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Dominican Republic Featured Participant in Upcoming Epcot International Food & Wine Festival

For the first time, Dominican culture will be showcased through eclectic gastronomy, fascinating history and traditional entertainment and artistry

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC – September 10, 2007 – With the Dominican Republic (DR) continuing to gain the attention of travelers from around the world, Disney, for the first time, has invited the DR to participate in its widely celebrated Epcot International Food & Wine Festival on September 28 to November 11, 2007.

As one of 25 countries selected to take part in this year's festivities, the DR will showcase elements of its rich culture through gastronomy, entertainment, artistry and history. The Epcot International Food & Wine Festival gives guests the opportunity to awaken their senses through exploring a global selection of cuisine, drink and more, along with experiencing unparalleled Disney-style events.

As a new addition to the Epcot International Food & Wine Festival, the DR's exhibit will be situated in an idyllic spot on the promenade near the Epcot entrance. The display will effortlessly captivate guests as it will be characteristically surrounded by pristine white sand and azure water, complete with contagious live merengue entertainment, the beloved music and dance of the DR.

"We are thrilled about this rare opportunity to work with Disney on such an extravagant event," commented Magaly Toribio, vice minister of Tourism. "We cherish our diverse culture and are delighted to share it with people around the globe – and what better way to do it than through Disney, one of the world's most adored and brilliant establishments."

The DR exhibit will consist of five distinctive elements that are all unique to the Caribbean country. Each aspect will play a role in painting a picture of the DR's colorful landscape by creating a tropical atmosphere authentic enough to warm guests' souls.

Leading the line-up is the **marketplace kiosk**, which will serve eclectic Dominican cuisine, including savory plantain and vegetable casserole and shrimp mofongo along with sweet coconut flan for dessert. The kiosk will also serve-up Presidente, a thirst-quenching Dominican beer.

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Another highlight of the exhibit is the **Dominican rum bar**. Here a selection of tropical frozen cocktails will be created, including passion fruit, mango and banana, and topped-off by Brugal, the DR's most popular brand of rum. Each drink will be dished-out by Brugal mixologists who will enlighten guests with their knowledge of rum-making.

In addition to the marketplace kiosk and rum bar where Dominican cuisine and drink will be served, the exhibit will run a series of **outdoor culinary demonstrations**, where famed Dominican chefs will demonstrate an assortment of authentic recipes. Here guests can interact with the chefs and learn the art of Dominican cooking while taking the recipe with them to try at home.

Furthermore, to illustrate Dominicans' love for fiestas, contagious merengue will be featured daily at the exhibit's **entertainment stage**. Here Dominican merengue dancers and musicians will entertain and conclude their performance with crowd interaction, providing a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn the dance.

Finally, to showcase the Dominican's distinct talent and love for the arts, an **artisan area** will be featured at the exhibit. Here, Dominican jewelry makers will demonstrate how gorgeous amber and larimar pieces are made, taking guests through each step of the intricate process. Dominican amber, best known for its debut in Spielberg's "Jurassic Park," is among the most valued in the world due to its remarkable array of colors, high transparencies and assortment of fossils found within the stone. Larimar, an opaque blue semiprecious gem, is only found in the DR. It's the result of ancient volcanic activity in the western region of the country, and is mainly blue with hints of green and white. The artisan area also will feature Dominican doll makers who will showcase how traditional ceramic "faceless" dolls are made. Guests will observe the elaborate process of painting the dolls, which depict Dominican country life and feature traditional garb.

Beyond the DR's cultural exhibit, the country was selected to participate in Epcot International Food & Wine Festival's sensational **Party for the Senses**, a tribute to the sensory arts. On October 27, one of the DR's most beloved and eminent chefs, Rafael Vasquez of the renowned Casa Colonial boutique hotel, will be featured. Rafael will be one of 25 celebrated chefs who will create an exquisite line-up of cuisine for the party's 1,200 reserved guests. Furthermore, each guest will have the opportunity to meet Rafael and taste his exclusive Dominican creation. And, representatives from Brugal rum as well as Arturo Fuente cigars will entertain guests. Brugal will provide rum samplings to showcase their range of fine products, while guests are treated with the company of Arturo Fuente himself along with an official cigar roller to demonstrate the special Dominican tradition.

The final element of the DR's contribution to the Epcot International Food & Wine Festival will be **indoor demonstrations** presented by Brugal rum. Held October 29 and 30, the demonstrations will

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be open to all guests and will feature representatives from Brugal who will educate through tutorials on the tradition of rum-making as well as history of the company. The demonstrations will conclude with exclusive tastings of the superior rum.

For details about the Epcot International Food & Wine Festival, visit www.disneyworld.com. For additional information about vacationing in the Dominican Republic, visit www.godominicanrepublic.com.

Rich in history, the Dominican Republic's first tourist was Christopher Columbus in 1492. Since then, it has developed into a diverse and luxurious destination offering both Dominican and European flavors to more than one million U.S. visitors each year. At 10,000 feet, the Dominican Republic is home to the highest point in the Caribbean. It also features some of the best golf courses and beaches in the world, the largest marina in the Caribbean and is a chosen escape for celebrities, couples and families.

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