



Caribbean Island Walking - Dominica

DOMINICA - TRIP CODE WD
WALKING AND TREKKING

Why book this trip?

Often named the 'Nature Island', Dominica's dramatic interior of forest-covered mountains, spectacular waterfalls and bubbling hot springs is perfect for exploring on foot. The lush scenery and wild nature make this a Caribbean holiday with a difference.

- **Boiling Lake** - Hike to one of the world's largest hot springs, a showcase of nature's might
- **Middleham Falls** - Take a dip under this cascade in the heart of the rainforest
- **Syndicate** - Hike on this nature trail, home to the endemic Sisserou parrot

**INCLUDED MEALS**

Breakfast: 8
Lunch: 1

**TRIP STAFF**

Explore Tour
Leader
Activity Guide(s)
Driver(s)

**TRANSPORT**

Bus

**ACCOMMODATION**

2 nights
comfortable
guesthouse
6 nights
comfortable hotel

**WALKING**

GRADE:
Moderate

**GROUP SIZE:**

12 - 18

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in Canefield (Roseau)

Arrive in Canefield, a suburb of Dominica's colourful capital, Roseau.

For those arriving on time our Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at approximately 6pm for the welcome meeting and, for those who wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner. There are no other activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Canefield at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into Douglas-Charles International Airport (DOM), which is a one-hour drive. Should you miss the welcome meeting, your Leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up, and will leave a note at the hotel reception with details on tomorrow's timings.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, our hotel is around six kilometres from the capital, overlooking the coast, and taxis or buses are easy to find.

**ACCOMMODATION:**

Bayport Residence Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Hike the hills behind Soufriere village; optional afternoon snorkelling

We drive south this morning, towards the tumbledown village of Soufriere, its colourful houses cascading down the hillside in a ramshackle fashion, ending with a brightly-painted church on the seashore. Our walk begins just outside the village, on a track that turns in steep switchbacks up into the hills towards the small township of Galion. This section of the walk is the steepest, but with great views out towards Soufriere Bay, and dotted with star fruit, mango and cashew trees. After the ascent, we continue on a mixture of rural roads and countryside tracks, with impressive views of the Palmiste ridge and other peaks in front of us. The paths can be overgrown, covered with wild tropical plants like yams, and with some coconut palms springing up around us. The last part of our walk takes us down a rough road back to the town of Soufriere, where we'll have some time to explore.

On the drive back to our hotel, we pass Champagne Beach, a rocky beach that is so called because of hot springs that percolate up through the sea water like champagne in a glass. There is some excellent snorkelling here, so we will make a stop to swim - snorkelling equipment is usually available to rent on the spot but you may wish to bring your own just in case.

Today's five kilometre walk is expected to take around two hours.



ACCOMMODATION:

Bayport Residence Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Walk in the rainforest to Middleham Falls and the Freshwater Lake

We drive into the mountainous interior of Dominica today, towards the Morne Trois Pitons National Park and the rainforest trails in the centre of the island. Our first point of call is the Freshwater Lake, the largest of Dominica's lakes that lies in the cloud forest almost 800 metres above sea level. The lake was dammed for hydroelectric power in the 90s and now provides much of the island's electricity. We start gaining height immediately with a climb; wooden steps have been created for traction as the path is often muddy. We're walking around a caldera, and once the climb levels out, we have impressive views not only of the lake but also the surrounding mountains and the east coast.

After looping around the lake, we get back in the vehicle and drive to the Middleham Falls trailhead, which leads us into the heart of the rainforest. The trail begins with a fairly long and steep ascent, crossing several streams and through vegetation including enormous tree ferns, bromeliads and buttress-

root trees. We're going through rainforest, so the trail will be muddy and slippery. It ends at a platform that gives us excellent views of the falls, which drop around 80m into a large pool. Depending on the weather we may see other people swimming in the pool - this is possible to do if we wish, and the final descent to the very base of the falls is a rocky scramble down. After some time here to take in the might of the falls, we hike out the way that we came in.

Today's walks total 10 kilometres, and are expected to take approximately two hours each.



ACCOMMODATION:

Le Petit Paradis (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Guesthouse



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Full day hike to the Boiling Lake

Today we have the toughest, but most iconic walk of the whole trip. At 63 metres across, Dominica's Boiling Lake is the second-largest in the world, and bubbles away at the end of a diverse and awe-inspiring trail. We start at the Titou Gorge, and climb steadily for around 45 minutes. The rainforest environment means that this is perhaps the muddiest part of the hike, and care should be taken both during the ascent and descent. After crossing Breakfast River (so called because this is where most people stop for their first snack!), we continue back up steeply, until we reach the summit ridge and our descent into the valley begins. The landscape here completely changes, and we enter the Valley of Desolation, a barren, steaming landscape of yellow and orangey-coloured rocks, and bubbling hot springs. From here it's a short uphill again to the lake, a massive cauldron of bubbling water that appears when the clouds of vapour part in the wind. After hiking for around three hours, we will spend some time at the lake before returning back the way we came.

This hike is undoubtedly the most challenging on the island, steep and muddy in parts, rocky and windy in others. Yet it is amazingly diverse, with dense rainforest emerging onto ridge lines, steaming fumaroles and sulphur springs dotted around a vast barren wilderness. It's a big achievement for those who hike it. For anyone who would prefer not to do this day hike, there is the option to remain at our guesthouse - there are hot springs for bathing within walking distance, or other trails that you may be able to explore in the vicinity. The hot pools may still be open when the hikers return, so we have the opportunity to sooth our aching legs in the warm waters this evening.

Today's 13 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately seven hours, with 600 metres of ascent and descent.



ACCOMMODATION:
Le Petit Paradis (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Guesthouse



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 5 - Swim in the Emerald Pool and visit Spanny Falls

After yesterday's exertion, we plan to take it easy today with a day for sightseeing and swimming opportunities. The Emerald Pool is hidden in secondary rainforest, with a small cascade falling into an emerald-blue swimming hole. The pool is just a five-minute flat walk from the car park. After some time here, we take the short drive to Spanny Falls, another forest-clad cascade that drops into a beautifully-located pool. The southern interior of Dominica is full of these freshwater swimming locations, and after making the most of our time here, we finally leave the rainforest and drive back to the coast for the second half of our trip.

Despite being off the beaten track by Caribbean standards, Dominica still has a small cruise industry, and the Emerald Pool is a popular excursion for cruise passengers. If necessary, the Tour Leader may make changes to try and avoid us meeting cruise groups, but any changes will be communicated to you during the trip.



ACCOMMODATION:
Tamarind Tree Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Walk through the Syndicate Nature Trail to the coast

Dominica is the only island in the Caribbean that has developed a designated trail all the way across the island; called the Waitukubuli National Trail, it is split into 14 segments that vary in length and difficulty.

Today we will be hiking on segment 10 of the trail, an easy hike that takes us past the Syndicate Nature Trail, where endemic Sisserou and Jaco Parrot may be spotted. This part of the trail is secondary forest, very different to the time that we spent in the rainforest, and we also pass by agricultural land full of fruit trees like pineapple and mango. From Syndicate, we descend slowly towards the coast, where the hiking takes us past wild rivers and remnants of the old railway that once traversed the island.

Being on the coast, we should be able to try some Caribbean fish or coconut prawns this evening. Dominica's food is typically Creole, with lots of ground provisions (yams, plantains, potatoes) and barbecue chicken or grilled snapper the headline act on many menus. We are in the Caribbean though, so service is slow and laid back. We advise you to slow down to their rhythm, and go with it!

Today's 13 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately six hours, with 300 metres of ascent and 750 metres of descent.



ACCOMMODATION:
Portsmouth Beach Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Explore the north coast on foot, from Penville to Toucarie

We have our first introduction to the northern coastline of Dominica today, as we hike on Section 13 and part of Section 14 of the Waitukubuli Trail from Penville to Toucarie. This trail is one of the most diverse, crossing through dense forest, rich agricultural land and small villages en route as well as, if the weather is right, giving us outstanding views of the neighbouring French island of Guadeloupe. The jutting peninsula of Cabrits National Park is within our sights for much of the final stretch, along with miles of the blue Caribbean Sea. We finish at the small village of Toucarie.

Today's seven kilometre walk is expected to take approximately four hours, with 150 metres of ascent and 450 metres of descent.



ACCOMMODATION:
Portsmouth Beach Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel





SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Walk in Cabrits National Park and visit Fort Shirley; optional Indian River boat trip

Fort Shirley, part of the Cabrits National Park, is located on a scenic peninsula just north of Portsmouth. The fort served as part of a network of defences along the Lesser Antilles during a series of conflicts between Britain and France in the 18th and 19th centuries, and is most famous for a revolt of the African slave soldiers in 1802, an event which would lead to the freeing of all 'British' slave soldiers in 1807. The forest is slowly encroaching and reclaiming some of the outlying buildings, but the main building has been rebuilt. We'll explore one of the trails in the national park on foot, towards Douglas Battery.

Our final afternoon is free to spend either relaxing on the beach, or there is the chance to take a boat trip down the 'Indian River', looking for wildlife including iguana, heron and crab. The river is narrow in parts, with mangroves dripping into the water - the eerie ambiance made it a perfect location for filming some of the scenes from Pirates of the Caribbean. A stop at the bush bar for a juice or a rum punch is a well-deserved end to the trip.

Today's three kilometre walk is expected to take approximately one-and-a-half hours.



ACCOMMODATION:
Portsmouth Beach Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 9 - Trip ends in Picard

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Picard.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Picard at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day, luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel, giving you some extra time at the beach. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from Douglas-Charles International Airport (DOM) which is approximately one hour away from our hotel.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and country information

Dominica

Climate

Daytime temperatures are in the 70's December to March and in the 80's April - June. Whatever the season, the climate is tempered by off shore breezes and the sea is pleasant to swim in year round. When visiting the rainforest be prepared for short sharp downpours at any time of the year. The hurricane season in the Caribbean officially runs from June to November, often peaking in September. However, as the frequency and intensity of the hurricanes is impossible to predict from year to year, we still plan operate our tours during this period. In the event of a hurricane occurring during your trip, your safety is our top priority. In accordance with local regulations and with the assistance of our local groundhandling agents, we may have to evacuate to another part of the island or have to remain in the same place for a number of days while the storm passes. This could result in a certain amount of disruption to the itinerary of your tour on the ground, or to your flights and, on very rare occasions when a hurricane is predicted to hit in advance of travel, we may even have to cancel your tour.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
-4	2 round pins	Mainly Christian	English

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Champagne Reef snorkelling - Equipment hire US\$10

Hot springs at Wotton Waven - US\$20

Indian River - US\$15

Clothing

Bring light and comfortable clothing. Tops made from wicking materials which keep you drier are recommended as a base layer, as well as walking trousers or shorts. Trousers that zip off into shorts are really versatile as you may prefer fully covered legs when walking through forest, to avoid scratches. A waterproof jacket is essential at all times.

- Breathable wind and waterproof jacket (you may also wish to bring waterproof trousers)
- T-shirts
- Long sleeved tops
- Sunhat
- Long trousers
- Shorts (if you prefer to walk in them)
- Swimwear and towel
- Socks (liner and thicker pair)
- Thin fleece or jumper for the evenings

Footwear

We recommend you bring walking boots with ankle support - leather or fabric are both fine. Make sure that your boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. Also trainers or sandals for relaxing and general wear. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them - should your luggage be lost or delayed, your own boots are the one thing that will be irreplaceable.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

Bring one main piece of luggage and a 20-30 litre day sack is recommended. You will need to carry what you need for the day which may include a raincoat, jumper, camera, sun-cream, water and picnic lunch. On hot days you will carry fewer clothes but more drinking water.

Equipment

- Sun glasses
- Sun cream
- Camera
- Walking poles (if you usually use them)
- Personal toiletries
- Personal first aid kit - On each walk a first aid kit is carried but you should have your own blister kit, supply of plasters, aspirin and other essentials.
- Insect repellent
- Small waterproof dry bag (for items such as your mobile phone)
- Reusable water bottle (minimum 1 litre) - Get 15% discount on a Water-to-Go bottle www.explore.co.uk/about-us/responsible-travel/water-to-go-discount-with-explore

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, your leader may organise a group's tips kitty for included activities and meals and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow US\$ 30, approx. \$80 East Caribbean Dollar, for group tipping

For all non-included services and meals on your trip please tip independently at your discretion.

Dominica

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£12	£21	£1.7	£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

East Caribbean Dollar(XCD) / USD

Recommended Currency For Exchange

You can choose to either change your money in advance or on arrival at the airport. Here you will find both ATMs and Bureau de Change. The exchange rate with the XCD is approximately XCD 2.40 to the British Pound. Please check on line for up to date information Although the currency of St Lucia and Dominica is the East Caribbean dollar. US dollars are readily exchangeable and accepted everywhere.

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

ATMs can be found in the major towns and cities for cash withdrawals in XCD (East Caribbean Dollars). Always have some cash back up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit card are widely accepted in many shops and restaurants but some may be subject to a service charge

Travellers Cheques

We do not recommend Travellers Cheques

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus

Accommodation notes

Dominica's range of accommodation for groups is very limited. Most properties are small B&Bs and guesthouses, leaving little choice for group bookings. However, we have selected a range of comfortable accommodation that is perfect for exploring the island. In the rainforest we stay at a family-run guesthouse that caters to nature-lovers and walkers, with outstanding views into the forest. On the coast, our accommodation gives us access to the beach and fantastic scenery. Caribbean capitals are relatively non-descript, so in Roseau we've chosen a hotel situated a little out-of-town that looks over the coast, but with easy access by vehicle or bus into the city if you wish.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Dominica: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens.

Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

USA (If flights transit): you will need to apply for an ESTA if you are transiting the USA as you will have to

disembark and clear immigration before re-boarding for the onward flight. Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done online - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be refused boarding. When completing an application for transit you should enter the words 'In Transit' with your final destination location in the address line. You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover. If you have visited Libya, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Syria or Yemen since March 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA. If you are a citizen of a country not included in the VWP you cannot apply for an ESTA. In both cases, you will instead need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel. For further information please check out the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

Canada (in transit): An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from

the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them [here](#).

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Dominica

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, TB, infectious hepatitis and

polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Walking and Trekking information

DAILY DISTANCES		
Day 2	5km	2hrs
Day 3	10km	4hrs
Day 4	13km	7hrs
Day 5		
Day 6	13km	6hrs
Day 7	7km	4hrs
Day 8	3km	1.5hrs

Walking grade

Moderate

Trek details

Walks on 6 days for between 1.5 and 7 hours on well-trodden forest and coastal trails. Maximum altitude 800m.

Additional Information



Why book this trip

This trip offers an alternative to the usual Caribbean all-inclusive resorts and days spent on the beach. Dominica is by far the most 'authentic' island in the Caribbean - locals commonly tell you that it's the one island that Christopher Columbus would still recognise if he sailed through the Caribbean again, over 500 years later. A walking holiday here combines rainforest and hidden waterfalls, with coastal views and tasty seafood. Its lush interior makes Dominica the best island in the Caribbean for exploring on foot.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**