

# May 2025 Retreat Planning Guide



**1** **When does the retreat officially start and end?**  
Registration at the resort runs from 2–6 p.m. on May 17th, followed by dinner and a welcome reception. We recommend booking the first flight into either Puerto Plata (POP) or Santiago (STI) to ensure a timely arrival. The week will wrap up at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 24th.

**2** **What's the best airport to fly into?**  
The Puerto Plata Airport (POP) is located approximately 20 minutes from the Gran Ventana Beach Resort. The other option is the Santiago Airport (STI), located 1 hour and 30 minutes from Gran Ventana. The cost of ground transportation from STI is significantly more than from POP, so be sure arriving at STI is cost effective. Both airports have a limited number of arrival and departure flights. Plan to arrive on Saturday, May 17th in time for registration (2–6 p.m.) followed by dinner and the evening welcome session.

**3** **How do I arrange transportation to and from the airport?**  
You are responsible for arranging your own transportation to and from the airport. If you would like to schedule transportation ahead of time, please contact one of the following reputable taxi companies via **WhatsApp**. Scheduling a taxi ahead of time is not required as many certified taxis are available at the airport to transport you to the resort.

➤ Mitchell Musa  
(809) 552-0900  
mitchell.musa@turissimo.com  
www.turissimo.com

➤ Luis Llames at (809) 601-4149

You can expect to pay approximately \$45 one-way from Puerto Plata and \$125 one-way from Santiago. \*Please note that late-night taxi fares may be higher.

**4** **Do I need to provide CNS with my flight information?**  
Please provide us with your flight information via our **[flight information form](#)** so we have a good idea of when you will arrive at the resort. We want to give you a warm welcome and provide support if you run into any challenges.

**5** **What online form do I need to complete before I travel?**  
You need to fill out the Dominican Republic E-ticket before traveling. You can find the online form **[here](#)**. To help you complete the form, you can **[watch this walkthrough video](#)**. You will need your passport and travel information to fill out the form. Be sure to select “English” in the top right corner of your computer screen to access the English version of the form. We encourage you to fill out the form for both your arrival and departure before your trip.

Note: The site is notoriously glitchy. We encourage you to fill out the form on your computer rather than your phone and try different browsers if you run into challenges. Make sure you save and have easy access to the QR code given to you upon completing the form. ***If you do not complete this form, you will not be allowed to board your plane.***

**6** **What's the best way to call and text while in the Dominican Republic?**  
We suggest that at least one person from your party download WhatsApp. This is a free mobile device app that allows users to send text messages and make phone calls for free while traveling without an international phone plan. To be able to communicate with the CNS staff, it is important that you have WhatsApp.

You can learn how to install WhatsApp on your phone **[HERE](#)**.

*\*Please note that to use WhatsApp, you will need to connect to a wifi network.*



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**Do I need to exchange money before departing the US?**

No. At the resort, you can pay for everything in US dollars. If you would like to buy local crafts and souvenirs, it's best to exchange money, but you can do so at the airport or the resort.

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**Is there an ATM machine at the resort?**

There is an ATM at the resort that provides pesos. Additionally, if you would like to use USD, there is an ATM within a five-minute walk.

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**Is tipping necessary?**

You may encounter situations where you would like to offer a tip to those who assist you in some way (baggage transport, room cleaning, etc.). Though by no means mandatory, retreat participants at all past retreats have collectively pooled tips for the kitchen and waitstaff who attend to us all week and also for the school that we visit on our excursion. Follow the same tipping guidelines you would in your own country. Plan to bring bills for tipping throughout the week as desired.

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**Is there Wi-Fi at the resort?**

Yes, there is Wi-Fi. However, it may not be as high-speed as you are used to. Checking emails is no problem, but streaming videos and video calls may be harder. It is also easy with the resort Wi-Fi to make free international calls using WhatsApp. Just make sure to download the app.

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**Should I contact my bank and credit card company before traveling?**

Yes. Your bank and credit card company may not allow you to use your debit cards outside the country and may charge large service fees for you to use your credit card. Some banking institutions encourage the use of travel money cards. See what your bank recommends.

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**What kind of meals will be served?**

The meals are whole food, plant-based with no added oil. Minimal amounts of sweeteners and

salt will be used. Meals will be buffet style so participants can select the items that best fit their needs.

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**What should I pack?**

You will be alright with comfortable, casual warm-weather attire. There is no need for formal wear. It can be a bit cooler sometimes, so you should pack at least one pair of pants and a light sweater or jacket. Additionally, make sure to pack comfortable walking shoes and a raincoat. If you are a notetaker, be sure to include a notebook and writing utensil.

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**What will the weather be like?**

The average daily temperature during May ranges from low-70s to mid-80s (Fahrenheit), offering a warm and comfortable experience. However, it can get chillier once the sun sets, so pack a sweater. Occasional rain is normal, but the showers are usually short, so don't fret about a ruined vacation! The rain often comes as a welcome surprise during a hot day.

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**What type of electrical plugs are used in the Dominican Republic?**

The Dominican Republic uses 120V electricity at 60Hz. This is similar to the United States, which uses 110–120V at 60Hz, so you will only need adapters for your items if you are traveling from somewhere that uses different outlets.

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**What activities will be offered?**

There will be many fun opportunities throughout the week. You can choose each morning between optional movement activities like beach yoga, swimming, or walking. You will not need to sign up for these activities. There will also be two CNS-led excursions during the week—stay tuned for more information!



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**How much walking is involved in the two included excursions, and how should I dress?**

Both excursions are designed to accommodate a range of mobility levels. If you have concerns or questions related to accessibility, please reach out to [community@nutritionstudies.org](mailto:community@nutritionstudies.org). Comfortable walking shoes or walking/hiking sandals are acceptable footwear. Casual attire is appropriate for the mountaintop botanical garden, school, and chocolate factory. However, please note that the school dress code requires women to cover their shoulders (no tank tops but short sleeves are fine) and wear skirts or pants that cover their knees.

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**Are resort facilities and activities included in the Total Health Experience package?**

Retreat attendees have full access to the entire resort facilities, including all pools, bars, restaurants, and daily programming (water aerobics, music, dancing). Additionally, the resort offers many excursions and activities: golf, scuba diving, spa treatments, etc. You can book these directly through the hotel upon arrival. Please note that most of these resort offerings are an additional expense. Please contact the Gran Ventana Resort directly at +1 809-320-2111 using your international calling plan.

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**Is the water safe?**

The resort serves purified water in its bars and restaurants and uses purified water for preparing food and drinks in its kitchens. They also provide all guests two water bottles per day. Tap water is not good for drinking or brushing your teeth. You are encouraged to bring a refillable water bottle as there are multiple places to have it refilled with purified water.

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**Can I extend my stay either before or after the retreat dates?**

Yes. If you wish to arrive early or stay later than the days included in the retreat package, please email Esperanza directly at [reservasgv@vhr.com](mailto:reservasgv@vhr.com). If you have an international calling plan on your

phone, you can also reach her at +1 809-320-2111 ext. 4504. Let her know that you are registering for the event hosted by LeAnne Campbell and that you wish to stay in the same room for your entire stay. You will be expected to pay for the additional nights separately from your retreat registration.

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**If I choose to arrive early or stay later, are plant-based meals available?**

The resort will be preparing special meals for our event, starting with dinner on Saturday the 17th and ending with breakfast on the 24th. However, the resort's main buffet always has several plant-based options to choose from, including a pasta bar, fruit bar, salad bar, and several side dishes.

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**What's the refund policy?**

Cancellations received in writing on or before Friday, April 18th, 2025, for the May event, will be refunded the full registration fee, less a 10% administrative fee. No refunds will be issued thereafter. Substitute participants will be accepted up to the start date of the event.

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**What's included in the Total Health Experience?**

The program fee includes your week-long stay at the Gran Ventana Beach Resort, the use of its free amenities, three delicious whole food, plant-based meals every day, daily presentations and Q&A sessions with plant-based doctors, and fun activities with other participants in the immersion program. The program fee does not include airfare or the optional use of additional amenities at the resort (e.g., the spa or golf course).