



Hurricane Maria moves away from the Dominican Republic without causing major damage to the tourist destinations

The US National Hurricane Center has discontinued the meteorological alerts for Punta Cana, La Romana-Bayahibe, Juan Dolio, Santo Domingo and Barahona

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic – September 22, 2017— Hurricane Maria continues its northwest trajectory, moving away from Dominican Republic without having a direct impact on the country's tourism industry.

The US National Hurricane Center maintains a hurricane alert for the northern coast of Dominican Republic, which includes destinations such as Puerto Plata, Sosua, Cabarete and Samana. Weather conditions are expected to improve as of tonight.

"In the north, the situation is under control despite intermittent rains and moderate winds that have caused some trees to fall," said Julio Almonte, Vice Minister of Tourism of the Dominican Republic's Northern Zone. "We have toured the area and can report that the hotel infrastructure has not suffered any damage and that electricity and water services are working. The roads are operational and Gregorio Luperón Airport was not affected."

As for the airports of Punta Cana, La Romana and Samana, the Dominican Institute of Civil Aviation (IDAC) ordered the resumption of operations today. The flight schedule in the country is expected to return to normal within the next few hours.

As of last week, the hotel industry activated hurricane management protocols to deal with any effects of the storm.

"So far, no significant damage is reported in the country's tourist destinations," said Joel Santos, president of the National Hotel and Tourism Association of the Dominican Republic (ASONAHORES). "There are cleaning and gardening crews operating to repair some of the things that wind and rain have affected, but fortunately there is nothing that the current protocols and established procedures have not helped us deal with."

Ernesto Veloz, president of the Association of Hotels and Tourism Projects of the East (ASOLESTE), said, "the hotel infrastructure of Punta Cana did not suffer considerable damage, with only the usual minor impact you would face with winds and rains of this nature. Hotel services are fully operational. Together with the Special Corps for Tourist Safety (CESTUR), we have traveled the area verifying the state of the highways and roads and the restoration of electricity in 1 / 2 GoDominicanRepublic.com <http://www.godominicanrepublic.com> affected areas." Similarly, Juan Bancalari, president of the Association of Hotels and Tourist Companies of Samana (AHETSA), commented that "Samana does not report major issues and vehicular traffic on the Northeastern Highway and Boulevard del Atlántico is back to normal. The hotel infrastructure in the area did not have significant damage, the electricity was reestablished in one of the areas that had been affected and the flooding on the boardwalk will be solved in the next hours."

For the Ministry of Tourism of the Dominican Republic (MITUR), the welfare and safety of our visitors is a priority. Therefore, we will be vigilant and alert of the situation until the hurricane leaves the Caribbean and will be providing updates as required.

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