



The Southwest & Península de Pedernales

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Best Places to Eat

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Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Casa Bonita (p195)
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- ➔ Ecoturismo Comunitario Cachóte (p193)

Why Go?

Talk about criminally undervisited. Few travelers make it to the southwest: it's remote, and its little-known highlights take some effort to uncover – but that's exactly the reason to visit. You can explore the cloud forests of the mountains with their soundtrack of twittering birdsong, or the cactus-studded desert that stretches all the way to the Haitian border. Then there's the stunning coastline of the Península de Pedernales, which offers miles of pristine, empty sands and clear turquoise sea. When you reach the Bahía de Las Águilas, a 10km deserted stretch of postcard-perfect beach, you'll feel as though you've hit the traveler's jackpot.

When to Go

- ➔ **March and April** Laguna Oviedo's biodiversity is in full evidence now, so this is the best time for nature lovers to see birds and wildlife that migrate here.
- ➔ **December to February** With sunny skies and seemingly endless fiestas on every corner, this is the busiest time for the DR as a whole. North American and European holidays are in swing now.
- ➔ **June** Caffeine fiends will want to visit the Polo Organic Coffee Festival, held in the first week of the month.



Isla Alto Velo

The Southwest & Península de Pedernales Highlights

1 Taking the boat ride to **Bahía de Las Águilas** (p194), the most remote and beautiful beach in the country

2 Spotting flamingos and turtles on a boat tour to super-salty **Laguna Oviedo** (p196)

3 Staying in a remote cabin in the cool, tranquil cloud forest of **Cachóte** (p193) and

seeing a different side to the Caribbean

4 Rubbing elbows with iguanas on **Isla Cabritos** (p199)

5 Cooling off in the idyllic freshwater pool at **Los Patos** (p193) near Paraíso

6 Renting some wheels and driving along the eastern

shoreline of the **Península de Pedernales** (p190), one of the most beautiful unknown coastal routes in the Americas

7 Sourcing your own semiprecious stone at the **Larimar Mine** (p196)

8 Wandering the spectacle that is the **Haitian Market** (p189) in Comendador del Rey