



# DOMINICAN REPUBLIC Vallejo Central (CA) Adventist Church Team



**Location:** Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

**Project Dates:** July 16-27, 2015

**Project Participation:** \$700

*Flight to Santo Domingo is not included in the participation fee*

## Information Packet

Thank you for your interest in this project. While this is a mission trip being organized through Maranatha, members of the Vallejo Central Seventh-day Adventist Church will be coordinating project details and leadership; all participants will be joining their team. For more information, please contact Lenson Wong, project coordinator, at (510) 367-9107 or email him at [lenarlwong@gmail.com](mailto:lenarlwong@gmail.com).

## Maranatha In The Dominican Republic

Maranatha's history with the Dominican Republic stretches back over three decades. The first contact with the country was made when Maranatha volunteers helped to construct churches and homes that were destroyed when a devastating hurricane hit the island in 1979.

Then in 1992, Maranatha embarked on an ambitious project to build 25 churches in Santo Domingo. Called Santo Domingo '92, more than 1,200 volunteers flew to the Dominican Republic in a period of three months to build. It was a watershed moment, and it changed how Maranatha operated as an organization. Santo Domingo '92 was also a significant moment in the Dominican Republic's Adventist history as the project resulted in a membership surge. The churches sprouted daughter congregations, and then those groups needed buildings too.

Maranatha returned in 2002 for another effort, building 50 churches. Once again, construction generated another growth in membership. Today the Adventist Church in the Dominican Republic has requested Maranatha's help in providing more places of worship for new congregations.

### Project Schedule

**Thursday, July 16**

Arrival in Santo Domingo  
Orientation and partial work-day

**Friday, July 17**

Work day, including clinic and VBS

**Saturday, July 18**

Worship with the local congregation  
Excursion to Los Tres Ojos Park

**Sunday, July 19 – Friday, July 24**

Work days

**Saturday, July 25**

Worship with the local congregation  
Excursion to Adventist University in Bonao

**Sunday, July 26**

Excursion to Isla Catalina

**Monday, July 27**

Departure from Santo Domingo

# Project Overview

Volunteers on this project will be building a church for a congregation in San Isidro, called Paraiso Escogido, just outside the eastern part of Santo Domingo. Three years ago, the congregation started as a church plant and met in a small, rented facility. When they received word that a Maranatha team would be building a new church for them, they ended their lease at the beginning of the year. Unfortunately, the project was postponed, and Paraiso Escogido had to extend their lease. However, the rent is high, and the congregation is struggling to keep up with the cost.

Now, a new team will be headed to Santo Domingo to finally build a church for Paraiso Escogido. In addition to construction, there will be a dental clinic, led by dentists and hygienists on our volunteer team. The local ADRA dental clinic coordinator will be providing support for this effort. There will also be a Vacation Bible School (VBS) and health ministry outreach. Volunteers are needed to support all of these ministries.

## Accommodations

Volunteers will stay at a modern hotel called La Tropicana. Each room will sleep two to five people, depending on the room size. The rooms are furnished with beds, linens, and towels. Each room has a private bathroom with shower and air-conditioning. There may be a few additional cots that we bring to the rooms to accommodate all of the volunteers. There is a pool and a large open area for our use. The hotel has a large open area for meals and evening worships. There is also an onsite kitchen that we will use to prepare meals.

## Excursion

**Los Tres Ojos** | Also known as “The Three Eyes,” this open-air limestone cave is a series of three lakes fed by underground rivers.

**Dominican Adventist University** | On the second Sabbath, volunteers will tour the Adventist University campus, located in Bonao visit The Adventist University in Sonador, Bonao, in central Dominican Republic. We'll also visit some waterfalls nearby.

**Santo Domingo** | Volunteers will have a chance to walk through the colonial district of Santo Domingo. You'll have an option to take a colonial tour at your own cost, view the sites on your own, or shop for souvenirs.

**Isla Catalina** | At the end of the project, the group will take a two-hour bus trip to La Romana and take a chartered catamaran to Isla Catalina. The tour will include snorkeling, lunch on the beach, and relaxing. Certified divers can also scuba dive.

## Leadership

<b>Lenson Wong</b>	<b>Project Coordinator</b>
<b>Dale Hamlin</b>	<b>Construction Superintendent</b>
<b>Johan Paredes</b>	<b>Maranatha's Volunteer Support</b>

## Expenses

The participation fee covers housing for ten nights, three vegetarian meals a day, ground transportation to and from the airport and project site, local excursions, and secondary accident insurance.

Please submit your completed registration as soon as possible. Payment and all forms are due by June 1, 2015. Wait for confirmation of acceptance on the project before purchasing your plane ticket.

If you are fundraising or receiving donations, please have them sent directly to you or work with your local church treasurer to collect funds and issue tax-deductible receipts. If your church will not work with you, please wait until you have collected the full amount of your participation fee before submitting your payment to Lenson Wong.



All checks should be made out to the Vallejo Central Adventist Church.

**Mailing address for checks:**

**Lenson Wong**  
**302 Scotts Valley**  
**Hercules, CA 94547**

Or you can pay online at [www.vcsdachurch.com](http://www.vcsdachurch.com). Click on the “Online Giving” link in the upper right hand corner of the homepage. The funds should be entered in the “mission trip” category.

**Estimate of Additional Costs**

- Flight to Santo Domingo \$700– 1,000
- Passport \$130 new or \$110 for renewal
- Tourist Card \$10 (paid upon arrival in Santo Domingo)

## About The Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic is a beautiful tropical country, located on the island of Hispaniola. The landscape boasts sandy, white beaches and lush green mountains that make it the second most popular destination in the Caribbean after Puerto Rico. Visitors flock to the island to indulge in fancy resorts and year-round golf courses.

Yet a look beyond the tourist attractions reveals a nation with a rich history that is not so picturesque. The Dominican Republic lies on the eastern part of an island that it shares with Haiti. Originally, the entire land mass was inhabited by the indigenous tribe of Taínos. The Spanish colonized it in the late 1400s, making it the first permanent European settlement in the Americas. Hispaniola suffered centuries of a tug-of-war between the French and Spanish. In 1804, the Spanish ceded the western third of the island to the French, and that portion of the island became Haiti. The remaining land became the Dominican Republic, which gained independence in 1844.

Since then, the Dominican Republic has had a turbulent history with ownership returning to Spain only to have a war to regain independence. The country also fell into the hands of a dictator from 1930-1961. Today, the Dominican Republic is a democracy, working toward maintaining a stable and healthy country. Tourism fuels its economy, and it has the second largest economy in Central America and the Caribbean. However, in the rural areas of the country, poverty continues to be a problem, particularly near the Dominican-Haitian border.

Given its history with colonization, the country’s culture is a blend of several influences. Spanish architecture is evident in areas of Santo Domingo, particularly in its cathedrals and cobblestone streets. Merengue, the national music and dance, is ubiquitous in the Dominican Republic, and it originated from slaves who worked in the sugar beet fields, their feet connected to each other by chains. Baseball, an American export, is an obsession for people of all ages and children can be seen playing games wherever there is space.

## Travel

Volunteers will fly into Santo Domingo (see below). Upon exiting customs, Maranatha representatives will meet volunteers, and the group will travel by bus to the hotel.

### Plane Tickets

Please wait until you are confirmed for this project before purchasing your plane ticket.

**Arrival** | Arrive in Santo Domingo (airport code SDQ) on Thursday, July 16, preferably in the morning.

**Departure** | Depart from Santo Domingo (SDQ) in the afternoon of Monday, July 27.



### Facts and Figures

**Capital:**  
**Santo Domingo**

**Population:**  
**10,088,598**

**Language:**  
**Spanish**

**Climate:**  
**Tropical maritime. Little seasonal temperature variation**

**Religion:**  
**95% Roman Catholic**

**Currency:**  
**Dominican Peso (approximately 41 pesos to \$1 USD)**

## Travel Resources

**Azumano Travel:** 800-454-4099 or by email with Erle at [edpenha@azumano.com](mailto:edpenha@azumano.com)

**Butler Travel:** 503-879-5005 or by email with Ellen at [ellen@butlertravel.com](mailto:ellen@butlertravel.com) or Nathanael at [nathan@butlertravel.com](mailto:nathan@butlertravel.com)

**Kayak:** [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com)

When contacting the Azumano or Butler travel agencies, be sure to mention Maranatha for the best fares.

## Entry Requirements

All passports must be valid for at least six months from the dates of intended travel (January 15, 2015). If you do not have a passport, U.S. citizens can apply at any U.S. post office or online at <http://travel.state.gov>. Canadian citizens can apply online at [www.passport.gc.ca](http://www.passport.gc.ca). It can take up to two months to complete the entire process, so plan accordingly to give yourself enough time to receive your passport.

In addition to a passport, visitors must purchase a tourist card upon arrival in the country. There will be stations at the airport to make this purchase. The fee is \$10 and must be paid in U.S. currency. Please bring new, unmarked bills to make this transaction. This tourist card will act as your visa for up to 60 days in the country.

Citizens of other countries, please consult the Dominican embassy or consulate in your home country for entrance requirements.

## Staying Healthy

Maranatha requires that every volunteer have a current tetanus vaccine (within the last ten years). The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also recommend vaccines for hepatitis A and B, typhoid, and an anti-malarial medication. Go to their website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) for more information.

There is a widespread risk of malaria for the entire island; however, it is not common in Santo Domingo. Mosquitos are prevalent throughout the island, and even though the locals say that they don't carry malaria, Maranatha recommends that you speak with a medical professional about options regarding malaria prevention. Mosquitos are also known for carrying the Caribbean disease, Chikungunya, so we recommend that you take personal precautions such as wearing long pants and using insect repellent to avoid being bitten.

Please check with a health care professional or travel clinic to decide which vaccines are best for you.

## How To Register

Please complete the attached Information Form and Medical Review form and mail or email to Lenson Wong for confirmation to join this group.

**Lenson Wong**  
**302 Scotts Valley**  
**Hercules, CA 94547**  
**(510) 367-9107**  
[lenarlwong@gmail.com](mailto:lenarlwong@gmail.com)



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