



**SCHOOL BOARD
PRESENTATION**

— 2024 —



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Dominican Republic Highlights

February 14, 2025 - February 21, 2025

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Welcome to Explorica and thank you for your interest in student travel!

As a licensed tour operator, Explorica is proud to be able to give your students the opportunity of a lifetime! When your school travels with Explorica, you'll bring your classroom lessons to life and offer your students valuable exposure to a city outside of their hometown. It's an educational adventure for both you and your students.

Before we begin, here's a little more about us:

Founded in 2000, Explorica helps teachers create educational tours full of authentic, interactive learning experiences. We specialize in connecting teachers and students to new cultures, languages and people on educational tours across the globe.

We believe we can create a better world by enriching every student with a cultural experience through travel. We aim to be the product leader in educational travel, helping teachers and students discover the wonders of the world through safe and reliable tour experiences. And we do this with a passion for delighting customers and connecting travelers to the world.

Explorica's combination of exclusive online tools and personalized service enables us to create tours uniquely suited to provide both the best value and the most customized tours in the industry.

Every Explorica tour includes flights or bus transportation, accommodations, on-tour transportation, most meals and an expert, full-time Tour Director dedicated to your group. What's more, as a WorldStrides organization, we have a network of more than 45 offices around the globe. And with our veteran Program Consultants, Customer Care Representatives, and comprehensive, user-friendly website, we're always here to support you from the moment you contact us, to the minute you shout bon voyage!

Join more than one million teachers and students in experiencing the world on Explorica tours!

Happy travels!

Sincerely,

The Explorica by WorldStrides Team



Hotel information

Even though you'll be far from home, your comfort won't be compromised. That's because when you travel with Explorica, you'll stay in clean, safe, attractive hotels that provide modern amenities and easy access to major attractions.

It is Explorica's policy to accommodate students in safe and clean hotels. We follow the three "C"s for our hotels – clean, comfortable and convenient. Upgraded hotels are available upon request.

The selection of our hotels is based on proximity to tour sights, comfort, quality and safety. Students are roomed in either triple or quad accommodations based on the hotel availability. Students have the option to upgrade to twin rooming for \$45 per night. Paying adults (23 or older) are roomed in twin/double accommodations and a \$45 per night double/twin rooming supplement is included in the adult total cost (\$75 per night for cruises and ferries). Adults have the option to upgrade to a single room for an additional \$40 per night.

HOTEL SAMPLE SPECIFIC TO DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Hotel Sol Dominicus

Standard Hotel

Hotel Description

"Offering a terrace and year-round outdoor pool, Hotel Sol Dominicus is located in Bayahíbe. All hotel rooms include air conditioning and a flat-screen TV, while some offer views of the sea or the garden. All rooms have a private bathroom with a bath, bidet, free toiletries and a hair dryer. Hotel Sol Dominicus also offers free WiFi in all areas."

Group Leader Evaluations

"This hotel was definitely a highlight of the trip. There is an infinity salt-water pool on the edge of the ocean! Rooms were kept clean, the staff was friendly, and the food was great. There was a lot of attention to details."



Meal information

Explorica provides breakfast and dinner daily on all tours (unless otherwise indicated on your itinerary). Explorica makes sure all travelers have the opportunity to experience local cuisine with their meals, such as a tapas dinner in Spain, crêpes in France or wiener schnitzel in Germany.

Tour director

Your tour director is responsible for organizing the overall logistics of the trip. He or she will be with you from the beginning of the tour until the end to oversee the arrangements for all transportation, meals, accommodations and sightseeing. The tour director can also provide a wealth of information and suggestions for your free time. Local guides are your resource for detailed destination information and help supplement the travel experience.

Communication on tour

Explorica provides a Tour Diary for each group that travels. We were the first company to develop the diary and have been providing this service for 10 successful years. Our online Tour Diary lets parents and friends see pictures of the group as they travel, so they know their children are safe, happy, learning and having fun. Here is an example of a posting for a group that traveled on our Galápagos Islands tour in February 2017:

“Day 2 - Hello everyone! Today was a wonderful first day! After breakfast we went to visit the highlights of Quito, museums, churches, plazas, government palace, and more. Then we had lunch in a traditional restaurant of the old town, after that we went to the equator line; there we had fun practicing some experiments and some of us got a certification as ‘egg master.’ We went back to the hotel and at night kids had dinner, and finally it was time to prepare everything to Galapagos! Tomorrow we leave early. We’re having a great time!”



Safety and security

All tour directors come highly recommended with at least five years of experience in the industry. In addition to their safety expertise, we provide 24/7 emergency support, and have a global presence with over 45 offices around the world.

Explorica also offers each traveler the option to purchase the Travel Protection Plan at \$16/day or \$24/day for the Travel Protection Plan Plus.

Explorica has a \$50 million Liability Insurance Policy (see below). We can have the school information printed on the certificate before traveling.

We are a member of USTOA: United States Tour Operators Association's \$1 Million Travelers Assistance Program. As an Active Member of USTOA, Explorica, Inc. is required to post \$1 million with USTOA to be used to reimburse, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the USTOA Travelers Assistance Program, the advance payments of Explorica, Inc. customers in the unlikely event of Explorica, Inc. bankruptcy, insolvency or cessation of business. Further, the \$1 million posted by Explorica, Inc. may be sufficient to provide only a partial recovery of the advance payments received by Explorica, Inc. Complete details of the USTOA Travelers Assistance Program may be obtained by writing to USTOA at 275 Madison Avenue, Suite 2014, New York, New York 10016, by email to information@ustoa.com or by visiting their website at www.USTOA.com.

In addition to the USTOA, Explorica is affiliated with the following notable organizations: Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA), National Tour Association (NTA), European Tour Operators Association (ETOA), Better Business Bureau (BBB), International Air Transportation Association (IATA), World Youth Student & Educational (WYSE) Travel Confederation, British Educational Travel Association (BETA). We also partner with iJET, a leading worldwide security and risk management organization, for additional assistance in evaluating global conditions.



Liability policy

To Whom It May Concern,

We understand that many school officials have expressed concern about allowing their students to travel. We want to assure you that the safety of the tour participants is Explorica's number one priority and that we have policies and procedures in place to protect the school, school district, teachers and participants involved with this tour.

Explorica's liability insurance is one of the largest in the industry at \$50 million. This insurance coverage extends to cover certain individuals acting on behalf of Explorica as tour directors, program leaders, chaperones, and volunteer speakers. Your school can be named as additional insured, if desired.

We of course share your concern for the students' safety and peace of mind. Our optional Cancel for Any Reason travel protection plan provides medical, baggage and cancellation insurance coverage for our travelers. We also have a network of support staff in the United States as well as a 24-hour emergency service for groups and their families. We offer additional peace of mind for parents and friends of our travelers by providing an online Tour Diary that is updated with pictures and journal entries by the Tour Director throughout the trip.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, we would be happy to speak with you at any time. Please call us at 1.888.310.7120.

Sincerely,

Tim Sweeney

Chief Product Delivery Officer
Explorica by WorldStrides



Payment options

FULL PAYMENT

Pay in full at time of enrollment.

MONTHLY AUTOMATED PLAN

Pay your \$50 deposit plus any travel protection plan fees with a credit card or checking account upon enrollment, and the balance of your tour fee will be automatically charged to your card or debited from your account in equal monthly installments until 35 days prior to your departure date. Please note that you must make all payments by credit card, debit card or checking account. If two consecutive payments are returned NSF or declined, we will change your account to the 4-Step Manual Plan.

4-STEP MANUAL PLAN

Pay your \$99 deposit upon enrollment, and then pay \$500 toward your balance 30 days later. At 110 days prior to departure 75% of the balance is due. At 65 days prior to departure the remainder of the balance is due. You must make each payment manually.

GENERAL PAYMENT INFORMATION

We accept MasterCard, Visa, ACH checking account payments (and require a credit card or ACH payment for our monthly payment plan), money orders and personal checks. Please note personal checks are only accepted until 75 days prior to departure and ACH payments until 65 days prior to departure.

Each month we will automatically charge the credit cards or debit the checking accounts of participants who choose our monthly payment plan; we will send email reminders of payments due to all other participants approximately two weeks in advance of the payment due date. You will receive payment reminders only through email and not through the mail. Payments that are late are subject to a \$50 late fee. The date of payments is determined by the date of receipt at Explorica. If you are not paid in full by 75 days prior to your departure or do not meet the conditions of your payment plan, then your tour reservation will be cancelled (subject to standard cancellation policy).

Payments rejected due to insufficient funds, disputed by your credit company, returned to us by the drawer's bank, or returned due to a stop-payment order are subject to a \$35 non-refundable fee. We reserve the right to cancel reservations for any participant who does not meet his or her contractually obligated payment schedule. Any bounced checks are subject to a \$35 non-refundable fee.



Insurance policy

EXPLORICA'S TRAVEL PROTECTION PLANS

Through Trip Mate, our third-party travel protection plan provider, four out of five Explorica travelers protect their tours with our travel protection plans. Explorica offers two great plans that help protect your educational travel investment.

EXPLORICA'S TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN

Our standard travel protection plan covers you for the following events:

- ›A traveler's injury, sickness, or death of a family member
- ›Theft of passport or visas
- ›Flight cancellations due to strike or bad weather
- ›Loss of luggage and personal effects
- ›Trip cancellation or trip interruption due to covered reasons such as a covered sickness, illness, injury or death
- ›Trip cancellation or trip interruption due to terrorist acts, as defined

EXPLORICA'S TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN PLUS

Along with providing you the same benefits as our standard Travel Protection Plan, the Explorica Travel Protection Plan Plus also includes our exclusive Cancel For Any Reason Waiver Benefit. With our Cancel For Any Reason Waiver Benefit, if you cancel your trip for any reason not otherwise covered by this policy, we will reimburse you for 75% of the non-refundable cancellation fees which apply to your trip, provided:

- 1) Payment for this plan is received by Explorica within 14 days of your initial deposit/payment for your trip; and
- 2) You cancel your trip 48 hours (2) days or more before your scheduled trip departure date.

This Cancel For Any Reason Waiver Benefit does not cover: 1) penalties associated with any air or other travel arrangements not provided by Explorica; or 2) the failure of Explorica to provide the bargained-for travel arrangements due to cessation of operations for any reason.

The Cancel For Any Reason Waiver Benefit is provided by Explorica and is not an insurance benefit underwritten by United States Fire Insurance Company and must be purchased within 14 days of your initial payment for your trip.



Insurance policy cont.

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN BENEFITS

The following benefits apply to both of Explorica's high-quality Travel Protection Plans:

TRIP INTERRUPTION

If you have to interrupt your Explorica trip after departure due to a covered injury, sickness or death (your own or that of a traveling companion or a family member) or for other covered reasons such as: cancellation of arrangements by an airline due to strike or bad weather; a documented theft of passports or visas; or a terrorist incident which occurs in a city which is listed on the itinerary of your trip and within 30 days prior to your scheduled departure date for your trip, as defined, you will be reimbursed up to the trip cost for the unused, non-refundable land or water arrangements and the additional transport charges paid to return home or to rejoin your trip (limited to economy one-way airfare, or first class if your original tickets were first class).

TRAVEL DELAY

Reimburses up to \$100 per day (maximum of \$500) for reasonable accommodation and traveling expenses until travel becomes possible if you are delayed for 12 hours or more due to a covered reason such as a common carrier delay; injury, sickness or death of you or your traveling companion; quarantine; loss of passport, travel documents or money; or natural disaster.

MEDICAL EXPENSE/EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Provides reimbursement up to \$25,000 for reasonable and customary medical expenses incurred while on your trip; emergency dental treatment received during your trip, up to \$750; the costs for emergency transport to home or an appropriate hospital, including escort expense (both, if deemed necessary by the attending physician), for a covered injury or sickness which occurs while on your trip; or the cost of homeward carriage if deceased, up to \$50,000.



Insurance policy cont.

BAGGAGE & PERSONAL EFFECTS

Coverage up to \$2,000 for direct physical loss or damage to your baggage, passports or visas while on your trip. A \$600 maximum limit applies to jewelry, gems, watches, cameras and camera equipment, and furs; a \$300 per article limit applies to all other items. If, while on your trip, your baggage is delayed for more than 24 hours, we will reimburse you up to \$100 for the purchase of necessary additional clothing and personal articles.

PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS WAIVER

The plan exclusion for pre-existing conditions is waived if you purchase the plan within 14 days of your initial deposit/payment for your trip.

A "Certificate of Coverage" which provides complete details of the plan, including conditions, exclusions and limitations is available to you on our website under the Travel Protection Plan or at any time by request.

The Explorica Travel Protection Plan benefits are administered by: Trip Mate, Inc. (In CA, dba Trip Mate Insurance Agency), 9225 Ward Parkway, Suite 200, Kansas City, Missouri 64114; tel. 1.800.888.7292.

The Explorica Travel Protection Plan is underwritten by United States Fire Insurance Company, Morristown, NJ.

The cost for Explorica's Travel Protection Plan is \$16 per day of your tour, maximum \$224. This plan must be purchased at the time of enrollment, and cannot be refunded once selected.

The cost for Explorica's Travel Protection Plan Plus is \$24 per day of your tour, maximum \$336. This plan must be purchased at the time of enrollment, and cannot be refunded once selected.



Positive feedback

After every tour Explorica asks our program leaders to create an evaluation to judge our overall pre-tour, during tour, and post-tour performance as a company. Everything is judged and it is a great way to provide feedback for us to improve as a company. Oftentimes we are given such positive feedback that we want to share it with potential Explorica program leaders.

Linda L., English & German teacher, Bowdoin, ME

My students had the time of their lives on this trip. Our tour director was so knowledgeable and incredible that Berlin, Prague and Munich just came alive during these 10 days. What an experience!

Michelle D., Coburg, ON

Well-organized, educational and safe travel — I couldn't ask for more! I have students knocking on my door the first day back asking, "Where is the trip next year?"

Joe H., Spanish teacher, Chandler, AZ

I LOVE teaching, but I LOVE traveling more! What better experience can we bring to the lives of our students than actually living in the countries we study?!

Kathleen W., French teacher, Higganum, CT

A wonderful experience for the students, especially hitting Carnevale in Venice. Our tour director enlivened the whole trip with his wit, charm and depth of knowledge.



Dominican Republic Highlights

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Explore north of San Cristobal where 2,000-year-old drawings cover the walls of the Pomier Caves. Then return to modern Santo Domingo where merengue music lures you into one of the Caribbean's most vibrant capitals. Walk the cobblestone streets in the footsteps of Christopher Columbus. And take in the late Gothic architecture with Romanesque characteristics. Then try to spy hundreds of species of tropical flora and fauna en route to one of Puerto Plata's best-kept secrets. Cool off from your day of discovery at natural waterslides and experience the Damajagua Waterfalls etched out of limestone.

Tour specifics

TOUR ITINERARY:

Day 1 Hola Santo Domingo

Meet your Tour Director and check into hotel

Day 2 Santo Domingo landmarks

- › Santo Domingo tour director-led sightseeing tour
- › Colonial District, Catedral de Santa María la Menor, Alcázar de Colón, Ozama Fortress, Malecon
- › Los Tres Ojos National Park visit
- › Chocolate tasting tour

Day 3 Santo Domingo to Santiago

- › Travel to Santiago via San Cristobal
- › Pomier Caves Anthropological Reserve visit
- › Santiago guided sightseeing tour: Centro Leon, El Monumento Santiago, Calle El Sol, Parque Duarte

Day 4 Santiago--Puerto Plata

- › Leon Jimenez Cultural Center visit
- › Travel to Puerto Plata
- › Traditional Dominican dance lesson
- › Damajagua waterfall adventure
- › Isabel de Torres visit

Day 5 Puerto Plata landmarks

- › Puerto Plata tour director-led sightseeing: Fort San Felipe, Sky tram
- › Canopy zipline tour

Day 6 Puerto Plata

- › Catamaran cruise & snorkeling excursion
- › Free time at the beach

Day 7 Puerto Plata--Santo Domingo

- › Whitewater rafting excursion
- › Travel to Santo Domingo

Day 8 End tour

TOUR INVESTMENT:

Travelers under 23 years \$3,933.00*

Travelers 23 and above \$4,373.00*

*Sign up by 2/29/24 for this fee

INCLUDED:

Round-trip airfare, all transportation, sightseeing tours and site visits, all hotels with private bathroom, breakfast and dinner daily, full-time multi-lingual tour director.



Supporting documents

This school board packet should be submitted with the following supporting documents:

- › Official price quote
- › Student application
- › Student/parent agreement & release form
- › Explorica's terms & conditions



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