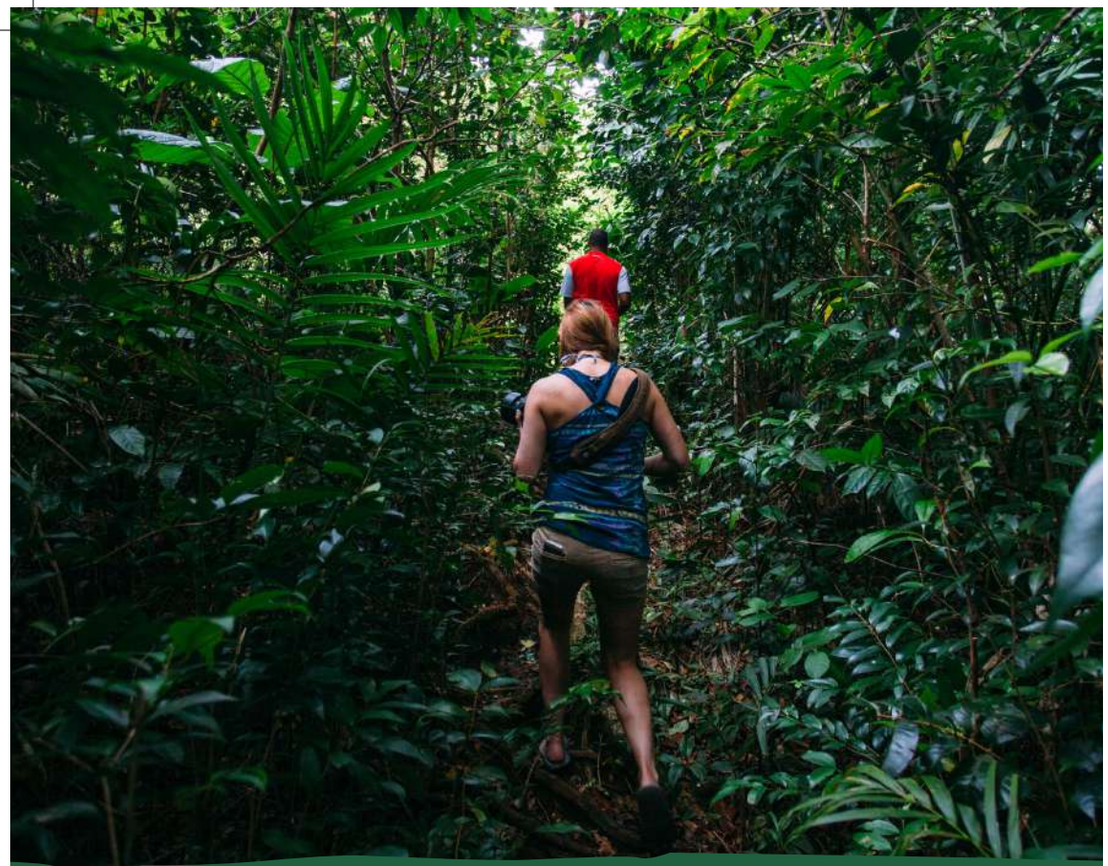
Dominica

THE NATURE ISLAND

Hiking Guide

Victoria Falls



Hiking in Dominica can mean anything from a walk in the park, to a mountain ascent, to a swim through a narrow gorge. Thanks to its mountainous terrain and despite its small size, Dominica offers a wide variety of challenges to hikers. Everything from a gentle stroll to magnificent waterfalls, to a strenuous trek through rainforest up to a sulphurous boiling lake.

GETTING STARTED

You'll find numerous hikes with varying degrees of difficulty listed in this guide. For additional information visit DiscoverDominica.com. So pack your boots and come hike Dominica!

Degree 1 (very easy)	●
Degree 2 (easy)	●●
Degree 3 (moderate)	●●●
Degree 4 (difficult)	●●●●
Degree 5 (very difficult)	●●●●●

TRAFALGAR FALLS

0.2 miles (0.3km) | 10 minutes | ●

Just east of the picturesque village of Trafalgar in the Roseau Valley is one of Dominica's most popular natural attractions, the Trafalgar Falls. These are twin waterfalls called the Mother and Father Falls. The Father Falls, the taller of the two is 125ft (38m) and the Mother Falls is 75ft (23m) high. A therapeutic soak in the mineral pool at the base of the waterfall is a must.

EMERALD POOL

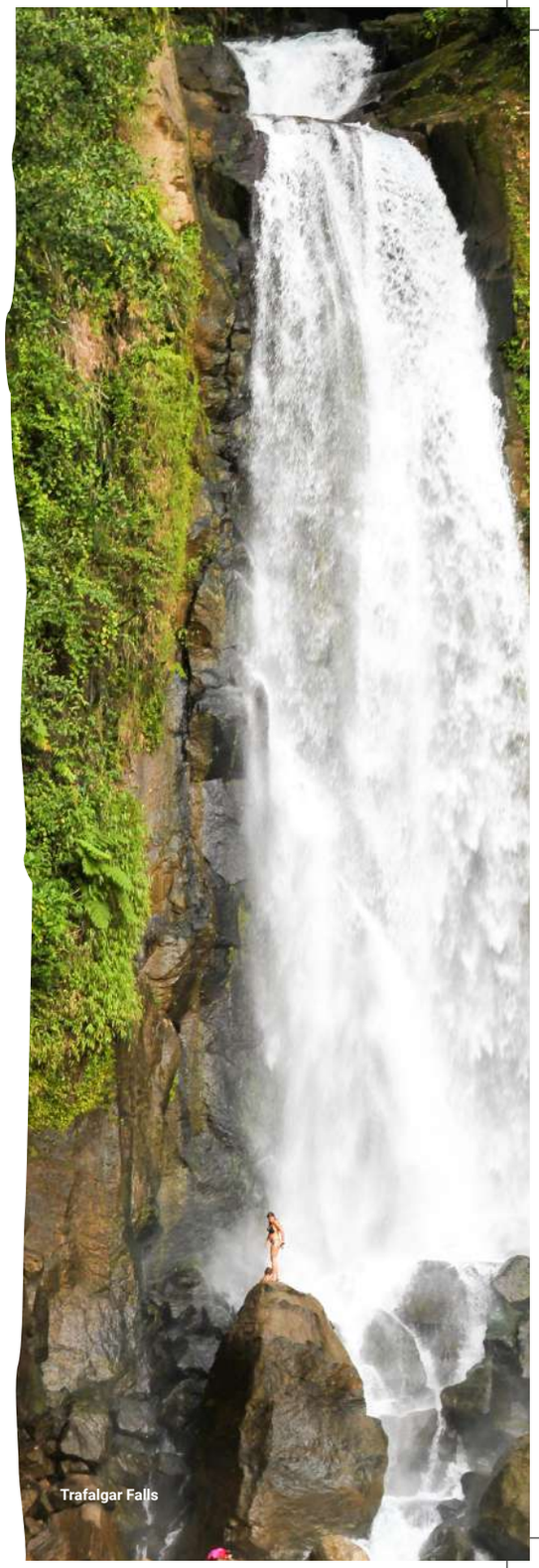
0.75 miles (1.2km) | 15 minutes | ●●

The Emerald Pool is located 3.5 miles (5.6km) northeast of Pont Cassé on the way to Castle Bruce. It is the most accessible trail in the Morne Trois Pitons National Park. The Emerald Pool has a 40ft waterfall which forms a pool at the base which is suitable for swimming. Some great features of this attraction include secondary rainforest, abundance of epiphytes, vistas of the Morne Trois Pitons and a variety of birds.

MIDDLEHAM FALLS

3.5 miles (5.8km) | 45 minutes each way | ●●●

The trek to Middleham Falls leads into the heart of the rainforest. The falls are striking – a narrow stream drops about 200ft (60m) from a keyhole notch in the lip of the cliff. Pause here and brace yourself for a chilly dip! Some features of this site include bats, tree frogs, Yanga Palms and a variety of birds.



Trafalgar Falls

Middleham Falls

SARI SARI FALLS

0.5 miles (0.8km) | 1.5 hours each way | ●●●

Sari Sari Falls is located within the village of La Plaine on the east-coast of the island. This waterfall flows into the Sari Sari River.

FRESHWATER LAKE

2.5 miles (4km) | 45 minutes each way | ●●

Freshwater Lake, the largest of Dominica's lakes, is two miles northeast of the village of Laudat, over 2,500ft (762m) above sea level. It lies at the centre of an old volcano at the foot of Morne Macaque, and is the source of the Roseau River. The Lake has a depth of approximately 55ft (17m) and is roughly 5-6 acres (2 hectares) in size. The lake can reach a depth of 85ft (26m) at its maximum capacity. Kayaking and hiking are some of the activities done at the lake.

VICTORIA FALLS

0.4 miles (0.6km) | 30 minutes each way | ●●●

Access this fall from the village of Delices, which is an hour and 45 minutes away from Roseau by car. The Waterfall is 175ft (53m) in height and flows into the White River.

COLD SOUFRIÈRE

0.4 miles (0.65km) | 8 minutes each way | ●

Cold Soufrière is located in an old volcanic crater that is partially contained by the northern slopes of Bellevue Mountain on the northern foothills of Morne aux Diables. This area is located at approximately 1,500 ft above sea level and can be reached by a motorable road that connects the hamlets of Delaford on the windward side and Guillet on the leeward side of the island. Driving up to Soufrière from the village of Penville through Delaford or Portsmouth through Savanne Paille area.

The road up the western side to Bellevue Mountain has some spectacular views of Prince Rupert Bay, Portsmouth to the south, and the Saints to the northwest. Cold Soufrière can be reached via a short track (8 minutes) which passes plots of dasheen and heads downhill from the Delaford-Guillet Road. There are over seventeen small, shallow pools in the Cold Soufrière with temperatures ranging from 23.5° C to 28° C (74° F to 82.5° F).

MORNE DIABLOTINS

1.25 miles (2km) | 2.5 to 3 hours each way | ●●●●

At 4,747ft (1,447m), this is the highest mountain in the eastern Caribbean. The trail begins at approximately 1,900ft (579m) above sea level, and usually ends at the 'popular summit' which is somewhat lower than the true summit. Some of the features of this trail are mature rain forest, montane forest with an abundance of epiphytes, endemic Jaco and Sisserou (or Imperial) parrots, spectacular views of Cabrits, Portsmouth and other villages in the north from the summit.

SYNDICATE NATURE TRAIL

5 miles (8km) | 45-60 minutes each way | ●●

Hike Trail Starts: The Syndicate Visitor Centre in the Morne Diablotins Park Nestled on the foothills of Dominica's tallest Mountain – Morne Diablotins and close to the edge of the Picard River Gorge is the Syndicate Nature Trail. Home of the rare Sisserou and Jaco Parrots, this trail is excellent for hike-lovers and birdwatchers. The main access to the trail is from the secondary road north of the village of Dublanc, or south of Morne Angol. The five-mile route takes you through citrus, coffee and other cash crops, to an elevation of about 1,750ft above sea level.

JACO FLATS/STEPS

1 mile (1.6km) | 45 minutes | ●

This is the site of a Maroon encampment of escaped slaves in the 1700s. The name was coined after a runaway slave, Jaco, who found refuge there. Access is uphill to a plateau after crossing the Belles River. The Jaco Falls is one of the main features of this site.

HOT SULPHUR SPA

Dominica's volcanic landscape and hot sulphur springs are a huge draw for ecotourists interested in nature, hiking and wellness. Relax in idyllic settings with springs that range from very hot to refreshingly cool. With the greenery all around, it is soothing and healing for the body and the senses. Several of these pools are found in the Wotten Waven area and at some of the properties. A soak in any of these pools is said to improve skin quality.

Boiling Lake Trail

MORNE TROIS PITONS

1.1 miles (1.7km) | 3 hours each way | ●●●●

Located to the north of Boeri Lake and Morne Macaque is the impressive Morne Trois Pitons. The top of the mountain is actually shaped into three peaks as its French name suggests. Morne Trois Pitons is also a dormant volcano and the second highest mountain on the island. Features of this site include rainforest, montane forest, elfin woodland or cloud forest, spectacular views of surrounding landscapes and mountain profile.

CHEMIN L'ETANG TRAIL

2.5 miles (4km) | 3 hours each way | Tour guide recommended | ●●●●

The Chemin L'etang or Lake Road began as a Carib/Kalinago track across the island. The trail connects the east coast to the capital Roseau and was for many years the main 'highway' across the island. The trail rises from the Rosalie River and passes up and along the plateau and through the village of Grand Fond. From here one gets wonderful views down the Rosalie Valley to the Atlantic Ocean and the east coast and, with one turn, there is the Freshwater Lake and surrounding mountains to the west.

BOILING LAKE AND THE VALLEY OF DESOLATION

2.75 miles (4.5km) | 3 hours each way | ●●●●

This hike promises to be the most diverse and awe-inspiring trail in Dominica. The rainforest rises from 1,772ft to 2,264ft (540m to 690m) then descends 98ft (30m) toward the Trois Pitons River. This hike is known as the ultimate challenge and completing it places one amongst an elite group of achievers. The lake has a cauldron of boiling water, approximately 200ft (63m) wide, fed by two small streams. Along the way to the lake is the Valley of Desolation which showcases hot streams of varied colours, sulphur deposits, hot boiling mud, mini-geysers and fumaroles, montane forest and elfin woodland. Another site, the Titou Gorge, is found at the beginning and end of this hike which offers a cool swim through a gorge where a little waterfall cascades. This was one of the sites of the Pirates of the Caribbean films.

BOERI LAKE

1.25 miles (2km) | 45 minutes each way | ●●●

The Boeri Lake is one of the two fresh water lakes in the Morne Trois Pitons National Park. It is the highest lake in Dominica at an altitude of 2,850ft. (869m), and the second largest, located on the slopes of Morne Micotrin. Access to the Lake is via a trail approximately 1 mile/2km (45 minutes walk) from the Freshwater Lake. A 2 ½ mile concrete road leads from the village of Laudat to the trail head to Boeri Lake.

WAITUKUBULI NATIONAL TRAIL

114.3 miles (184km) | Average time for entire trail is 2 to 2.5 weeks | Trail segments vary in levels of difficulty

The Waitukubuli National Trail (WNT) is approximately 184km and is divided into 14 discontinued segments of varying lengths. It begins at Soufriere in the South and ends at Cabrits in the North. A Heritage Trail, WNT features Dominica's natural and cultural heritage; passes through UNESCO World Heritage Site, national parks and forest reserves, historical sites, old routes, Carib/Kalinago paths first cut by indigenous people.

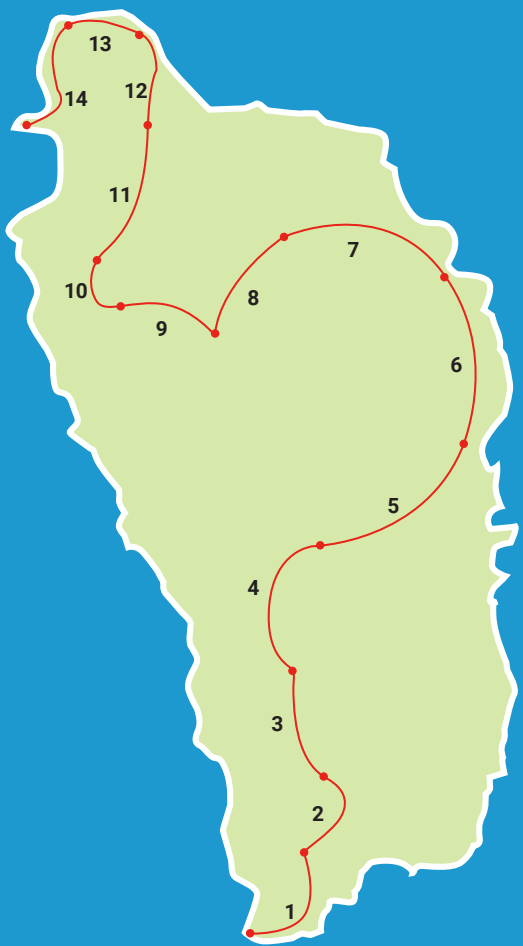
GUIDES & SERVICES

Trained guides are available for every hike on the island. Find out if your guide is certified by the national tour guide training programme. This programme ensures that the guides have basic first aid and life support training (CPR) and are knowlegeable about the flora and fauna. You can find a guide at the village where the hikes begin, or contact Discover Dominica Authority for names and numbers. Be sure to negotiate with both guide and bus driver before going off on your trip. The Forestry Division has many capable guides who are experts on the flora and fauna of the island. Some off-duty guide services are available during the weekends or after work. The Forestry Division is located at the Botanical Gardens, telephone: 767.448.2401. User fees are needed to enter the sites within the National Park. Site passes are US$5 or EC$13.35 and week passes are US$12 or EC$32.04 Always keep to the trails and hike with a friend and guide. Find out if your guide is certified and licensed by the Discover Dominica Authority.

Boeri Lake Loop Trail

WAITUKUBULI NATIONAL TRAIL

1. Scotts Head to Soufrière Estate
2. Soufrière Estate to Bellevue Chopin
3. Bellevue Chopin to Wotten Waven
4. Wotten Waven to Pont Casse
5. Pont Casse to Castle Bruce
6. Castle Bruce to Hatten Garden
7. Hatten Garden to First Camp
8. First Camp to Petite Macoucherie
9. Petite Macoucherie to Colihaut Heights
10. Colihaut Heights to Syndicate
11. Syndicate to Borne
12. Borne to Penville (Delaford)
13. Penville to Capuchin
14. Capuchin to Cabrits National Parks



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