo Cayo Santa Maria Beach Resort, Cayo Santa Maria, Cuba</p> <p>Barcelo Marina Palace, Varadero, Cuba</p> <p>Barcelo Solymar Arenas Blancas, Varadero, Cuba</p> <p>Barcelo Capella Beach, La Romana, Dominican Republic</p> <p>Barcelo Puerto Plata, Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic</p> <p>Barcelo Bavaro Beach, Punta Cana, Dom Rep</p> <p>Barcelo Punta Cana, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	Barcelo Dominican Beach, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic Barcelo Tucancun Beach, Cancun, Mexico Barcelo Maya Beach Resort, Riviera Maya, Mexico
--	--

<b>AIRLINE PARTNER</b>	<b>Air Transat</b>
<b>Flight details 2011/2012 - Toronto</b>	Punta Cana: Seven days a week Santa Clara: Four days a week
<b>Flight details 2011/2012 - Montreal</b>	Punta Cana: Seven days a week Santa Clara: Weekly on Thursdays

<p><b>Newstalk 1010 Prize</b>  <b>Hotel: Barceló</b>  <b>Bavaro Palace</b>  <b>Deluxe</b></p>	<p><b>Barceló Bávaro Palace Deluxe Prestige Class in Punta Cana</b></p> <p>Exclusive to Transat Holidays is the Barceló Bávaro Palace Deluxe Prestige Class with Superior Rooms. This fantastic resort is in a unique and spectacular location, situated directly on Bávaro Beach in Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic. Protected off shore by a coral reef it makes for a perfect, totally calm sea. The resort boasts 198 renovated superior rooms.</p> <p>Transat Holidays guests enjoy Prestige Class inclusions - golf unlimited green fees, welcome cocktail and cold towel, separate check-in, welcome bottle of rum in room, beach towels, bathrobe and slippers in room, concierge service, unlimited à la carte dinners with 5 guaranteed, unlimited selected international drinks – and more!</p> <p>There is simply no other place in the Caribbean with a gastronomic range that rivals the Barceló Bávaro Palace Deluxe. Seven à la carte restaurants take you away to different parts of the world, from the minimalist tradition of Japanese cuisine to the fiery flavours of Mexico, the unique experiences of Spanish and Italian food, the fun of a steak house or the special taste of seafood - as well as exquisite Dominican cuisine. In addition there is the impressive international diversity of the buffet restaurant.</p> <p>The Resort facilities offer a world of activities and entertainment for everyone. Play the 18-hole golf course designed by the prestigious PB Dye and enjoy sporting facilities such as a fully equipped gym, soccer and baseball fields and tennis courts. Your all inclusive stay covers a multitude of water sports and for an extra fee you can enjoy everything from water skiing to windsurfing and catamaran classes.</p> <p>The hotel boasts four pools, including pools for children, a pool for adults and a semi-Olympic pool. The extensive pool area has all types of fun activities and possibilities for relaxation, such as pool beds, water spouts</p>
---	--

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>and much more! At the Barcy Water Park the whole family can enjoy themselves playing on the castles, slides and waterfalls in the pool. Plus the new Pirates Island Water Park has a wave pool.</p> <p>If shopping is your sport – you will find a gift and craft store, a jeweller’s, a perfume shop, multi-brand boutiques, a record store, golf shop and more right in the Hotel’s own shopping centre. The Wellness Centre has an outdoor pool with water and beauty therapies; relaxation, therapeutic and sports massages and other leisure facilities. And at U Spa – relax in the soft candlelight with subtle calming music, the pleasant sounds of nature and the sweet aroma of incense and spices as you receive the perfect spa treatment.</p> <p>For evening entertainment, dancers and a talented orchestra offer different and unique shows every night in the Vegas inspired Teatro Bavaro. And the Disco Bavaro provides international music and beverages for people aged 18 and over from 11am to 3 am! And the best place for gaming in the Caribbean is the Casino Bavaro, open 24 hours (for people aged 18 and over). Have fun with the table games, including American roulette, blackjack, Caribbean Poker and Texas Hold’em. Or try your luck on the slot machines!</p>
<b>Location</b>	On spectacular Bavaro Beach and just 215km from Punta Cana International Airport.
<b>Accommodation</b>	There are 198 superior rooms. The Deluxe Junior Suites and Family Rooms are also available.
<b>Services</b>	There’s a daily activity program, a nightly entertainment line-up and multiple pools at this luxurious resort. Also a casino, spa, shops and beauty salon.
<b>Dining</b>	The restaurants include 7 a la carte restaurants: Mexican, Italian Spanish, French, Japanese, Steakhouse and seafood.
<b>All-Inclusive</b>	Buffet breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, domestic drinks and wine, activities, entertainment
<b>Kids</b>	Free kids club for children aged 4 to 12 years and children’s pool. Babysitting is available at an extra charge.
<b>Activities</b>	Free rounds of golf are included in the all inclusive deal with Transat, as well as selected non-motorised water-sports, intro scuba lesson, volleyball, tennis, gym and mini-golf.
<b>Deals with Transat Holidays</b>	Free wedding and honeymoon packages are available with Transat. Early booking bonus: Book up to 35 days prior to departure and save \$320 per couple per week for departures to Oct 31, 2012. Unlimited green fees for golfers

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



<p><b>CJAD 800 Prize Hotel: Barceló Cayo Santa Maria Beach Resort, Cuba</b></p>	<p><b>Barceló Cayo Santa Maria Beach Resort Prestige Class</b> in Cayo Santa Maria, Cuba.</p> <p>This fantastic resort is perfectly integrated in the lush flora and fauna of Cayo Santa María, at Buenavista Bay which has been declared a Biosphere Reserve. Cayo Santa María is an islet of the Jardines del Rey archipelago on the north coast of the province of Villa Clara in the centre of Cuba. The crystal-clear waters and peace and calm make it an unbeatable paradise. The resort is right on one of the most impressive beaches in the world - nearly 2.6 km long, with clear water and fine sand. It was voted 25th best beach by Travel Choice 2011.</p> <p>Exclusive to Transat Holidays the Barceló Cayo Santa Maria Beach Resort Prestige Class with Prestige Class Junior Suites is built in twenty one 3-story bungalows. The resort is designed in the style of the Cuban town of Matanzas (known as the “Athens of Cuba” due to its great cultural and artistic heritage) and the colonial town of Trinidad.</p> <p>Transat Holidays guests enjoy Prestige Class inclusions - welcome cocktail and cold towel, separate check-in, dedicated room location closest to the beach, welcome gift and bottle of rum, beach towels, bathrobe and slippers in room, turn down service, concierge service, à la carte dinners with 3 guaranteed , unlimited selected international drinks – and more!</p> <p>The resort offers 2 buffet restaurants, two beach grills and four à la carte restaurants. The “Bellamar” specializes in seafood. “El Quijote” is the à la carte Spanish restaurant. At “Napoli” you can enjoy the dishes and flavours of traditional Italian cuisine. And “La Campiña” offers the best of Cuban cuisine without leaving the hotel with a choice of 14 dishes.</p> <p>There are 4 swimming pools with a children’s pool - and kids facilities also include a Baby Club (ages 0 to 4), Kid’s Club (ages 5 to 12) and a playground. Ask your travel agent about great kids offers at this resort. One child stays and eats free until Dec 21, 2011 and from Jan 3 – 31, 2012. Two children can stay and eat free from May 01 – October 31, 2012.</p> <p>At the beach you will find a water sports centre with catamarans, windsurfing, snorkelling, kayaking, water bikes and more. The resort offers a daily activity programme and nightly entertainment.</p>
<p><b>Location</b></p>	<p>Directly on the beautiful white sand beach of Santa Maria, 50 km from Caibarien and 115km from Santa Clara Airport. It is 386 kms from Havana – approx 5 hours drive.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



<b>Accommodation</b>	This resort is built in twenty one 3-story bungalows, designed in the style of the Cuban town of Matanzas (known as the “Athens of Cuba” due to its great cultural and artistic heritage) and the colonial town of Trinidad.
<b>Services</b>	There are 8 bars at this resort! The water sports centre, where you can practice a wide variety of sports (catamarans, windsurfs, snorkelling equipment, kayaks, water bikes).
<b>Dining</b>	The resort offers 2 buffet restaurants, two beach grills and four à la carte restaurants. The “Bellamar” specializes in seafood. “El Quijote” is the à la carte Spanish restaurant. At “Napoli” you can enjoy the dishes and flavours of traditional Italian cuisine. And “La Campiña” offers the best of Cuban cuisine without leaving the hotel with a choice of 14 dishes.
<b>All-Inclusive</b>	Accommodation, transfers, all meals and drinks, services and entertainment.
<b>Kids</b>	Baby Club for ages 0 to 4 Kids Club for ages 5 to 12 Playground, kids pool and babysitting available
<b>Activities</b>	Windsurfing, Kayaking, tennis and more
<b>Deals with Transat Holidays</b>	Free wedding and honey moon packages available with Transat Free shuttle to El Pueblo Kids stay and eat free: One child free to Dec 31 2011 and Jan 3-31 2012; Two children free May 1 to Oct 31 2012

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



<p><b>TRANSAT HOLIDAYS</b></p>	<p>Transat Holidays and sister company Nolitours offer vacation packages at Barceló Resorts. Be sure to pick up their winter brochures at your Travel Agent! These three great names together translate into a vacation cocktail of carefree days in the sun for you. Barceló Hotels and Resorts are located in Punta Cana, Puerto Plata, Cancun, Riviera Maya, Cayo Santa Maria, Varadero, Costa Rica and many other destinations. Transat Holidays features Barceló resorts in its Transat Distinction Collection, an outstanding line of luxury hotels offered exclusively to Transat Holidays clients. With Prestige Class, guests enjoy exclusive privileges, enhanced services and fabulous facilities – at resorts that are already renowned for their attentive service and their wide array of activities for couples and families.</p>
<p><b>Transat Background</b></p>	<p>Transat is now the largest tour operator in Canada, and is at the core of the vertical integration process developing and marketing vacation products as well as flights to destinations in the South and Europe. The company acts as a master craftsman in assembling different components of leisure travel: air transportation, passenger transfers from airport to hotel, accommodation, recreational and cultural activities, meals, cruises, and much more. As an industry leader, Transat Holidays offers departures from many Canadian cities including: St-John's, Halifax, Moncton, Fredericton, Montréal, Québec, Ottawa, Hamilton, Toronto, Thunder Bay, Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Vancouver, Victoria, Comox, Abbotsford, Prince George and Kelowna. (as at 2011)</p>
<p><b>Mission</b></p>	<p>Transat Holidays offers quality vacation packages to a wide variety of destinations. Each season, the company presents a wide selection of quality products, in order to meet the diversified needs of Canadian travellers. In keeping with their mission, their employees aim to exceed vacationers' expectations in order to maintain their position as a market leader. They see their role, ultimately, to turn holiday dreams into reality: making the vacation experience one of the most memorable ever.</p>
<p><b>Products</b></p>	<p>Packages, Cruises, Hotels, Flights, Tours, Car Rentals &amp; Train Travel. With a choice of over 300 hotels located in more than 50 destinations and a complete line of itineraries offered in partnership with the most prestigious cruise lines, all products offered by Transat Holidays are subject to a rigorous standard review.</p>
<p><b>Wider Seats</b></p>	<p>Air Transat has added more legroom on all their aircraft, making the journey to and from your destination even more comfortable.</p>
<p><b>Air Transat Upgrades</b></p>	<p>Air Transat have introduced its new Economy Class meal service on sun destination flights. As part of its ongoing efforts to provide clients with the best possible service, Air Transat has upgraded its onboard service. Passengers flying south will now be welcomed onboard with a glass of champagne, while early morning passengers will be greeted with a mimosa. The meal</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.





	<p>service has also been improved. The airline will now offer passengers a more complete meal tray, including a choice of two hot meals, a complimentary glass of wine and dessert.</p>
<p><b>Awards</b></p>	<p><b>Agent's Choice Awards:</b> Transat Holidays ranked number one for three year in a row by Canada's travel agents according to the results of the Agents' Choice Awards, a survey carried out by Canadian Travel Press and Travel Courier.</p>
<p><b>Current Brochure</b></p>	<p><b>Transat Holidays Sun 2011-2012 brochures are available at your local travel agent.</b></p>
<p><b>Air Transat Kids Club</b></p>	<p>A recent Transat Holidays Family survey reveals that 85% of Canadians say it is essential or very important to unplug and escape from the daily grind to spend quality time on a family vacation. Transat Holidays offers a number of services, including the award-winning Air Transat Kids Club, to help make your vacation enjoyable and reduce stress when travelling with kids.</p> <p>Results from the survey also indicate that the face of family in Canada continues to change with the definition of “family vacation” extending far beyond the spouse and kids:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80% confirm they take a family vacation once or more a year</li> <li>• 45% would spend a family vacation with their in-laws!</li> <li>• 57% would spend a family vacation with their parents!</li> </ul> <p>The top three things that can stress out Canadians when taking a family vacation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping children happy and occupied during the flight (42%)</li> <li>• Long line-ups at airline check-in (40%)</li> <li>• Seat selection/comfort (34%)</li> </ul> <p>To alleviate stress, Transat Holidays welcomes families with young children at a separate check-in counter and offers priority boarding and meal services; fun onboard surprises and complimentary transportation of baby equipment. And there’s a little relief for parents when they return to Canada — a stroller is waiting right outside the doors of the aircraft so parents can stroll their children all the way to the baggage carousel.</p> <p>From amenities such as Seat Selection, Club Class and the award-winning Air Transat Kids Club to exclusive offerings and a quality in-flight experience, Transat Holidays offers the attention to details that makes a family vacation more enjoyable and memorable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 38% of Canadians say it is essential or very important to have access to kids programs when travelling with family</li> </ul>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



Transat Holidays recognizes that today's families come in all shapes and sizes and offers an outstanding line of full service, family- and teen-friendly, all-inclusive resorts with most of them offering a wide variety of amenities including supervised activities at Kids Camps; teen excursions; and babysitting services so parents can treat themselves to a romantic dinner. The company also offers resorts that accommodate up to three children sharing a room with their parents, while others offer special rates for children's rooms.

- 84% of single families say they are limited when it comes to family vacation options

Transat Holidays knows that single parents also need to get-away and spend quality time with their children. The company offers affordable, family-friendly, all-inclusive resorts where single parent families benefit from single parent special rates and children can stay and eat for free.

### **Seat Selection**

With the Transat Holidays seat selection service, you can pre-select your seats before departure. A window seat has two advantages: children can sleep leaning against the cabin wall, or enjoy the view outside. An aisle seat is perfect for parents to have easy access to the overhead storage compartment. If your child is an Air Transat Kids Club member, seat selection on both the outbound and return flights is free of charge.

Children are given priority meal service. Respecting even the smallest passenger, parents are permitted to bring infant formula, breast milk, or juice in quantities greater than three ounces as long as it is declared for inspection at the security checkpoint for the under-two crowd. Parents can also pack gel or liquid-filled teethingers and canned, jarred, or processed baby food in their carry-on baggage.

### **Air Transat Kids Club**

The Air Transat Kids Club makes travelling with children even more enjoyable. For kids ages 2 to 11, even the littlest members of this big club enjoy free benefits and privileges including a welcome kit filled with great stuff including headphones, games, and a Travel Log Book; check-in at a specially-identified pre-boarding counter for a shorter waiting time; priority boarding at the gate, so you can settle comfortably into your seat and avoid lining up; priority baggage retrieval; free round trip Advance Seat Selection; and automatic entry into 2 annual draws for 1 trip for 4 to Walt Disney World Resort Florida and 1 trip for 4 to Paris, France. New this year – members travelling on their birthdays will receive a surprise gift from the crew.

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>Even before the doors of the plane are closed following boarding, every child receives a small bag containing all sorts of surprises and games. The more fun they have, the easier the flight. Furthermore, children who are members of Air Transat Kids Club enjoy certain exclusive privileges. Members of the Air Transat Kids Club will enjoy several benefits that the whole family can share. You can check in at a special "Air Transat Kids Club Members" counter. Thanks to these special counters located in major Canadian airports where Air Transat flies, checking-in is quicker than before. At check-in, special tags will be placed on your baggage; as a result, your baggage gets priority treatment.</p>
<p><b>Transat Club Class</b></p>	<p>Enjoy exclusive privileges such as complimentary seat selection, wider, more comfortable leather seats, a choice of gourmet meals and fine wines, priority check-in, baggage service and boarding.</p> <p>Club Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated Club attendants</li> <li>• Attentive, personalized service</li> <li>• Exclusive, spacious Club cabin</li> </ul> <p>Drinks &amp; Snacks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome cocktails</li> <li>• Complimentary non-alcoholic drinks, snacks and bar service</li> </ul> <p>Club Privileges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased baggage allowance</li> <li>• 40 kg checked/15 kg carry-on</li> <li>• Exclusive, rapid check-in counter in most airports</li> <li>• Priority boarding</li> <li>• Practical travel items (on Europe flights)</li> <li>• Free headsets</li> <li>• Canadian newspapers</li> </ul> <p>Comfort &amp; Refinement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wider, more comfortable leather seats</li> <li>• More leg room</li> <li>• Complimentary Seat Selection: call 1-877-872-6728</li> <li>• Choice of gourmet meals</li> <li>• Choice of wine and more</li> </ul>
<p><b>Option Plus</b></p>	<p>This Economy class option includes many priority privileges and services including priority check-in, priority baggage handling, an extra 10kg baggage allowance and even champagne. Here's what you get:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advance seat selection on roundtrip flights</li> <li>• Priority check-in at a dedicated counter</li> <li>• Priority baggage handling</li> <li>• Priority boarding</li> <li>• Complete Air Transat travel kit on flights to European destinations</li> <li>• Snacks from the On Board Bistro selection</li> <li>• Alcoholic beverages during drinks service 200ml bottle of champagne</li> </ul>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>(Sun and Europe)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supplementary baggage allowance up to 10 kg per flight segment**</li> <li>• Wine or beer with the meal</li> <li>• Headsets</li> </ul> <p>The cost is \$79 for southbound destinations and \$99 for European destinations.</p>
<p><b>Transat and Sustainable Tourism</b></p>	<p>Transat recognizes the prime importance of the environment, host communities, cultural diversity, and their relationships with their employees, customers and partners. Tourism has become one of the world's leading industries. Society and communities reap the benefits, and, each year, hundreds of millions of travellers discover new countries and cultures. Transat is firmly committed to the responsible development of the tourism industry.</p> <p>The issue of the environment, as far as Transat's own facilities are concerned, is a clear and basic target. Their environment committees have implemented concrete initiatives with regard to recycling, conservation of resources, the disposal of obsolete electronic equipment, and raising employee awareness. Air Transat, which proved its forward-looking approach by adopting a strict fuel-management system in 2003, has since begun developing an environmental management system that could lead to an ISO 14001 certification in the future. To find out more, consult the Transat and the Environment sections at their website.</p>
<p><b>Gift Certificates</b></p>	<p>Transat gift certificates are valid on all Air Transat, Nolitours, or Transat Holidays products. They can be redeemed at a travel agent's office at the time of reservation. To order gift certificates call 1-800-322-6649.</p>
<p><b>Transat Excursions from Punta Cana</b></p>	<p><b>ZIP LINE</b> Soar like a bird over the treetops on the ten different zip-lines in an eco tourist park. The professional and knowledgeable guides will provide you with an unforgettable experience.</p> <p><b>BAVARO RUNNERS – SAFARI ADVENTURE</b> Discover the Dominican countryside with its traditional villages, mountains and sugar cane plantations. Stops are scheduled for lunch and swimming. Experience the Dominican way of life. Unforgettable!</p> <p><b>SWIM WITH THE DOLPHINS</b> A once-in-a-lifetime experience and a dream come true... Learn about these amazing mammals as you interact with them!</p> <p><b>BUGGY EXCURSION</b> Drive your own dune buggy through the Dominican countryside, then stop off to relax or go for a swim. A day to remember!</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



#### SAONA CATAMARAN – MOTOR BOAT

Sail the crystal-clear Caribbean Sea on the catamaran cruise of your dreams. On the way back, experience a thrilling speedboat ride and go swimming in one of the world’s most beautiful natural pools!

#### MARINARIUM

Swim with sharks and stingrays at this unique marine park, the only one of its kind in Punta Cana. A unique experience, not to be missed!

#### HORSEBACK RIDING

Enjoy a beautiful horseback ride on the beach.

#### SANTO DOMINGO

Enjoy a cultural and fascinating tour of the capital of the Dominican Republic, the oldest city in the Americas. Visit the first Cathedral of the New World, the Alcazar of Columbus, the Pantheon, the colonial city, and “Los Tres Ojos”, the amazing underground caverns.

#### TROPICAL STORM FULL DAY

Go to a beautiful snorkelling area, enjoy a bath in the natural pool, have a nice lunch on the boat and learn how to dance the bachata and merengue! All this while sailing on a magnificent catamaran along the beautiful Bavaro coast.

#### TROPICAL STORM SUNSET

Enjoy a beautiful sunset cruise aboard a catamaran, bathe in a natural pool and finish up this magical evening with a lobster dinner in one of the most popular restaurants on the beach.

#### BUCANEROS – SPEED BOAT

Discover the beautiful turquoise waters aboard your own speed boat. This 3-hour tour will show you the best of this spectacular area.

#### DEEP-SEA FISHING

Did someone say fishing? We have everything you need for a private fishing trip or a shared charter excursion. An unforgettable experience!

#### HIGUEY SIGHTSEEING

Visit historic Higuey City, and marvel at magnificent Nuestra Señora de la Altadracia Basilica. Go souvenir shopping in local stores, and finish up with a visit to a rum factory located near a Taino cave.

#### ANIMAL ADVENTURE PARK

Come and visit this unique park, where you get to interact with animals.

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>Become a trainer for a day and work with sea lions. Different animal shows are also available throughout the park.</p> <p><b>QUAD EXCURSION</b>          This tour will bring out the Indiana Jones in you. Drive your own four-wheeler on the beach and through some breathtaking scenery. Stop at a lovely beach for a refreshing swim. The tour guides will look after you every step of the way.</p>
<p><b>Transat Excursions in Cuba</b></p>	<p><b>Cayo Santa Maria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jeep Safari from Cayo Santa Maria to discover the Cuban countryside, visit a farm and horseback ride</li> <li>- Guided tour to Santa Clara, its history and museums, plus cigar making</li> <li>- Catamaran adventure, including snorkeling and lobster picnic on an untouched tropical island</li> </ul> <p><b>Varadero</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visit the town of Trinidad, a UNESCO World Heritage site and the most picturesque town on the island</li> <li>- Havana Historia: Tropicana Show, Havana tour and cigar making</li> <li>- Rambo Tour: ride in a 6-wheel truck to Guanayara Farm Natural Park, then hike through the mountains to El Rocio Waterfall and swim there.</li> </ul> <p><b>Holguin</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gran Safari: visit the Guayabo Waterfalls which are the highest in Cuba, tour the rainforest and visit a coffee plantation</li> <li>- Santiago de Cuba: see the fortress of Castillo El Morro, a World Heritage Site guarding the harbor of this historic city.</li> <li>- Crucero del Sol: Catamaran to coral reefs, snorkel and swim with the dolphins at Bahia Naranjo</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transat Deals with Barcelo 2011-2012</b></p>	<p>Transat currently has some very special deals with Barcelo Hotels and Resorts this 2011/2012 winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Early booking deals of up to \$320 per couple per week</li> <li>- Free wedding and honeymoon packages</li> <li>- <b>Jan 26, 2012</b> dept 7 nts all inclusive at Barcelo Cayo Santa Maria Beach Resort Prestige Class from Montreal: \$936</li> <li>- <b>Jan 10, 2012</b> dept 7 nts all inclusive at Barcelo Bavaro Palace Deluxe Presige Class from Toronto: \$913 + \$388 taxes</li> </ul> <p>Varadero Xmas 2011 departure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Dec 22, 2011</b> from Toronto to Barceló Marina Palace, Prestige Class \$1129 + \$276 taxes/fees</li> </ul> <p>Check out their website at <a href="http://www.TransatHolidays.com">www.TransatHolidays.com</a> for latest deals</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



## **PUNTA CANA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

Come away to paradise in the Dominican Republic. Explore the white sandy beaches, impressive mountain ranges, spectacular waterfalls and lush greenery of the Dominican Republic. And the history, music, food and culture that give it such charm and spirit.

In Punta Cana there are miles of silky-fine white sand, gorgeous beaches, coconut palms, crystal clear turquoise waters and lush vegetation - Punta Cana certainly has the wow factor. Beyond its exceptional natural beauty, this vacation spot offers something for everyone. Sail to the idyllic island of Saona, play a round or two of golf at one of the many courses, swim with dolphins, discover the countryside as you drive your own Jeep or go zip lining above the trees.

Come away to paradise in the Dominican Republic. Explore the white sandy beaches, impressive mountain ranges, spectacular waterfalls and lush greenery of the Dominican Republic. And the history, music, food and culture that give it such charm and spirit.

### **Punta Cana**

Here there are miles of silky-fine white sand, gorgeous beaches, coconut palms, crystal clear turquoise waters and lush vegetation - Punta Cana certainly has the wow factor. Beyond its exceptional natural beauty, this vacation spot offers something for everyone. Sail to the idyllic island of Saona, play a round or two of golf at one of the many courses, swim with dolphins, discover the countryside as you drive your own Jeep or go zip lining above the trees.

### **Puerto Plata**

Expect beautiful beaches, lush green valleys and majestic mountains, along with lively resorts, great nightlife, kite surfing and fabulous windsurfing. This popular destination features a wide range of activities to choose from! Sail to Paradise Island, go swimming with dolphins, enjoy a cabaret show and savour a delicious dinner, or simply spend the day sailing and snorkelling.

### **La Romana**

Deserted beaches, protected lagoons, lush mangroves, towering cliffs and incredible snorkelling are features of this idyllic destination. You will never run out of things to do. La Romana offers a wide array of activities, including snorkelling, golf, 4 x 4 rides through the countryside, cave exploration, and excursions to Catalina, an uninhabited island.

### **Samana**

Eco-friendly Samana offers long sandy beaches, majestic mountains and lush vegetation. The Samana peninsula is the ideal destination for

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>nature lovers and sports enthusiasts alike. Once there, the options are endless! Lounge on the beach, tour the countryside in a Jeep, go whale watching, explore Las Haitises National Park, visit Cayo Levantado or simply sail the seas aboard a comfortable catamaran.</p> <p><b>Transat Holidays</b> and its sister company <b>Nolitours</b> have weekly direct flights to all the major destinations in the Dominican Republic. They offer not only packages but also the flexibility of air only flights to the Dominican Republic.</p>
<b>Location</b>	<p>In the heart of the Caribbean archipelago - nestled amid Cuba, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico - the island of Hispaniola (Little Spain) is divided between Haiti, on the westernmost third of the island, and the Dominican Republic, which has a lush landmass about the size of Vermont and New Hampshire combined. In the Dominican interior, the fertile Valley of Cibao (rich sugar-cane country) ends its upward sweep at Pico Duarte, the highest mountain peak in the West Indies, which soars to 3,125m (10,250 ft.).</p> <p>Much of what Columbus first sighted still remains in a natural, unspoiled condition. One-third of the Dominican Republic's 1,401km coastline is devoted to beaches of which the most celebrated are those around Punta Cana, which lies in the east of the country.</p>
<b>Geography</b>	<p>The mountains of the Dominican Republic divide the country into northern, central, and southwestern regions. The northern region includes the Cordillera Septentrional (northern mountain range), the Cibao Valley, which is the country's major agricultural area; and the tropical Samaná Peninsula with its coconut plantations and bay, where humpback whales breed.</p> <p>The central region is dominated by the Cordillera Central (central range) which ends at the Caribbean Sea. The highest point in the Caribbean is Pico Duarte, which reaches an elevation of over 10,414 feet (3,175 meters) and has alpine forests near the summit. The Caribbean coastal plain includes a series of limestone terraces that gradually rise to a height of about 328 feet (100 meters) and has sugarcane plantations.</p> <p>The southwestern region lies south of the Valle de San Juan and encompasses the Sierra de Neiba. Much of the region is a desert and it includes Lake Enriquillo, the island's largest lake. Lake Enriquillo is a saltwater lake that lies 150 feet (46 meters) below sea level and is inhabited by unique fauna, including crocodiles, huge iguanas, and flamingos.</p> <p>Pico Duarte was not climbed until 1944; it's now a 3 day hike, \$240 plus 4 mules.</p>
<b>Name</b>	Hispaniola was named "Little Spain" by Columbus
<b>Population</b>	Approximately 9.2 million
<b>Language</b>	The official language is Spanish; many people also speak some English.

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.





<b>Currency</b>	The Dominican monetary unit is the peso (RD\$), made up of 100 centavos. Coin denominations are 1, 5, 10, 25, and 50 centavos, 1 peso, and 5 pesos. Bill denominations are RD\$5, RD\$10, RD\$20, RD\$50, RD\$100, RD\$500, RD\$1,000, and RD\$2,000. Price quotations in this section sometimes appear in U.S. and sometimes in Dominican currency, depending on the policy of the establishment. Currently, 38 pesos = Cdn \$ at 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2011
<b>Tipping</b>	Most restaurants and hotels add a 10% service charge to your check. Most people usually add 5% to 10% more, especially if the service has been good.
<b>Government</b>	Representative democracy with Presidents elected for a 4 year term Although the DR has long been viewed primarily as an exporter of sugar, coffee, and tobacco, in recent years the service sector has overtaken agriculture as the economy's largest employer due to growth in tourism
<b>Documentation</b>	Canadians traveling to the Dominican Republic require a valid Canadian passport. You will also require tourist card which will be provided on the aircraft during your southbound flight. Minors (under the age of 18) being nationals of Canada in addition to the above documentation requirements must: if traveling as an unaccompanied minor or with an adult other than a parent or legal guardian must hold a permit issued by the Consulate of Dominican Republic in Canada or the Director General's Office of Immigration in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic to leave the country of Dominican Republic. Baptismal Certificates are not acceptable as a birth certificate, nor are birth certificates issued in Quebec prior to January 1, 1994. Please contact the Consulate of Dominican Republic for more information.
<b>Time zone</b>	One hour ahead of EST
<b>Health</b>	Stick to bottled water outside of the main resorts. Consult your doctor about Malaria and Dengue Fever – very unlikely threat to tourists but you may want to additionally protect yourself anyway.
<b>Safety tips</b>	Safety is still a concern in the Dominican Republic, but it shouldn't dissuade you from planning a vacation here. Crime consists primarily of theft, robberies, and muggings, and most of it is limited to Santo Domingo. There is a low incidence of violent crime against tourists, however. Follow some simple common-sense rules, and you'll be fine.

<b>CLIMATE</b>	
<b>General climate</b>	The average temperature is 25°C. August is the warmest month, and January the coolest month, although even then it's warm enough to swim.
<b>Today's weather</b>	27 degrees Centigrade and sunny for 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2011.
<b>Best time to visit</b>	The DR is a year-round destination, but with special attraction to Canadians during the cold winter months! Hurricane season is

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	generally September and October, but you would be very unlucky indeed to experience one of these storms.
--	--

<b>GETTING THERE</b>	There are daily flights to Punta Cana from Canada.
<b>Flying time</b>	It's just over a 4 hour flight from Toronto or Montreal with Air Transat. There is a departure tax of US\$20 which must be paid in U.S. currency as at December 2011.
<b>Punta Cana</b>	<p>On the easternmost tip of the island is Punta Cana, site of several major vacation developments with more scheduled to arrive in the near future. Known for its spectacular beaches and clear waters, Punta Cana is an escapist's dream. Its 32km of white sands, set against a backdrop of swaying palm trees, are unrivaled in the Caribbean, and that's the chief and perhaps only reason to come here.</p> <p>Many Europeans (especially Spaniards) rushed to take advantage of Punta Cana's desirable climate - within one of the most arid landscapes in the Caribbean; it rarely rains during daylight hours. Capitalizing on cheap land and the virtually insatiable desire of Europeans for sunny holidays during the depths of winter, a half-dozen European hotel chains participated in something akin to a land rush, acquiring large tracts of sugar-cane plantations and pastureland. Today, at least a dozen mega-hotels, most with no fewer than 500 rooms, some with even more, attract a clientele that's about 70% European or Latin American. Some of them have some of the most lavish beach and pool facilities in the Caribbean, spectacular gardens, and relatively new concepts in architecture (focusing on postmodern interplays between indoor and outdoor spaces).</p> <p>If you choose to vacation in Punta Cana, you won't be alone, as increasing numbers of Latino celebrities are making inroads, usually renting private villas within private compounds. Julio Iglesias and celebrity designer Oscar de la Renta both spend time here.</p>
<b>Santo Domingo</b>	<p><b>Santo Domingo</b> is one of the Caribbean's most vibrant cities, with a 12-block Colonial Zone to rival that of Old San Juan in Puerto Rico. Come here to walk in the footsteps of Cortés, Ponce de León, and, of course, Columbus himself. Allow at least a day to capture some of the highlights of the old city such as its Alcazar and its Catedral Santa Maria la Menor.</p> <p>Bartholomeo Columbus, brother of Christopher, founded the city of New Isabella (later renamed Santo Domingo) on the southeastern Caribbean coast in 1496. It's the oldest city in the New World and the capital of the Dominican Republic. Santo Domingo has had a long, sometimes glorious, more often sad, history. At the peak of its power, Diego de Velázquez sailed from here to settle Cuba, Ponce de León went forth to conquer and settle Puerto Rico and Florida, and Cortés set out for</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	Mexico. The city today still reflects its long history - French, Haitian, and especially Spanish.
<b>Distances</b>	Santo Domingo to Puerto Plata: 235km; to La Romana: 130km; to Punta Cana: 225km; to La Samana: 320km
<b>Ferries</b>	Shuttle boats to Cayo Levantado from Samana Also ferry to Sabana de la Mar across Samana Bay
<b>Trains</b>	There is no passenger train service in the DR
<b>Car Rental</b>	The best way to see the Dominican Republic is to drive. Motorists drive on the right here. Although major highways are relatively smooth, the country's secondary roads, especially those in the east, are riddled with potholes and ruts. Roads also tend to be badly lit and poorly marked in both the city and the countryside. Drive carefully and give yourself plenty of time when traveling between island destinations. For reservations and more information, call the rental companies at least a week before your departure: Avis (tel. 800/331-1212 in the U.S. and Canada, or 809/535-7191; <a href="http://www.avis.com">www.avis.com</a> ), Budget (tel. 800/527-0700 in the U.S. and Canada, or 809/549-0351; <a href="http://www.budget.com">www.budget.com</a> ), and Hertz (tel. 800/654-3131 in the U.S. and Canada, or 809/221-5333; <a href="http://www.hertz.com">www.hertz.com</a> ) all operate in the Dominican Republic. All three have offices at the Santo Domingo and Puerto Plata airports, as well as in downtown Santo Domingo. Avis and Hertz also have offices in La Romana and in Punta Cana.
<b>Buses</b>	Públicos are unmetered multipassenger taxis that travel along main thoroughfares, stopping often to pick up people waving from the side of the street. A público is marked by a white seal on the front door. You must tell the driver your destination when you're picked up to make sure the público is going there. A ride is usually RD\$5 (15¢/8p). The minimum fare is RD\$3 (10¢/5p). Public buses, often in the form of minivans or panel trucks, are called guaguas (pronounced gwa-gwas). For about the same price, they provide the same service as públicos, but they're generally more crowded. Larger buses provide service outside the towns.

<b>ACCOMMODATION TYPES</b>	Transat Holidays and Nolitours feature the widest range of hotels and resorts in the DR, from value 3 star to all-singing, all-dancing 5 star resorts
----------------------------	---

<b>LIFESTYLES</b>	
<b>Kids</b>	<b>Acuario Nacional, Santo Domingo</b> Phone: (809) 766-1709 Open from Tuesday to Sunday from 9:30am to 5:30 pm. Bordering the Caribbean Sea, the national aquarium offers visitors a glimpse of the Caribbean's diverse, colorful sea life. The aquarium's Plexiglas tunnel surrounds spectators with water, sharks, rays and

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>conger eels. A variety of colorful fish swim throughout the tunnel, while exhibits explain different types of marine environments.</p> <p><b>Manati Park, Bavaro, Punta Cana</b>          Phone: (809) 221-9444          Website: <a href="http://www.manatipark.com">www.manatipark.com</a>          Manati Theme Park focuses on nature, animals and the history of the Dominican Republic. Located in Bavaro-Punta Cana, the park is centered on an incredible landscape of magnificent gardens abundant with orchids and tropical plants. This park is a huge hit with kids as it encourages them, with the assistance of professionals, to hold non-poisonous snakes and play in a pool with dolphins.</p> <p><b>Parque Zoologico Nacional, Santo Domingo</b>          Phone: (809) 562-3149. <a href="http://www.zoodom.gov.do">http://www.zoodom.gov.do</a>          Open Tuesday to Sunday, 9am to 5pm          Located north of Santo Domingo, Parque Zoologico is one of the largest zoos in Latin America. The 320-acre park provides guests with the opportunity to see intriguing animals like tigers, chimps and hyenas, while also offering glimpses of crocodiles, flamingos and nocturnal anteaters. Whether children are discovering creatures in the large landscaped grounds or going for a ride on the shuttle train, they're sure to enjoy their visit to Santo Domingo's National Zoo.</p>
<b>Teens</b>	<p><b>Islabon Jungle River Tour</b>          Phone: (809) 248-2818          Located about three miles east of Cabarete, the Islabon Jungle River Tour allows kids to explore the Islabon river area by boat and walk through jungle trails to a mini zoo that includes iguanas, snakes, turtles, ravens and North American crocodiles. The tour includes an informative chat about the nature found in the area.</p> <p><b>Monster Truck Safari</b>          Phone: (809) 244-4060          This full-day adventure tour allows participants to experience the diversity and beauty of the Dominican countryside in a fun, comfortable and safe environment. Holding approximately (28 people for small jeeps, and 32 for large), the large eight-wheel drive safari jeeps are driven by professionals on a variety of terrain. Participants are seated up high to ensure an exceptional view of the countryside and will be covered in case of rain. Various stops throughout the day offer a glimpse of true Dominican culture and life.</p>
<b>Romance</b>	<p>Lush tropical forests, rolling mountains and long deserted beaches – perfect!</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



<b>Honeymoons &amp; Weddings</b>	Transat can help you arrange weddings, honeymoons and vow renewals in the Dominican Republic. Let them know through your travel agent and take a look at page 22/23 of their Transat Holidays 2011/2012 brochure for more details.
<b>Seniors</b>	Endless beaches, excellent resorts and accessible tours to the countryside make this an excellent choice for the older vacationer.

<b>UNIQUES</b>	<p>Usually starting in <b>January and lasting until late March</b>, Samana's humpback whales return every year to these tropical waters. Tours originate from Samana and Las Galeras (and several bayside locations in between) and from Las Terrenas.</p> <p><b>Whale-watching</b> as a local tourist industry was begun in the 1980s by Kim Beddall, then an itinerant scuba instructor with no formal training as a marine biologist – although she's since been instrumental in the implementation of a code of conduct for whale-watch boats. Beddall still runs excellent whale boat tours through her Whale Samaná/Victoria Marine operation, Malecón (US\$45) that allow you to get an up-close look at the humpbacks; sitings are guaranteed in season</p>
<b>Surprising</b>	<b>Los Altos de Chavon</b> village near the south coast is an oddball 16th century Italian style confection on hilltop, crafts, workshops, Taino Art Museum, great views, shopping, restaurants.
<b>History</b>	<p>For at least 5,000 years before Christopher Columbus discovered America for the Europeans the island was inhabited by Amer-Indians. Anthropologists have traced multiple waves of indigenous immigration from two principle places. Some of the early Amer-Indians came from Central America (probably Yucatan and/or Belize) and some came from South America, descendants of the Arawakan Indians in Amazonia, many of whom passed through the Orinocco Valley in Venezuela. It is from the blending of these waves of indigenous immigrants that the Taíno Indians, the people who welcomed Columbus on his arrival, are believed to have originated.</p> <p>The Dominican Republic was discovered on <b>December 5, 1492</b>, by Christopher Columbus during his first voyage to the New World. At that time the island of Hispaniola (as Columbus named it) was called "Quisqueya" by the Taino Indians who occupied the land. With a population estimated around 600,000, the Tainos (meaning "the good") were peaceful and hospitable to Columbus and his crew of Spaniards. Columbus himself grew a particular fondness for Hispaniola, describing it in his journal as "a beautiful island paradise with high forested mountains and large river valleys."</p> <p>Columbus' admiration for Hispaniola coupled with his crew's discovery of gold deposits in the island's rivers led to the establishment of European</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



settlements, the first of which was founded in **1493** in La Isabela. With the presence of new settlements, the Taino Indians were put into slavery and over the next 25 year, were eventually wiped out. Simultaneously, the settlers began bringing African slaves to the island to ensure adequate labor for their plantations.

Columbus' brother, Bartholomew, was appointed governor of Hispaniola and in **1496** he founded the city of Santo Domingo. The capital city quickly became the representative seat of the Spanish royal court and therefore, a city of power and much influence. However, by **1515** the Spaniards realized the gold deposits of Hispaniola had significantly dwindled. Around this time Herman Cortes discovered silver deposits in Mexico. Upon hearing this news, most Spanish residents of Santo Domingo left for Mexico, leaving only a few thousand settlers behind. Because of the predominance of livestock, initially introduced by Columbus, these settlers sustained themselves by providing food and leather to Spanish ships passing Hispaniola on their way to the richer colonies on the American mainland. It is during this period of time that the pirates of the Caribbean made history.

The island of Hispaniola remained under Spanish control until **1697** when the western third of the island became a French possession. (In 1804, the western part of the island became the Republic of Haiti.) This area, which the French called "Saint Domingue" became the richest colony in the world thanks to large sugar plantations which were worked by hundreds of thousands of slaves imported from Africa. In **1791** a slave revolt broke out in Saint Domingue. For fear of losing their colony to the slaves, the French abolished slavery in **1794**. With calm in Saint Domingue, the French were able to focus on overwhelming the Spanish on the island's eastern side, who later surrendered power.

In **1809** the eastern side of the island returned to Spanish rule. In **1821** the Spanish settlers declared an independent state but just weeks later, Haitian forces invaded the eastern portion of the island and incorporated Santo Domingo. For the next 22 years the entire island came under Haitian control. However, fueled by their loss of political and economic control, the former Spanish ruling class developed an underground resistance group led by Juan Pablo Duarte called "La Trinitaria." After several attacks by La Trinitaria on the Haitian army, the Haitians retreated. On February 27, **1844**, the eastern side of the island declared independence and gave their land the name "Dominican Republic."

The 70 years that followed were characterized by political unrest and civil war, mainly due to fights for leadership of the government by

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>Dominican strongmen. Disputes continued with Haiti and power returned to the Spanish for a short period of time (Restoration Day celebrates the day that a national war of "restoration" began, re-establishing the Dominican Republic's independence by 1865). Turmoil in the early 1900's led the United States to intervene. In <b>1916</b> U.S. troops occupied the country and stayed until 1924 when a democratically elected Dominican government was put into place. However, the head of the army that was put into place during the American occupation, Raphael Leonidas Trujillo, used his power to block government reform and shortly thereafter, took total control of power in the form of a repressive dictatorship. His rule lasted until 1961 when his motorcade was ambushed and he was killed. (The anniversary of his death is a public holiday in the Dominican Republic.)</p> <p>Following Trujillo's death, political unrest again prevailed. The Dominican Republic went through a series of leaders until 1965 when Lyndon B. Johnson ordered the U.S. marines to again occupy the country. A rigged election in 1966 put Dr. Joaquin Balaguer, a member of the Partido Reformista Social Cristiano (PRSC), in power for a reign that lasted until 1978 when Dominicans elected Antonio Guzman, also of the PRD. Guzman died in 1982 at which time Dominicans elected another member of the D.R.P. In 1986 Balaguer was again elected, this time legitimately, and remained president until 1996 when President Leonel Fernandez (of the Party of the Dominican Liberation or PLD.) was elected. He served for four years and was replaced by Hipolito Mejia in 2000.</p>
<p><b>Books</b></p>	<p><b>Frommer's Caribbean 2012</b>  <b>An Adventure Guide to the Dominican Republic</b> by Harry Pariser          See also an article I have written for one of the airline in-flight magazines:  <a href="http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/travelarticles/TA_Dominican.pdf">http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/travelarticles/TA_Dominican.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>1000 Places to see before you die</b></p>	<p><b>Casa de Campo</b> near La Romana – one of the world's best golf and sporting destinations</p>
<p><b>Must Sees</b></p>	<p><b>The Cascada el Limón waterfall</b> is immersed in a tropical forest on the Samaná peninsula. Tours offer you a relaxing, pleasant and unforgettable trip; a one- to two-hour donkey ride through tropical forest leads to this striking 55-metre waterfall. After bathing in the refreshing, crystal-clear water, you can enjoy a typical meal in the local restaurant.</p>
<p><b>SPORTS ACTIVITIES - Baseball</b></p>	<p>Back in <b>1866</b>, American sailors stationed on the island of Cuba taught natives the rules of the game of <b>baseball</b>. Following the Ten Years' War (also known as the Big War) in Cuba, baseball migrated to the Dominican Republic along with Cubans who were fleeing their country. Quickly nicknamed "beisbol" by the Dominican people, the sport was</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>rapidly learned and became a passion. Today, traveling from one side of the country to the other presents national scores of baseball fields and stadiums, attesting to the Dominicans' love for the game.</p> <p>The sport first turned competitive in the 1920s when baseball games began being played against neighboring countries. This competitiveness encouraged the establishment of the Dominican Baseball League. Four baseball teams were formed: Tigres del Licey and Leones del Escogido, both from Santo Domingo, Estrellas Orientales of San Pedro and the Las Aguilos Cibaeñas in Santiago. The popularity of professional baseball in the Dominican Republic ascended throughout the following years, but came to a halt in 1937 due to a financial downturn in the country. Meanwhile, amateur baseball evolved with Dominican teams competing with those from the U.S. and other Caribbean countries. The hiatus finally ended in 1951 with the return of professional baseball. Dominicans' idea of hosting amateur baseball in the summer and professional baseball during the winter months was generated, therefore giving the Caribbean the "home of winter baseball" title.</p> <p>Today there are two additional teams in the country's professional baseball league: the Azucareros del Este from La Romana and the Gigantes del Cibao. Each season extends from the end of October through February, with the winner advancing to the Caribbean Series. At the series, the winning team of the Dominican Republic league plays against the champions of the Mexican, Venezuelan and Puerto Rican leagues.</p> <p>The baseball season is <b>October to February</b> each year.</p>
<b>Golf</b>	<p><b>Punta Cana: The Bávaro Golf Course</b>, at Barcelo Bávaro Beach, Golf &amp; Casino Resort, Bávaro Beach (tel. 809/686-5797), is the best golf course on this end of the island, and bears the honor of being the golf course whose allure helped open the eastern DR to the tourist boom. Greens fees are RD\$1,920 for 18 holes, with cart rentals going for RD\$1,440. Guests of the hotel pay only 50% of greens fees. Open daily 7am to 5pm.</p> <p><b>Punta Cana Golf Club</b>, near the Punta Cana Resort and Club (tel. 809/959-4653), is the best and most sought-after of the four golf courses now flourishing in Punta Cana. Fronting the sea, it was designed by P. B. Dye of the famous golfing family. Fourteen of its holes open onto panoramic views of the Caribbean Sea, and four play along the ocean itself. For 18 holes, hotel guests pay RD\$3,520, and nonguests are charged RD\$4,800. In summer, greens fees are reduced to RD\$2,144 for hotel guests, RD\$2,944 for non-guests.</p>
<b>Fishing</b>	Sea fishing is great in all the resorts for Marlin, sailfish, benito, tarpon,

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.





	<p>dorado, snook</p> <p>You can arrange freshwater river-fishing trips through Casa de Campo in the south. Some of the biggest snook ever recorded have been caught around here. A 3-hour tour costs RD\$868 (US\$31/) per person, and includes tackle, bait, and soft drinks.</p>
<b>Horse riding</b>	<p>Within <b>Punta Cana</b>, the guest services staff at your hotel can arrange horseback riding for you, but if they can't, consider an equestrian jaunt at the region's biggest stables. These are headquartered at Rancho RN-23, Arena Gorda (tel. 809/747-7356 or 7538). It supervises as many as 125 horses that are stabled at three separate "ranches," each within a reasonable distance of one another. For RD\$1,800 (US\$54) an hour, you'll be guided on equestrian tours through groves of coconut palms near the beach and, in most cases, onto the beach itself. To reach it, you'll follow some clearly marked signs 3km through some of the wildest terrain left in Punta Cana, down winding sandy paths to a series of palm groves, to the site of these stables.</p>
<b>Hiking</b>	<p>In the National Park and along the endless beaches the walks are superb. For a special hike, there's a three day guided hike up <b>Pico Duarte</b>, the highest mountain in the Caribbean.</p>
<b>Cycling</b>	<p>The coast road is good biking terrain, but the roads are pot-holed and this is not ideal biking country!</p>
<b>Diving</b>	<p>There are diving opportunities with fully qualified operations in all the major resort areas of the country.</p>

<b>CULTURE</b>	
<b>Arts</b>	<p>Dominican paintings are primitive, colourful and affordable</p>
<b>Music</b>	<p>Passing through the streets of the Dominican Republic visitors are sure to notice the handmade posters that hang from telephone poles promoting an upcoming merengue or bachata night at a nearby venue. Continue walking and it doesn't take long to realize that music acts as the soundtrack of the country and its people, often heard blaring from vehicles, stores, restaurants and houses. After sunset, the pulsing beats fill the air with life and draw locals and tourists alike toward the crowded dance floors of the world's hottest night clubs. A way of life on the island, Dominicans view dancing as an art and take pride in sharing their native movements with others. Salsa, Latin jazz and other types of dance music can be heard in the country, but are not as popular as their beloved merengue and bachata counterparts.</p> <p><b>Merengue</b></p> <p>The country's national dance, traditional merengue groups are comprised of a three-piece band including a melodeon (accordion-like instrument), a guira (a scraped percussion piece) and a tambora (double-headed drum); however, it has expanded to incorporate other instruments such as the saxophone, trumpets, violin, flute and piano. Its</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	tempo is characterized by an aggressive beat, requiring its dancers to swing their hips in rapid, fluid motions and make sure their feet follow suit. Early merengue's lyrics were based on sexual encounters and other socially taboo subjects, thus preventing it from becoming widely accepted. Today, merengue's lyrics cover more general topics including politics and current events. Its music has become so popular, in fact, that it is honored with two regional festivals each year.
<b>Films</b>	Cayo Levantado is the original Bacardi Island photographed in the 1970s rum campaign
<b>Museums</b>	At the southern end of the Plaza Espana in Santo Domingo is <b>the Museo de las Casas Reales</b> , built between 1503 and 1520, was the administrative centre of the West Indies, housing the Royal Court, Treasury and Office of the Governor. Inside, the museum's rather hodgepodge collection includes a few Taíno artefacts, Spanish navigational instruments, and an armoury donated by Trujillo with examples of weaponry used here since Columbus. Opposite the Casas Reales is the Alcazar de Colón, the fortified palace of the Columbus family, built by Diego from 1511 to 1515.
<b>Festivals</b>	<p><b>Dominican Republic Jazz Festival:</b> Nov 26-27 2011 in Cabarete The Dominican Republic is world-renowned for merengue so it is no surprise that the annual Dominican Republic Jazz Festival attracts a line-up of Latin jazz performers. Concerts are held at Cabarete beach and the Gran Teatro del Cibao in Santiago. <a href="http://www.drjazzfestival.com">http://www.drjazzfestival.com</a></p> <p><b>Carnival</b> is held in late Feb – Diablo Conjuelo costumes, singing, dancing, every weekend in February.</p> <p><b>Merengue festivals:</b> July in Santo Domingo – musical blowout; Oct in Pto Plata on the Malecon.</p> <p><b>Las Nochas de Vela:</b> the night of the prayer festival Jan 21 mix of Catholic and African religious festivities</p>

<b>ATTRACTIONS</b>	
<b>Beaches</b>	<p><b>Playa Bonita</b>, 13km of uninterrupted beach that begins just west of Playa Las Ballenas, boasts the kind of powdery white sand you might expect to see only in tourist brochures.</p> <p>From Playa Bonita's entrance, a sand road provides access for four-wheel-drives and motorbikes, past a beachfront populated at most by a few small groups of people taking advantage of the isolation to swim or sunbathe naked, until, after 6km, you reach Playa Cosón, a small fishing village holding two gourmet beach shacks with tables and chairs on the sand, serving grilled, fresh-caught fish for a few pesos.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



<b>Wildlife</b>	<p><b>Whales:</b> 2500 of 6000 world pop of humpbacks breed and give birth in the north on the Silver Bank; they are 50ft long and 60 tons; Dec- Mar is the season</p> <p>The hutia is an oddly endearing endemic mammal, nocturnal, 30cms, lives in caves and is rarely seen.</p>
<b>Parks</b>	<p><b>Los Haitises National Park</b> – 1200 square kilometers of limestone hills and mangroves. Guided tours to explore the many small islands and caves of the park are offered from Samana, Sanchez, Sabana de la Mar. Pre-Colombian pictograms cover the walls of some of the caves</p> <p>There are 16 national parks, 67 protected areas; caimans in SW; birds: flamingos, parrots; solenodon – the Caribbean’s only insectivorous mammal, almost extinct; sea turtles, whales galore!</p>
<b>Gardens</b>	<p>The <b>National Botanical Garden</b> in Santo Domingo occupies an area of one square mile and was founded to study, preserve and investigate the varied plant life of Dominican Republic. Opened in 1976, the Botanical Garden is named after Dr. Rafael María Moscoso, the first Dominican botanist who wrote a catalog of the plants of the Spanish island in 1943. It is a sanctuary where animals and plants live in perfect harmony, with roads and trails will lead you a personal encounter with nature. It highlights the permanent exhibitions of bromeliads, ferns, palms, orchids, aquatic plants and the Japanese garden. Open daily from 9am - 5pm. Tel 809-385-2611</p> <p><a href="http://www.jbn-sdq.org">www.jbn-sdq.org</a></p>
<b>Historical Buildings</b>	<p><b>Santo Domingo:</b></p> <p>Santo Domingo is the city of firsts in the Americas. Located in this metropolis are the first buildings constructed for religious, health, judicial and government purposes after the Spanish arrived. Among them, the first Cathedral of the Americas was erected (1523-1546), with its blend of Gothic and Renaissance styles. Don't miss the beauty of the Alcázar de Colón, the oldest Viceregal residence in the Americas. It was built at the beginning of the 16th century by the son of Admiral Christopher Columbus, Don Diego Columbus. He lived there with his wife María de Toledo, the niece of the King of Spain. Columbus Park is in the centre of the city's ancient quarter. It is an "urban living room" where everyone goes to enjoy its tree-lined streets where beautiful buildings date back several centuries.</p>

<b>OTHER ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>Shopping</b>	<p>Santo Domingo is also one of the grand shopping bazaars of the Caribbean, with such "hot" items as hand-wrapped cigars for sale virtually everywhere, along with local handicrafts. Jewelry made of <b>larimar or amber</b> is also much sought after.</p> <p>Notable <b>cigar</b> brands include: Santiago, Cibao Valley, Davidoff, Churchill</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



<b>Markets</b>	Most of the towns have fun markets to explore. Samana Town has one of the most colourful public markets in the DR.
<b>Nightlife</b>	<b>Punta Cana: Bávaro Disco</b> , on the grounds of the Barcelo Bávaro Beach, Golf & Casino Resort (tel. 809/686-5797), has emerged as the hottest, most popular, and sexiest dance club in Punta Cana, thanks to a superb sound system. The venue is more European than North American, thanks to a heavy concentration of clients from Italy, Spain, and Holland. Painted black, with simulated stars overhead and lots of mirrors, the place is open nightly from 11pm to 5am.
<b>Casinos</b>	Most casinos are conveniently located within major resort complexes and are open until dawn, if not 24 hours. Dominican casinos use Las Vegas odds, so the casino's profits and player winnings are relatively the same and considered fair.

<b>CUISINE</b>	
<b>Food</b>	<p>Breakfast typically calls for a serving of "<b>Mangu</b>," a mix of plantains, cheese and bacon, which can be found at most hotel and resort restaurants. Mangu has been dubbed the "mashed potatoes" of the Dominican Republic and is a must-try for all visitors. Locals are also known to prepare the dish for evening meals.</p> <p>A foundation of the native diet, "<b>La Bandera Dominicana</b>," or the Dominican flag meal, is eaten by nearly everyone at lunch time. The most important meal of the day, La Bandera consists of rice, beans, meat, vegetables and fried plantains to ensure energy throughout the afternoon and evening.</p> <p>Another popular dish is "<b>Sancocho</b>," a Spanish-style stew usually served with rice. Ingredients include various roots, green plantains, avocado and typically chicken or beef, although it sometimes includes a combination of seven meats (Sancocho prieto). Goat meat, a staple in many Dominican homes, may also be used in this recipe. It offers a unique addition to the character of any dish as these animals graze on wild oregano.</p> <p>"<b>Locrio</b>," or Dominican rice, varies with its preparer. An adaptation of the Spanish paella, locrio is made with achiote (a colored dye produced from the seeds of the achiote plant), since saffron spice is unavailable.</p> <p>Near Samana, coconut trees decorate the landscape and provide a delectable milk sauce for fish, known as "<b>Pescado con Coco</b>." Throughout the south central coast, "bulgur", or whole wheat, is a main ingredient in "Quipes" (ground beef wrapped in wheat) or "Tipili" (bulgur salad).</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p><b>Comida Creolla</b> – creole cuisine blends Spanish, African, Indian and Caribbean influences; plantains, cassava, tropical fruits, mango, papaya, seafood, rice and beans; pastelitos: meat or cheese pastry turnovers; chimichurris: pork sandwiches hot off the spit; sancocho: national dish, sausage, pork, chicken, beef, goat, veg, herbs, spices in stew.</p> <p>Local beers, which are very good, are Quisqueya and El Presidente.</p>
<p><b>Rum</b></p>	<p>Rum production in the Caribbean is attributed to the African colonists who brought sugar cane with them to make crystallized sugar and molasses. They noticed, however, that the molasses began to ferment when left in the hot Caribbean sun and could be mixed with water to create what became known as rum.</p> <p>During the 1700s, sugar cane plantations and their by-products contributed to a booming social and economic climate which eventually drew the attention of the DR's three rum brand founders. In the mid-to-late 1800's Don Andres Brugal Montaner, Don Erasmo Bermudez and Julian Barcelo started experimenting with their own personal refining processes. Today, the <b>Brugal, Bermúdez, and Barcelo</b> brands of rum have become popular across the globe and are considered some of the world's best. Unlike that of Jamaica and Barbados, Dominican rum is produced through a more natural process of distillation. Aging is often done in special American white oak kegs, thus creating a sweet, hearty blend.</p> <p><b>Bermudez</b>, the eldest of the Dominican rum distilleries, was established in 1852. Its first formula, Bitter Panacea, remains famous. Distilling in Santo Domingo, Bermudez boasts the Dominican's oldest aging cellar.</p> <p><b>Brugal</b>, established in 1888, is located just east of Puerto Plata and produces more than one and a half million liters of white and dark rum each year. Considered the most popular distiller, Brugal offers affordable bottles of rum for sale at its bottling plant and gives guests a free rum drink. Tours are offered Monday through Friday and admission is free.</p> <p><b>Barcelo</b>, established in Santo Domingo in 1930, is said to be best-liked by locals. The plant manufactures 40 thousand liters of rum per day.</p>
<p><b>Restaurants</b></p>	<p><b>Chez Palace, Punta Cana:</b> This is the showcase restaurant of one of the biggest resort complexes in the Dominican Republic. If you're not staying at one of the Barcelo hotels, you'll have to make reservations in advance. The decor is cool and stylish, as if it were imported from a chic resort in the south of Spain. A formally dressed staff serves superb dishes that include salmon mousse in a prawn sauce, tartar of tenderloin, grilled red snapper, grouper with mustard sauce, and filet mignon with truffles and foie gras.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



<b>MORE INFO</b>	DR Tourism Office: 514-499-1918
<b>Brochures</b>	Transat Holidays and Nolitours 2011/2012 brochures are available at travel agents
<b>Websites</b>	<a href="http://www.transatholidays.com">www.transatholidays.com</a> and <a href="http://www.nolitours.com">www.nolitours.com</a> <a href="http://www.godominicanrepublic.com">www.godominicanrepublic.com</a>
<b>PERSONAL EXPERIENCES</b>	Puerto Plata – Jarabacoa; South Coast – Boca Chica, Santo Domingo, Isla Saona; Punta Cana

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



<b>DESTINATION</b>	<p><b>CUBA</b></p> <p>Cuba is unlike any other place on earth. What draws people to this fascinating Caribbean island is much more than beaches, sun, and cheap drinks, though there are plenty of all three for those who want them. One of the last Communist nations left, it doesn't suffer from the drab and desultory demeanor of its disappeared peers. Cuba's rich culture, unique political history, and continued survival through ongoing economic hardship make it one of the most eye-opening countries that travellers can still discover.</p>
<b>Location</b>	<p>Cuba is the largest Caribbean island, between the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean. It lies 145 km south of Key West, Florida, between the Cayman Islands and the Bahamas, to the west of Haiti, and northwest of Jamaica.</p> <p>Formed by over 4,000 keys, islets and islands, Cuba covers 110,922 square kilometers of terrain, encompassing luxuriant vegetation with a huge variety of flora and fauna, virgin islands, grottoes, caves, mountains, forests and over 280 beaches.</p> <p>Havana, the capital, was declared a World Heritage City by UNESCO in 1982 in recognition of its concentration of historic buildings.</p>
<b>Geography</b>	<p>111,000 square km, 4,200 coral cays and isles, 1,250 km long, 30-100 km wide, with 7,000 km coastline .</p> <p>Pico Turquino is the highest mountain at 1974 meters</p>
<b>Name</b>	<p>Columbus named it Juana, the first of several names he successively applied to the island. It eventually became known as Cuba, from its aboriginal name, Cubanascnan.</p>
<b>Population</b>	<p>Nationally 11.2 million, with Havana having more than 2 million</p>
<b>Language</b>	<p>Spanish; English is widely spoken in the resorts and in Varadero</p>
<b>Currency</b>	<p>One Canadian Dollar = 26 CUP or Cuban Pesos (3<sup>rd</sup> December 2011)          One Canadian Dollar = 0.98 CUC or Cuban Convertible Pesos (3<sup>rd</sup> December 2011)</p> <p>There are two currencies circulating in Cuba, Cuban Pesos (CUP) and Cuban Convertible Pesos (CUC). Prior to 2004 US dollars were in wide circulation on par with the CUC, but the government discontinued that and they are no longer used.</p> <p><b>CUC is the currency most tourists will use in Cuba.</b> It is how you will pay for hotels, official taxis, entry into museums, meals at restaurants, cigars, rum, etc. Conversion into CUC can be done at exchange houses (casa de cambio, or cadeca). These are located in many hotels and in other places throughout the cities. CUC are valued at 24 times the value of CUP. Tourists are permitted to import or export a maximum of CUP 100 or CUC 200 at any one time.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>CUP are also known as local Pesos and Moneda Nacional (National money). There is a limited range of goods that can be bought for local pesos, and these are transactions carried out in agricultural markets or from street vendors. Fruits, vegetables, fresh juices and snacks from street vendors are among the things CUP can buy. Because the products that can be purchased with CUP are limited, it is not a good idea to change more than CUC 5-10 into CUP at a time, as the CUP will last for a good while.</p> <p><b>Note that Amex, MasterCard MBNA and Visa Citibank credit cards are not accepted in Cuba and US dollars are not accepted for exchange in official outlets.</b></p>
<b>Tipping</b>	American dollar notes are always appreciated if you receive good service
<b>Government</b>	Socialist republic, but Fidel Castro has created his own brand of more pragmatic Socialism; his brother is now the top guy.
<b>Documentation</b>	Passport and tourist card (included in package tours) Departure tax is 25 CUCs
<b>Time zone</b>	Eastern Standard Time
<b>Health</b>	<p>Cuba's health and education facilities are more accessible to the average citizen than those of many richer countries, including the U.S. Life expectancy is 76 years and literacy is 96%.</p> <p>Since 2010, travellers must present proof of health insurance in order to enter the country. Upon arrival, travellers may be required to present an insurance policy, insurance certificate, or medical assistance card valid for the period of their stay in Cuba. Those who do not have proof of insurance coverage may be required to obtain health insurance from a Cuban insurance company when they arrive.</p>
<b>Safety tips</b>	<p>Cuba is generally a very safe country; strict and prominent policing, combined with neighborhood watch style-programs keep the streets safe from violent crime. Nonetheless, a certain degree of common-sense and caution is advisable, especially in major cities.</p> <p><b>In my personal opinion and experience, Cuba is the safest destination in the Caribbean today.</b></p>

<b>CLIMATE</b>	
<b>General climate</b>	Wet season is May to Oct; temp averages 26 degrees in Jan and temperatures are sub-tropical year-round
<b>Today's weather</b>	25 degrees Centigrade and sunny in Havana (3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2011)
<b>Best time to visit</b>	November to April, but this country is lovely year-round.

<b>GETTING THERE</b>	
<b>Flying time</b>	3.5 to 4 hours from Montreal and Toronto
<b>Cities</b>	<b>Havana:</b> a city of 2.5 million people, full of faded glory, 1950's cars, and

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.





swinging nightlife. It has “a rhythm all of its own: halfway between the easy tempo of a sleepy tropical resort and the feverish pace of a metropolis”  
It was founded in 1514 and became known as “the jewel of the Spanish colonies”; it’s a UNESCO world Heritage Site.  
From 1898-1902 it was ruled by the US.  
Highlights:  
Old Havana is a walkers paradise;  
Catedral de la Havana – baroque façade;  
Plaza de la Cathedral - Is perhaps the most beautiful square in the Caribbean which is surrounded by examples of the finest baroque architecture in the country  
Castillo de la Real Fuerza – oldest colonial fortress in the Americas;  
Museo de la Ciudad – former Palace of the Captains General;  
Malecon – seawall meeting place;  
Hemmingway – El Floridita 180 yrs old, birthplace of daiquiris, ‘papa especial’: double 3year rum, lemon, crushed ice;  
And no less than 247 museums!

**Varadero:** Varadero is a privileged enclave on the west coast of Cuba, with over 20 kilometers of superlative beaches sheltering caves and virgin keys whose crystalline waters conceal more than 40 different kinds of coral, fish, lobsters, shrimp, crabs and turtles. This beautiful destination has excellent connections and a vast range of leisure and entertainment options, making it the ideal spot for a relaxing and enjoyable vacation in the heart of the Caribbean.  
History: Siboney Indians, Cubanacan nation, Cueva de San Ambrosio: 50 drawings at tip of peninsula, discovered in 1961;  
1928: Mansion Xanadu – Cary Grant, Ava Gardner;  
1900-1920: wooden houses;  
Museo Municipal – Varadero history with English captions;  
Establecimiento Tabaquero – cigar factory, 20 tobacco craftsmen;  
Parque Josone – flamingos, macaws and rowboats;  
Scuba – 3 clubs \$60 Playa Giron intro 2 hrs;  
Horseriding – Casa del Valle, Valle Yumuri near Matanzas;  
Cardenas – 15km from Varadero, architectural jewel, Museo Oscar Maria de Rojas – eclectic: shrunken heads and snails;  
Shopping: cigars, ceramics, art;  
Delfinario – 8 dolphins, 5 born there, 3 shows;  
Cuevas de Bellamar – discovered in 1861, 45 mins, La Fuente del Amor  
Sailing ship to Cayo Blanco from Marina Chapelin \$65 seafood lunch, snorkeling

**Santa Clara:** Santa Clara is a pretty city set amid green hills. The capital

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



of the province of Villa Clara; it was founded in 1689 as San Juan de los Remedios. It is the airport that you fly into when vacationing in Cayo Santa Maria.

Overlooking the Parque Leoncio Vidal, the Museo de Artes Decorativas occupies a magnificent colonial house built around 1740. Transformed over the centuries, it was restored in 1820 and again in 1980. The museum has some extraordinary items, including an armoire built entirely without nails and a washbasin from the days when there was no running water.

The memory of Che Guevara permeates the town of Santa Clara. Located a little over 2 kilometres west of Parque Leoncio Vidal, the Plaza de la Revolución is dedicated to the famous Argentine guerrilla who fought fiercely alongside Fidel Castro to overthrow Batista in the late 1950s. A gigantic statue of Che Guevara dominates this plaza, the site of major political and cultural rallies in Santa Clara. Built in 1988 to commemorate the Guevara-led Battle of Santa Clara, this 7-metre high bronze sculpture is the work of Cuban artist Delana; the gigantic stone pedestal upon which it rests is more than 10 metres high.

Below this monument, anyone interested in this almost mythical Argentine revolutionary will not want to miss the Museo Memorial Nacional Comandante Ernesto Che Guevara. Inaugurated on December 28, 1988, it traces Che's life from his childhood up to his death, including his trips through Latin America, his stay in Mexico during which he met an exiled Fidel Castro, the landing of the Granma on the coast of Cuba, and his revolutionary experience in the Sierra Maestra. The museum is well documented, and displays a number of Che's personal items, including his uniforms, hand-written letters as well as many photos.

The door that faces the entrance to the museum leads to the **Mausoleo del Che**, where lie the remains of Che and the 13 Cubans who were killed with him in Bolivia. An eternal flame shines in this solemn and touching shrine.

Following Che Guevara's footsteps in Santa Clara also requires a visit to the **Monumento del Descarrilamiento**, Acción y Toma del Tren Blindado, which recounts the decisive battle led by Che Guevara against an armoured train carrying Batista's forces on December 28, 1958. Four of the train's 22 cars can be viewed at the monument.

**The Museo de Artes Decorativas** also offers classical music concerts. The museum is recognized as Santa Clara's most important centre for classical music.

**The Casa de la Cultura Juan Marinero** is Santa Clara's community cultural centre. At the entrance, a small art gallery exhibits works by contemporary artists from the region. This beautiful house, built in 1927, is the site of many cultural activities. Shows and concerts are held here regularly.

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p><b>Shopping</b> is a rare diversion in this region of the country, but you can still head to Calle Independencia, open only to pedestrians starting at Calle Maceo. Most of the shops are intended for local residents, including Santa Clara's biggest bookshop.</p> <p><b>Santiago de Cuba:</b> Set on the seaside, near the island's eastern tip, Santiago de Cuba is the country's second-largest city. Vibrant, tropical, and often sweltering, Santiago is the country's liveliest cultural showpiece, outside of Havana. With a population just under a half-million people, Santiago is a world apart, with a unique history and rhythms all its own.</p>
<b>Distances</b>	<p>Varadero to Havana: 144 km            Santa Clara to Havana: 270 km</p>
<b>Buses</b>	<p>There are 30,000km of paved road. Probably the nicest way to get around Cuba is on the Viazul buses. These are well-staffed and luxurious air-conditioned buses with toilets, big comfy seats, and lots of leg room. Refreshments are provided. Viazul buses are mostly used by foreigners and rich locals. You'll need to book your ticket a day before departure to secure your seat; you may not get a ticket if you just show up right before departure.</p>
<b>Trains</b>	<p>Standard gauge: 4,226 km of which 140 km is electrified</p>
<b>Car Rental, Taxis</b>	<p>Car rental starts from CUC 65 per day (including insurance) plus the cost of a full tank of gasoline. The refundable deposits start around CUC 200. Rental cars are for the most part fairly new, imported European or Asian models.            Collective taxis often use pre-1959 US cars.</p>
<b>Regions</b>	<p><b>Central Cuba</b> is an area rich in both historical and natural attractions. It is home to several wonderful colonial-era cities, as well as isolated and pristine beaches. Heading east from Matanzas into Cuba's central heartland you first hit Villa Clara province, which is devoted largely to sugar cane, citrus, and tobacco farming and cattle ranching. The provincial capital, Santa Clara, a lively university town, is often called "Che Guevara's City" and features an impressive monument and plaza dedicated to the fallen revolutionary. To the north of Santa Clara lie the tiny and well-preserved colonial-era city of Remedios, and the jaw-droppingly beautiful beach resort destination of la Cayería del Norte. Abutting Villa Clara to the south is <b>Cienfuegos</b> province. The city of Cienfuegos is affectionately known as La Perla del Sur (The Southern Pearl). Cienfuegos is a busy port city with a pretty, colonial-era center and the country's second-longest seaside promenade, or Malecón. Cienfuegos is connected to Trinidad by a pretty coastal highway, and is definitely worth a visit on a loop trip around the region.            The province of <b>Sancti Spíritus</b> is the only one in Cuba to count two of the original seven villas (towns) in Cuba among its offerings. The</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>colonial gem Trinidad, tucked in the southwest corner of the province, is the highlight of a visit to the central section of the country, or all of Cuba for that matter. The provincial capital, Sancti Spíritus, isn't a great deal larger than Trinidad, and though it is more ramshackle and rough around the edges, lacking Trinidad's remarkable collection of perfectly preserved architecture, it is still worth a visit to see its couple of colonial highlights.</p> <p><b>Cuba's Northeast Coast:</b> The extraordinary, powdery beaches of Cayo Coco and Cayo Guillermo, the cays that lie off the mainland and jut into the deep blue of the Atlantic Ocean, are the primary attractions of Ciego de Avila province. It is a remote area, but one with the infrastructure and natural gifts that make it perfect for idyllic sun, sand, and sea holidays. The namesake provincial capital Ciego de Avila and other towns and cities in this province hold few attractions for visitors. A little farther east, predominantly flat low-lying Camagüey province, southeast of Ciego de Avila, is the largest in the country, though it is also the least densely populated. It occupies the widest swath on the island, 120km from the Atlantic coast to the Caribbean coast. Camagüey, the provincial capital, is Cuba's third-largest city, after Havana and Santiago de Cuba, and is a relatively undiscovered colonial gem of a city that is worth exploring.</p> <p><b>El Oriente:</b> Prior to the 1959 Revolution, the eastern half of Cuba was a single province, straightforwardly called "El Oriente," or the East. Most Cubans still refer to everything east of Camagüey - a region much more scenically and historically interesting than most of central Cuba - as El Oriente, even though it is now composed of the distinct provinces of Holguín, Granma, Santiago de Cuba, and Guantánamo. The region is less known and visited than the west, but every bit as rewarding for travelers (and perhaps more so). The farther east you go, the more emphatically Caribbean it feels. The region's remarkable landscapes include the north coast's exuberant banana and coconut groves, densely wooded peaks of the Sierra Maestra, and tropical rainforest on the east coast.</p>
--	---

<p><b>ACCOMMODATION TYPES</b></p>	<p>Everything from five star international resorts to the B&amp;B equivalent in Cuba called <b>casas particulares</b>. In general, the rooms and homes are kept very clean, while the furnishings and amenities are quite simple. The rates average between \$8 and \$20 per person, and meals are often available at very reasonable prices.</p>
-----------------------------------	---

<p><b>TARGET GROUPS</b></p> <p><b>Kids</b></p>	<p>If you've got kids in Varadero, you might want to head to the <b>Parque de</b></p>
--	---

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p><b>Diversiones</b>, a small amusement park in Varadero that has the types of rides and booths you might find at a county fair.</p> <p>Near the Marina Chapelín, on the ocean side of the road, you'll find the <b>Delfinario</b>. Open daily from 8am to 5pm, this attraction offers a 40-minute show by trained dolphins about four times daily. Admission is \$10 per person; it's \$5 extra to take photos, and 55 CUC for a 15-minute swimming session with the dolphins.</p>
<b>Teens</b>	<p>If all the activities at the resorts are not enough, there is a large swath of the eastern end of the Varadero peninsula is protected as the <b>Parque Ecológico Varahicacos</b>. There are some gentle paths through the scrub forests here, and you can visit a series of small caves, some of which contain ancient indigenous pictographs.</p> <p>If your family is adventurous, try the <b>Jungle Tour</b>, which is a fast and furious trip through the mangroves aboard sit-on-top motorized watercraft.</p> <p>Sign up for a day-cruise on one of the many sailboats operating out of Varadero. These cruises head out to nearby cays, and include some snorkeling time, as well as lunch either on the boat or on some private little island beach.</p>
<b>Romance</b>	<b>Old Havana</b> has to be one of the most romantic cities on earth...
<b>Honeymoons &amp; Weddings</b>	The major resorts are all able to create magical wedding events – involve your travel agent at the early planning stage. Transat Holidays feature free weddings and honeymoons at selected Barcelo Resorts in Cuba.
<b>Seniors</b>	<p>The nicest spot to visit in "downtown" <b>Varadero</b> is the <b>Parque Josone</b>, a beautifully maintained little city park with cool shady grounds and gardens. There are paths winding around and over little lakes with fountains, several restaurants and food stands, and the park is dotted with gazebos and park benches.</p> <p>The old colonial city of <b>Trinidad</b> is a perfect day excursion from many of the island resorts.</p>
<b>UNIQUES</b>	<p><b>Fábrica de Tabaco Partagas</b>, Havana: Founded in 1845, this is Cuba's largest and perhaps most renowned cigar factory, producing around 5 million cigars a year.</p> <p>If you want a bird's-eye view of things, the Centro Internacional de Deportes Aéreos, off a little side road across from the Marina Dársena, offers <b>parachute jumps and ultralight flights</b>. Tandem parachuting costs \$150 per person. Ultralight flights run \$30 to \$300, depending on the length of time</p>
<b>Surprising</b>	<p><b>Santería</b> is a folk religion of African deities combined with Catholic saints; Cubans are open about it and happy to tell you more.</p> <p><b>Guantanamo Bay</b>: the US forced Cuba to accept a US lease in 1903</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>which can be ended only by abandonment or mutual agreement.</p>
<p><b>History</b></p>	<p>History is important in Cuba, so I have expanded this section for a fuller account of Cuba's intriguing past...</p> <p>In <b>1492 Columbus</b> said of Cuba " I have never seen a more beautiful country..."</p> <p>It's thought that humans first cruised from South America to Cuba around 3500 BC. Primarily fishers and hunter-gatherers, these original inhabitants were later joined by the agriculturalist <b>Taino</b>, a branch of the <b>Arawak Indians</b>. Christopher Columbus sighted Cuba on 27 October 1492, and by 1514, Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar had conquered the island for the Spanish crown and founded seven settlements. When captured Taino chief and resistance fighter <b>Hatuey</b> was condemned to die at the stake, he refused baptism, saying that he never wanted to see another Spaniard again, not even in heaven.</p> <p>Cattle ranching quickly became the mainstay of the Cuban economy. Large estates were established on the island under the encomienda system, enslaving the Indians under the pretext of offering instruction in Christianity. By 1542, when the system was abolished, only around 5000 Indians (of an estimated 100,000 half a century before) survived. Undaunted, the Spanish imported African slaves as replacements. British troops invaded Cuba in June 1762 and occupied Havana for 11 months, importing more slaves and vastly expanding Cuba's trade links. In 1817, Spain's long-standing monopoly on tobacco ended, which raised prices, encouraging the crop's expansion. Tobacco quickly became one of the islands most important products. Sugar had also become a major industry, as American independence in 1783 created new markets, and the 1791 slave uprising in Haiti eliminated Cuba's biggest sugar-producing competitor. By 1820 Cuba was the world's largest sugar producer.</p> <p>After the great liberator, <b>Simón Bolívar</b>, led Mexico and South America to independence, Cuba and Puerto Rico were the only remaining Spanish holdings in the Western Hemisphere. Spanish loyalists fled the former colonies and arrived in Cuba in droves. Even they, however, began demanding home rule for the island, albeit under the Spanish flag. In October 1868, planter <b>Carlos Manuel de Céspedes</b> launched Cuba's First War of Independence. After 10 years and 200,000 deaths, the rebels were spent and a pact was signed granting them amnesty. Meanwhile, a group of Cuban rebels exiled to the USA began plotting the overthrow of the Spanish colonial government. Among their ranks was <b>José Martí</b>, a respected journalist and critic of US policy, as well as an important poet and the author of the best-known Cuban song of all time, Guajira guantanamera. Martí and his military commander, General Máximo Gómez, landed on eastern Cuba in 1895; within days Martí, conspicuous on his white horse, was shot and killed in a skirmish with</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



Spanish soldiers. His martyrdom earned him the permanent position of Cuba's national hero.

Gómez and rebel leader Antonio Maceo pushed westward, burning everything in their path. Spain came down hard, forcing civilians into reconcentración camps and publicly executing rebel sympathizers. These methods effectively reestablished Spanish control, but Cuba's agriculture-based economy was in ruins. The Spaniards adopted a more conciliatory approach, offering Cuba home rule, but the embittered populace would agree to nothing short of full independence.

José Martí had long warned of US interest in Cuba, and in 1898 he was proved right. After years of reading lurid (and often inaccurate) tabloids tales about Cuba's Second War for Independence, the American public was fascinated with the island. Although everything was quiet, newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst told his illustrator not to come home just yet: 'You furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war.' In January 1898 the US warship Maine, anchored outside Havana harbor, exploded mysteriously. All but two of its officers were off the ship at the time. The **Spanish-American war** had begun.

Spain, weakened by conflict elsewhere, limped to battle, trying to preserve some dignity in the Caribbean. They nearly beat future US president Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders (though they'd had to leave their horses on the mainland) in the Battle of San Juan Hill. The USA's vastly superior forces eventually prevailed, however, and on December 12, 1898, a peace treaty ending the war was signed. The Cubans, including General Calixto García, whose largely black army had inflicted dozens of defeats on the Spanish, were not invited.

The USA, hobbled by a law requiring its own government to respect Cuban self-determination, could not annex Cuba outright, as it did Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines. In 1903, the USA built a naval base at Guantánamo Bay that is still in operation today.

By the **1920's** US companies owned two-thirds of Cuba's farmland, imposing tariffs that crippled Cuba's own manufacturing industries. Discrimination against blacks was institutionalised. Tourism based on drinking, gambling and prostitution flourished. In 1933 Morales was overthrown in a coup, and army sergeant **Fulgencio Batista** seized power. Over the next 20 years Cuba crumbled, and its assets were increasingly placed into foreign hands. On January 1, 1959, Batista's dictatorship was overthrown after a three-year guerilla campaign led by young lawyer **Fidel Castro**. Batista fled Cuba for the Dominican Republic, taking with him US\$40 million of government funds.

Castro was named prime minister and began reforming the nation's economy, cutting rents and nationalizing landholdings larger than 400 hectares. Relations with the USA, already shaky, deteriorated when he nationalized US-owned petroleum refineries that had refused to process

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>Venezuelan oil. The Americans retaliated by cutting Cuban sugar imports, crippling the Cuban economy, and the CIA began plotting devious ways to overthrow the revolutionary government.</p> <p>In <b>1961</b>, 1400 CIA-trained Cuban expats, mainly upper-middle-class Batista supporters who had fled to Miami after the revolution, attacked the island at the <b>Bay of Pigs</b>. They were promptly captured and ransomed back to the US for medical supplies. The following week, Castro announced the 'socialist nature' of the revolutionary government, and its relationship with the Soviet Union flourished, who provided food, technical support and, of course, nuclear weapons. The October <b>1962 Cuban Missile Crisis</b> is said to be the closest the world has ever come to nuclear conflict.</p> <p>The missiles were shipped back to the USSR, and the USA declared an embargo on Cuba. Castro and his Minister of Economics, <b>Che Guevara</b>, began actively supporting guerilla groups in South America and Africa, sending troops and advisers to assist socialist insurgencies in Zaire, Angola, Mozambique, Bolivia (where Guevara was killed) and Ethiopia. The US response was to support dictators in many of those countries.</p> <p>In December <b>1991, the Cuban Constitution was amended to remove all references to Marxism-Leninism</b>, and economic reforms began. In 1993, laws passed allowing Cubans to own and use US dollars, be self-employed and open farmers' markets. Taxes on dollar incomes and profits were levied in 1994, and in September 1996 foreign companies were allowed to wholly own and operate businesses and purchase real estate. These measures gradually brought the economy out of its post-Soviet tailspin. The US responded by stiffening its embargo with the Helms-Burton Act, ironically solidifying Castro's position.</p> <p>In July of 2006, Fidel Castro handed off the reins of government for the first time in 47 years. The reins were not passed far. In fact, Fidel turned over the day-to-day chores of governing to his younger brother <b>Raúl Castro</b>, who was already the head of the Cuban armed forces and the head of Cuba's Communist party.</p>
<b>Books</b>	<b>Frommer's Cuba</b> – a comprehensive guide to the country.
<b>1000 Places to see before you die</b>	<p><b>Cuba's Jazz Festival</b> – mid Feb in Havana</p> <p><b>La Habana Vieja</b> – Havana's Old Quarter</p> <p><b>Hemingway's Hangouts</b> – La Floridita and La Bodeguita del Medio</p>
<b>Must Sees</b>	<p><b>Trinidad</b> - The best-preserved colonial city in Cuba, in the shadow of the Escambray mountains, Trinidad was not even linked by road to the rest of the country until the 1950s. Declared a national monument by the Cuban government this city is very much as it was four centuries ago, the beauty of its baroque architecture and cobblestones squares harking back to a bygone era when Trinidad was a key player in the Caribbean slave trade. There are many interesting things to see (e.g Guamuaya Archaeological Museum, Plaza Mayor, Church of Santa Ana, Calle</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.





	Simon Bolivar....) but the most impressive of all Trinidad's many museums is Trinidad Municipal Museum and a visit to the Taller Alfarero, a large ceramics workshop where traditional techniques are still used is also worthwhile.
--	--

<b>SPORTS ACTIVITIES</b>	<p><b>Baseball</b> is the national sport. Cuba's amateur players are considered some of the best in the world, and the premier players are aggressively scouted and courted by Major League Baseball. The regular season runs November through March, and playoffs and the final championship usually carry the season on into May. Most major towns and cities have a local team. Some of the consistently better teams include Pinar del Río, Sancti Spíritus, Santiago de Cuba, Santa Clara, and of course Havana's Industriales. It's usually easy to buy tickets at the box office for less than 5 Cuban pesos, or ask at your hotel and perhaps they can get you tickets in advance.</p> <p>If you want to bring presents for the locals, you can't go wrong with any baseball equipment!</p>
<b>Golf</b>	The country's only regulation 18-hole golf course is <b>the Varadero Golf Club</b> ( <a href="http://www.varaderogolfclub.com">www.varaderogolfclub.com</a> ). The course is a relatively flat resort course, with lots of water, plenty of sand, great views, and almost no rough. Greens fees are \$60 for 18 holes.
<b>Fishing</b>	<p>There's fabulous deep-sea sport-fishing for <b>marlin, sailfish, tuna, dorado</b>, and more off of most of Cuba's extensive coastline, while the Zapata Peninsula and Cayo Largo del Sur may just be some of the best and least exploited bone-fishing spots left in the hemisphere. The mountain lake and resort of Hanabanilla is getting good grades as a freshwater ground for widemouth and black bass.</p> <p>A half-day of fishing should cost between CUC\$150 and CUC\$400, while a full day can run between CUC\$300 and CUC\$1,400, including gear and lunch, depending on the size of the boat and number of fishermen. There's a broad network of state-run marinas all around Cuba; the greatest number are run by Cubanacán (tel. 7/208-6044; <a href="http://www.cubanacan.cu">www.cubanacan.cu</a> ) and Gaviota (tel. 7/66-9668; <a href="http://www.gaviota-grupo.com">www.gaviota-grupo.com</a> ). All offer sport fishing charters</p>
<b>Hiking</b>	<p>Walking along <b>Havana's Malecón</b>: your best bet is to start in Habana Vieja and work your way toward the Hotel Nacional in Vedado. Take your time to stop and sit on the sea wall for a spell, and be sure to talk to some of the locals on your way. If you time it right, you will reach the Hotel Nacional in the late afternoon - a good time to grab a cool drink and enjoy the setting sun from their "Compass Card" outdoor terrace.</p> <p><b>Hiking Pico Turquino</b>: Pico Turquino, tucked within the celebrated Sierra Maestra National Park, is the highest peak in Cuba at just under 2,000m. The trail to the summit is swathed in cloud forest and tropical</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	flora. Mountaineers in good physical condition can do the 15km round-trip journey in a day, but most camp overnight below the summit. The panoramic views of the coast and Caribbean Sea are breathtaking.
<b>Cycling</b>	<p>With a local reliance on bicycles for everyday transportation and a relatively well-maintained road network serving a small motor vehicular fleet, Cuba is a great country to tour by bicycle. There are very few operations renting decent bikes in Cuba, so it may be best to bring your own. There are also specialist tour companies who organize biking holidays in Cuba: try <b>Holiday-n-Adventure</b> (1877-415-4329)</p> <p>Jeff Reid operates a small humanitarian program sending donated bicycles to Cuba – see <a href="http://bikesforcuba.wordpress.com">http://bikesforcuba.wordpress.com</a> or <a href="http://www.bikesforcuba.com">www.bikesforcuba.com</a> for full details. He sends bikes every month and depends on tourists from Ontario to take them.</p>
<b>Diving</b>	There are fabulous scuba diving and snorkeling opportunities on the coral reefs, ocean walls, and ancient wrecks that lie just off Cuba's coasts. María la Gorda, Isla de la Juventud, Playa Larga, Playa Girón, and Los Jardines de la Reina are widely considered the absolute top scuba-diving destinations. You will also find perfectly acceptable dive opportunities and operations in Varadero, Cayo Coco, Cayo Guillermo, Guardalavaca, and Cayo Largo del Sur

<b>CULTURE</b>	
<b>Music</b>	<p><b>Buena Vista Social Club</b>; rumba; jazz; salsa; son</p> <p>Cuba has a strong tradition in the performing arts. Cuban musicians, playing in a range of styles, are world-renowned. The Cuban National Ballet (tel. 7/855-3084; <a href="http://www.balletcuba.cu">www.balletcuba.cu</a> ) has been garnering international accolades for decades, under the seemingly eternal direction of Alicia Alonso.</p> <p>The <b>Conjunto Folklórico Nacional de Cuba</b> (Cuban National Folklore Group) hosts the weekly <b>Sábado de la Rumba</b>, a mesmerizing show of Afro-Cuban religious and secular dance and drumming. The 2-hour shows are presented every Saturday at 3pm, at El Gran Palenque, Calle 4, between Calzada and Avenida 5 in Vedado.</p>
<b>Museums</b>	<p><b>Museo de la Ciudad, Havana:</b> Old Havana's preeminent museum displays colonial-era art and artifacts. It's worth the price of admission alone to stroll the rooms, outdoor courtyards, and interior veranda of the former Palacio de los Capitanes Generales (Palace of the Captain Generals), which houses the museum.</p> <p><b>The National Fine Arts Museum</b> fills three floors of this square-city-block building, and the design - with a central courtyard and zigzagging ramped stairwell - can make navigating the upper floors confusing, so allow yourself plenty of time, and be prepared to get mildly lost inside. An extensive collection of Cuban art and sculpture is on</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	display at the newly renovated main building here. Modern masters like Wifredo Lam, Raúl Martínez, Amelia Peláez, and Rene Portocarrero are well represented. The international collection is now housed in a recently restored early-20th-century gem of a building.
<b>Festivals</b>	<p><b>The Havana Jazz Festival</b>, each February, organized by Chucho Valdés, is an internationally renowned event that consistently attracts an excellent line-up, with performances at venues around the city. Cuban music enjoyed a worldwide boost in popularity due to the success of the Buena Vista Social Club, and rightly so. Cuban son was a precursor to salsa and much excellent Latin jazz emanates from this sunny Caribbean island.</p> <p>What better place for a jazz festival than Havana, with its rich musical heritage and unique atmosphere? The Hotel Rivera acts as the festival headquarters, while the Casa de la Cultura Plaza, Teatro Nacional de Cuba, Teatro Amadeo Roldán, Teatro Mella and Teatro Karl Marx also host performances</p> <p><b>Carnival Santiago de Cuba</b> July/Aug: in the intense heat of summer, Santiago de Cuba explodes with the island's best carnival, an evocative celebration of the city's Afro-Caribbean roots. Ripe with rumba music, conga processions, booming percussion, fanciful floats, and wild costumes, it's a participatory party.</p>

<b>ATTRACTIONS</b>	<p><b>Cayo Santa Maria</b></p> <p>As well-kept secrets go, Cayo Santa Maria is one of Cuba's best. Just one glance at this tiny speck of an island and you can see why the locals wanted to keep it to themselves. We're talking pristine beaches, bath-warm waters and a rugged interior so jam-packed with nature it's been declared a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Cast adrift in the Atlantic Ocean to the north of Cuba, Cayo Santa Maria is part of the Jardines del Rey Archipelago – a clutch of islands whose name literally translates as the 'Gardens of the King'. Joined to the mainland in the late 1990's by a causeway that took almost a decade to complete, it's the latest addition to Cuba's list of premier holiday resorts. As such, it's relatively development-free and still lists remoteness as one of its charms. For the best in footprint-free sands, head to the north of the island. Here, postcard-worthy beaches trim the coast and dune-backed sands offer up prime sunbathing space. And the underwater world is just as impressive. Venture out to see twisting corals, shoals of rainbow-coloured fish, and even the odd turtle. To the south of the island, meanwhile, it's all mangrove swamps, palm-lined grasslands and a maze of creeks and lagoons. And when you've had your fill of Santa Maria, zip across the causeway to the other islands in the archipelago, Cayo Las Brujas and Cayo Ensenachos. Here, you'll find rustic villages freckled with</p>
--------------------	---

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>sun-scorched houses and rocking chair-decked verandas. Then there's Havana to think about. Cuba's iconic capital may be a long day or overnight trip away, but it's definitely worth the road miles. For an R&amp;R beach break with a dash of city style, Cayo Santa Maria is a top choice.</p>
<p><b>Beaches</b></p>	<p><b>Varadero</b> is Cuba's premier beach resort destination, and it ranks right up there with the best in the Caribbean. If you're looking for a well-run all-inclusive resort loaded with amenities and activity options, Varadero is a good choice, with a 21km stretch of nearly uninterrupted beach. If you prefer less commercialized beach destinations, consider the various Cayo destinations along the north coast.</p>
<p><b>Wildlife</b></p>	<p><b>Bird-Watching in the Zapata Peninsula:</b> A dedicated (and lucky) bird-watcher might be able to spot 18 of Cuba's 22 endemic species in the swamps, mangroves, and wetlands of the Zapata Peninsula. In addition to the endemics, ornithologists and lay bird-watchers can spot over 100 other varieties of shore birds, transients, and waterfowl in this rich, wild region. Other top bird-watching destinations include La Güira National Park, as well as the areas around Cayo Coco and Cayo Guillermo and Baracoa.</p> <p><b>Cayo Largo:</b> In the Archipelago de los Canarreos, off the south coast, 177 km southeast of Havana; 38 sq km, 26 km long, 2 km wide; glittering white sands faced by turquoise waters; 200 shipwrecks in the area, shallow coral reefs; wildlife: turtles, iguanas, cranes, flamingos, bee hummingbirds; Playa Paraiso – nude beach; Cayo Iguana – home to 100's of friendly iguanas</p>
<p><b>Parks</b></p>	<p><b>Gran Parque Natural Montemar:</b> 4500 sq km, Peninsula de Zapata, vast wetland of mangroves, 160 birds species, 31 reptiles, 12 mammals, manatee sea-cows, hummingbirds, flamingos, parrots, Apr/May red land crabs swarm in their 10,000's</p> <p><b>The Viñales Valley:</b> This broad, flat valley is punctuated by a series of limestone karst hill formations, or mogotes. The views from the small mountains surrounding the valley are spectacular. The area offers great opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, bird-watching, and rock climbing, as well as caves to explore.</p> <p><b>Sierra del Rosario Biosphere Reserve:</b> (100 km west of Havana) The mountainous region between Havana and Pinar del Río is another prime destination in the country's budding eco-tourism industry. With both the Sierra del Rosario Biosphere Reserve and La Güira National Park, as well as eco-tourism projects in Soroa and at Las Terrazas, the area offers a wealth of opportunities to explore the flora and fauna of Cuba's inland mountain forests. Add the sulfurous mineral springs of San Diego de los Baños into the mix, and you've got the perfect recipe for some nature-based rest and relaxation. Declared a UNESCO biosphere reserve in 1985, the 25,000-hectare (nearly 62,000-acre) Sierra del Rosario encompasses a mountainous area of rapidly</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	recovering secondary tropical deciduous forests, cut with numerous rivers and waterfalls. Nearly 100 species of birds can be spotted here, including over half of Cuba's 22 endemic species.
<b>Gardens</b>	<b>Parque Josone</b> in Varadero is a beautifully maintained little city park with cool shady grounds and gardens.
<b>Castles/Forts</b>	<b>Castillo de la Real Fuerza, Havana:</b> a well-preserved 16th-century fort sits within a broad cloverleaf moat. This is the oldest fort in Havana, and the oldest surviving fort in the hemisphere. It was a failure, built too small and too far from the harbor entrance to be of much use, but crossing over the old drawbridge and walking around the ancient stone battlements gives a great sense of history.

<b>OTHER ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>Shopping</b>	Highlights of Cuban craftsmanship include articles made from leather, vegetable fibers, wood, stone, metal and coal as well as traditional clothing such as Cuban hats and "guayaberas", beautifully cool, comfortable shirts made from pure linen, and select Cuban tobacco products such as Havana cigars. There are nine shopping centres in Varadero where beautiful examples of Cuban craftsmanship can be found as well as delicious local produce. They are generally open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m
<b>Markets</b>	<b>Havana:</b> The biggest and best street market in Havana features three narrow rows of stalls stretching over a full city block. It's open daily from 10am to 6pm in Habana Vieja on Calle Tacón, between Calles Empedrado and Chacón. In addition to the typical arts and crafts and souvenir T-shirts, you'll find scores of local painters selling their wares. <b>Varadero:</b> There are several outdoor arts and craft markets around Varadero; the best, <b>Artesanía</b> , is at Avenida 1 and Calle 12. The Plaza de los Artesanos is also good. ARTex has stores at each of these sites, as well as at Avenida 1 and Calle 35. At each you will find a broad collection of trinkets, T-shirts, musical instruments, posters, and CDs.
<b>Nightlife</b>	<b>Tropicana, Havana:</b> This is the original and still reigning cabaret show in Cuba. The Tropicana has been at it for over 60 years and it shows no signs of slowing down. The sea of lithe dancers, the exuberance of their costumes, and the sheer excess of it all is worth the trip. It all occurs under the stars in the shadow of tall overhanging trees. There's a second Tropicana in Matanzas for visitors to Varadero, and another in Santiago. <b>El Gato Tuerto, Havana:</b> The mood is dark and bohemian, although the decor mixes Art Deco and kitsch in equal measure. The nightly show usually features three or four distinct acts, which can range from sultry boleros to up-tempo jazz. A storyteller, poet, or comedian might perform between sets. <b>La Zorra y El Cuervo, Havana:</b> This is Havana's best jazz club, and that's saying a lot. The vibe is mellow and unpretentious in this compact

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>basement club, but the music and acts are usually culled from the best Cuba has to offer.</p> <p><b>Habana Café</b>, Havana and Varadero: Mix the Tropicana with a Hard Rock Cafe, and Habana Café is more or less what you'd get. The floor show is a mix of cabaret-style dance numbers and slightly burlesque comedic bits, all anchored by a top-notch big band. After the show, the dance floor swings and writhes for hours</p>
<b>Casinos</b>	There are no casinos in Cuba – unlike pre-Castro days when the Mob used to run a plethora of raunchy casino establishments!!

<b>CUISINE</b>	
<b>Food</b>	<p>Cuban cuisine is influenced by Spanish, African, indigenous and other cultures. The national dish is <b>ajiaco</b>, a stew of assorted root vegetables cooked with pork, poultry or beef. Other typical dishes are lechón (roast pork), fried green plantains (tachinos, chatinos or tostones), black beans, congrí (rice with red beans), moros y cristianos (rice with black beans), picadillo a la habanera (ground beef in tomato sauce), roast chicken and tamales among others. The Cuban sweet tooth ensures that each meal includes dessert.</p>
<b>Wine</b>	<p><b>Rum</b> Cuban national cocktails include the <b>Cuba Libre</b> (rum and cola) and the <b>Mojito</b> (rum, lime, sugar, mint leaves, club soda and ice). If you request a rum in a small country restaurant do not be surprised if it is only available by the bottle. Havana Club is the national brand and the most popular. Expect to pay \$4 for three year old white rum or \$8 for seven year old dark rum. In Cardenas is the <b>Arrechabala Rum Factory</b>, where the brand Havana Club was born and where present-day Varadero and Buccanero rums are made. Tours of the factory are given daily between 9am and 4pm; admission is \$3.</p> <p><b>Beer</b> <b>Cristal</b> is a light beer and is available in "dollar" stores where Cubans with CUCs and visitors may shop. Cubans prefer the Bucanero Fuerte, which at 5.5% alcohol is a strong (hence the "fuerte") darker beer. Both Cristal and Bucanero are brewed by a joint venture with Labatts of Canada, whose beer is the only Cuban beer sold in CUC.</p>
<b>Restaurants</b>	<p>The best restaurants are within the major resorts, but good food will also be found in <b>paladares</b> (locally owned restaurants in private homes). Restaurants in Varadero: Mi Casita – Cuban style seafood; El Bodegon – Creole cooking; La Casa de Antiguiedades – best in town; Nightlife: La Cueva de Pirata – Latin music; Casa du Pont – quiet piano bar and gorgeous views</p>

<b>MORE INFO</b>	
<b>Brochures</b>	<b>Transat Holidays Sun 2011-2012</b>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<b>Nolitours Sun 2011-2012</b> Both of these brochures are available now at your local travel agent.
<b>Websites</b>	<a href="http://www.transatholidays.com">www.transatholidays.com</a> <a href="http://www.nolitours.com">www.nolitours.com</a> <a href="http://www.barcelo.com">www.barcelo.com</a> <a href="http://www.gocuba.ca">www.gocuba.ca</a>
<b>AIRLINE PRIZE PARTNER</b>	Air Transat
<b>Flight details</b>	Transat has many flights from across Canada to all the major destinations in Cuba – see the earlier section for full details. Flight times are 3 to 4 hours.
<b>PERSONAL EXPERIENCES</b>	Several trips to Cuba including visits to: Havana, Varadero, Holguin, Cayo Largo, Cayo Coco and Trinidad

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.