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The New York Times **Style Magazine**
Winter 2008

Hotel happenings

ON THE EASTERN tip of the Dominican Republic, **Puntacana Resort & Club** (www.puntacana.com) has been attracting famous guests and residents like Oscar de la Renta, Julio Iglesias and Mikhail Baryshnikov since it opened in 1978. Today, outstanding accommodations and facilities, further enhanced by recent additions, have confirmed its place among the finest resorts in the islands.

Bordering five miles of white-sand beach, the 15,000-acre property offers two choices of accommodations. Guests can stay in a villa in Tortuga Bay, an exclusive 15-villa enclave within the main resort that opened in December 2005. Decorated by Oscar de la Renta, these villas range in size from one- to four-bedrooms and come equipped with every comfort from Frette linens to Jacuzzi bathtubs, private golf carts and villa managers.

Or you can stay in the Puntacana Hotel itself, with its 400 rooms, including the newly renovated two- and three-bedroom casitas (villas), right on the beach. Fully furnished, with living/dining rooms and gardens, these cottages are the perfect option for families and groups looking for a budget-friendly vacation together in a relaxed setting and a beautiful location.

Whichever option they choose, guests have access to the resort's impressive facilities, including a full-service marina, children's activities and evening entertainment, a private nature reserve with natural spring waters (perfect for swimming) and a biodiversity and sustainability research center demonstrating the resort's ecological awareness. Among the nine restaurants, Cocoloba serves Asian fusion cuisine, and La Yola, a romantic site

overlooking the marina, specializes in seafood and pasta.

Golfers fly in from all corners of the world to tee off on the championship La Cana Golf Course, designed by P.B. Dye, with 14 holes overlooking the sea. A second seafront course, Corales, designed by Tom Fazio, is scheduled to open this winter. And spa enthusiasts have been praising the resort's Six Senses Spa, the first in the Caribbean from the prestigious spa brand, which opened in 2006. With eight treatment rooms and four outdoor palapas, this modern sanctuary offers a wide range of treatments including a full line of services designed for children under 12 (priced at half the standard rates), half-day packages for golfers and a self-indulgent full-day spa package called "The Essence of Six Senses."



Puntacana Resort & Club