

Día de la Altagracia

Jan 21

Eleanor + Francie



Location

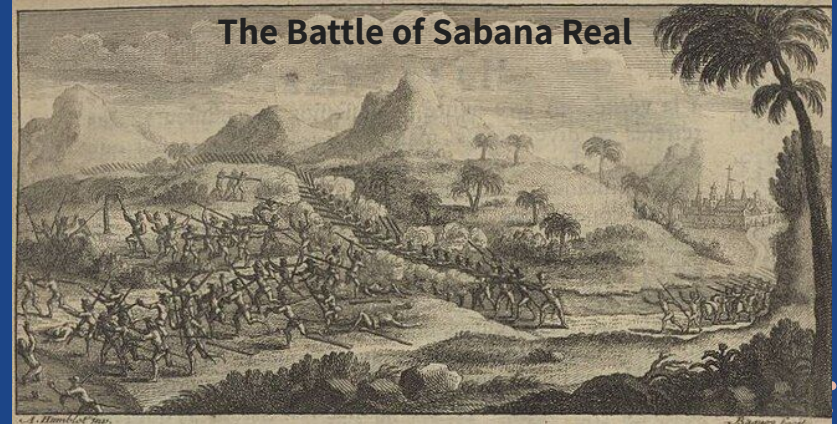
- The famous painting is located in the eastern region of the island, in spanish known as “Llano Costero del Caribe”
- East of Santo Domingo (the capital)
- between La Romana and Punta Cana
- The only province on the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Coast
- “La Altagracia” most nearly means “High Grace”



History

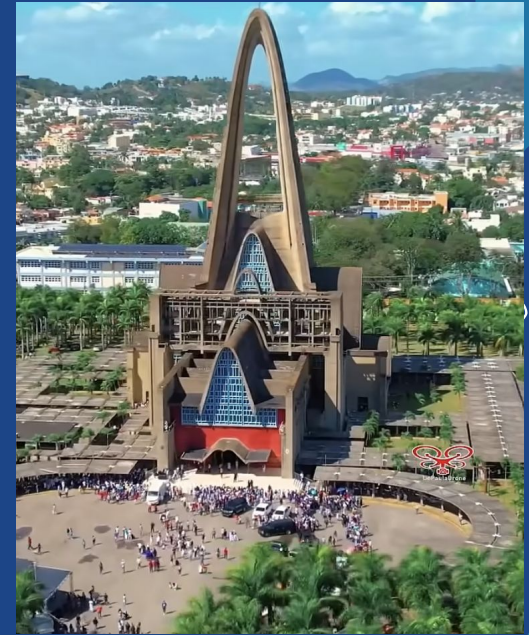
- January 21
- Celebrating la virgen de altagracia → seen as the protector of the Dominican people (Mary)
 - Spanish believe she helped them achieve the victory over the French in 1691 (the battle of Sabana Real)
 - Then associated with many other miracles
- Painting of the Virgin Mary, Baby Jesus, and Joseph
 - 1520: First depiction in an oil painting
- 1971: Pope Paul VI declared Our Lady of Altagracia as the official spiritual mother of the Dominican Republic
- Legend of the oranges
 - The painting would always go to the orange grove instead of staying in the house

The Battle of Sabana Real



Celebrations

- “Feast day” with bright oranges (planting, eating, or cooking!)
- All night vigils, singing, dancing, festivals, processions with candles
- Official holiday in the Dominican Republic, no work
- People walk to the Basílica Catedral Nuestra Señora de la Altagracia for celebrations (like a short pilgrimage)



Basílica Catedral Nuestra Señora de la Altagracia

Traditional Song!



Fun Facts!

- About 800,000 people visit the painting annually
- 1569: The Church of Higüey was built to serve as the first sanctuary completely devoted to Our Lady of Altagracia
- Originally celebrated on August 15th, but the Assumption of Mary was already this day, so they changed it to the day the Battle of Sabana Real was won
- The frame of the painting is known as one of the most refined gold works in the Dominican Republic



A Display in a New York Church



"Living the Year of Mercy nurturing peace": the feast of the Virgin of Altagracia, patroness saint of the country"



It's even celebrated in the U.S!

- Of the 800,000 visitors of the Basilica, many are from the U.S and celebrate at local communities and schools
- New York and Boston are hotspots because of their large Dominican population



Here is a video of a traditional celebration of Día de la Altagracia in Hazleton, Pennsylvania at Holy Family Academy



Thank You!