



# Dominican Republic

## Has it all

### **UNESCO Declares Dominican Republic Merengue an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity** *Designation honours and protects cultural traditions around the world*

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic – January, 2017 – The Dominican Republic Ministry of Tourism announced today the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared traditional Dominican merengue music and dance an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, a recognition of the beloved cultural value that is part of Dominican identity. This designation works to protect and persevere the merengue for future generations around the world.



“Receiving this international designation is truly an achievement for Dominican culture, because the merengue has been part of our identity for more than a century,” says Magaly Toribio, Marketing Advisor at the Ministry of Tourism of the Dominican Republic. “Merengue is a rhythm that identifies us as a country; it is part of our roots. This distinction from UNESCO confirms that our rhythm transcends borders, breaks language barriers and resonates in every corner of the world.”

Merengue is a cultural expression that is considered part of the everyday life for Dominicans and, over time, has become popular among other countries in the Caribbean, Latin America and across the world.

The merengue has influences in Spanish, African and indigenous cultures. The musical formation was composed by the "cuatro," guitar, guiro—a percussion instrument—and the tambourine. In 1870, the "cuatro" was replaced by the accordion and years later the saxophone, bass and piano were added.

Synonymous with joy, the merengue sound and dance is found in social gatherings, meetings and events. It has been shared throughout the world, thanks to individuals who spread it with their travelers, including: Joseíto Mateo, Juan Luis Guerra, Johnny Ventura, Milly Quezada, Wilfrido Vargas, Fernando Villalona, Rosario brothers and Eddy Herrera.



The Dominican Republic's various venues, festivals and concerts give life to merengue, where different generations dance to the sounds of the unique rhythm. The two popular events, Festival of Merengue in Santo Domingo, and Caribbean Rhythms of Puerto Plata, are celebrated by the masses each year. These festivals are an excellent opportunity for travelers to learn about Dominican values and experience the joy of the Dominican people.

This recognition continues to position Dominican Republic as the leading tourist destination in the Caribbean, characterized by beautiful landscapes, beaches and a remarkable cultural richness that is celebrated around the globe. For more information, visit [www.godominicanrepublic.com](http://www.godominicanrepublic.com).

### **About Dominican Republic**

Surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean on the north and the Caribbean Sea on the south, our lush tropical and paradisiacal country boasts nearly 1,000 miles (1,609 km) of coastline, 250 miles (402 km) of the world's top beaches, magnificent resorts and hotels, and a variety of sports, recreation and entertainment options. Here you can dance to the pulse pounding thrill of the merengue, renew in our luxurious and diverse accommodations, explore ancient relics of centuries past, delight in delicious Dominican gastronomy or enjoy ecotourism adventures in our magnificent national parks, mountain ranges, rivers and beaches. Known for our warm and hospitable people, Dominican Republic is a destination like no other, featuring astounding nature, intriguing history and rich cultural experiences like music, art and festivals, plus uniquely Dominican specialties such as cigars, rum, chocolate, coffee, merengue, amber and Lorimar. Dominican Republic features the best beaches, fascinating history and culture, and is a chosen escape for celebrities, couples and families alike.

Visit Dominican Republic Ministry of Tourism's official website at: [www.GoDominicanRepublic.com](http://www.GoDominicanRepublic.com).

<https://www.everfest.com/e/festival-del-merengue-santo-domingo-dominican-republic>

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