

CAPTIVATING
★
CUBA
UNIQUE AUTHENTIC JOURNEYS

The Essential Cuba Tour

7-Night Escorted Tour of the West | November 2020 – April 2021



Issued: 26 May 2020



The Essential Cuba Tour | The West of Cuba



Introduction

A 7-night fully escorted tour that has been carefully designed from over 25 years' experience of tour planning in Cuba.

You will gain a fantastic insight into Cuba, one of the most unique destinations in the world. Our fully escorted tour, led by an experienced English-speaking guide, will cover the most important sights of the island, but also allow you to discover the real Cuba.

We have included a number of unique highlights in the itinerary, these include:

- ☆ An afternoon cruising through Havana in a chauffeur driven old American car
- ☆ A visit to a famous working cigar factory in Havana
- ☆ A visit to the fascinating Museum of the Revolution
- ☆ Authentic cocktail making and tapas served at a bar & restaurant recently enjoyed by HRH Prince Charles
- ☆ A day exploring picturesque Vinales Valley an UNESCO World Heritage Site with spectacular scenery
- ☆ 2-nights in the UNESCO World Heritage city of Trinidad where history & the live music scene are at its best
- ☆ A visit to the beautiful El Nicho Waterfalls in the Escambray mountains
- ☆ A final farewell dinner in one of Havana's famous private restaurants
- ☆ A final night performance by the outstanding Legendarios de Guajirito

General Information

- This tour has been designed for small groups so to maximise the experience for guests
- Unlike many other tours, this tour is guaranteed to operate every Sunday when there are 2 or more guests booked, do check with us for latest availability
- This tour operates year-round offering a great choice of departure dates
- The tour will be guided in English throughout
- Maximum group size can be up to 21, but usually with an average of 6 to 14 guests
- Minimum age of 14 years old required
- This tour is designed and created by Captivating Cuba, and is marketed by us, other tour operators and travel agents in the UK & Ireland
- On the last day of the tour, we can arrange for you to continue your journey to the beach resorts of Varadero, Cayo Santa Maria, Cayo Coco, Cayo Guillermo or eastern Cuba or enjoy a second week exploring on our Ultimate Cuba Tour. Alternatively, why not spend a few more days in Havana exploring independently

Itinerary



Sunday | Day 1 - Havana

After a welcome at Havana airport, a transfer will take you to your accommodation confirmed for the tour, well located in Old Havana.

Depending on the time of arrival, there may be the chance to take a wander through the local area and sample Havana's amazing street life before retiring to bed ready for the tour ahead.

Overnight in Havana.

Monday | Day 2 - Havana

Breakfast at accommodation.

After breakfast, you will meet our guide for the first time at your accommodation at 8.30/9.00am and head to one of Havana's fascinating working cigar factories, to see where Cuba's famous cigar brands are still hand made by the local workers. Experience first-hand the stages in production from the dried tobacco leaves, to the famous branded boxes being ready for export around the world.

You will then continue to the Museum of the Revolution, housed in the former Presidential Palace offering a fascinating insight into Cuba's revolutionary history. Lunch will then be served in one of our favourite restaurants in Old Havana.

After lunch, there will be a fascinating, guided leisurely walk through Old Havana, visiting the four famous historical squares, Plaza de la Catedral, Plaza de San Francisco, Plaza Vieja and Plaza de Armas. Absorb the atmosphere and amazing vibrancy of Old Havana and explore the narrow bustling streets which many have described as walking through a film set! You will experience an interesting insight into Old Havana where your guide will ensure you have seen the sights but also some hidden, but fascinating locations away from the normal tourist routes.

In the afternoon you will explore the other areas of central Havana in Old American vintage cars. Be chauffeur driven through the city in fantastic vehicles dating back to the 50s, a thrilling way to enjoy this unique city.

The cars will take you to the impressive Revolution Square overlooked by the mural of Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, through the downtown Vedado district of the city, and then on a spectacular drive along the Malecon, Havana's seafront promenade. Next, past the elegant mansions and embassies in Miramar district as the tour then heads further into fascinating residential areas that are far from the main tourist areas. You will then enter the 'Bosque De La Havana', a beautiful tropical woodland and park area with the Almendares River running through and known as the lungs of Havana. This area of parkland is a beautiful place to drive through and you can stop to take photos and explore the area.

Your old American cars will drop you at bustling and vibrant tapas bar, visited in 2019 by HRH Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall, where there will be an authentic Cuban cocktail making lesson and homemade tapas will be provided for a light meal. With great food and service, it is a fitting end to a fabulous day.

For those that would like to visit the world-famous Tropicana open air cabaret show that dates back to the 1930's, you can pre-book your tickets before arriving in Cuba (or on arrival in Cuba, subject to availability). For those guests adding this optional extra, after dinner you can head off to the show.

Your guide can also recommend bars and music venues in the city for those that might want to enjoy the evening independently.

Overnight in Havana.

Optional Extra | Club Tropicana Cabaret

Option 1 Standard seating - Adults (18+) £95 (single supplement £20)
 Option 2 Main table seating – Adults (18+) £105 (single supplement £20)
 £10 per person supplement applicable 24 December – 2 January inclusive
 £200 per person supplement 31 December
 Open: Nightly, 365 days per year

Enjoy a night under the stars and spectacular dazzling lights at the historic and world-famous Tropicana cabaret which has been an iconic part of Havana's nightlife for 80 years. Enjoy the most beautiful dancers, exotic choreography and flashy carnival costumes and listen to the varied rhythms of Cuba whilst sipping your Cuba Libres made of course from Havana Club Rum. The original Tropicana Cabaret was inaugurated in Havana in 1939 and ever since then it became an iconic landmark that has enchanted visitors from all over the world. The open-air venue can accommodate up to 1750 people on decorated tables surrounded by tropical plants, palm trees and large glass arches.

- ☆ *Minimum age 18*
- ☆ *Formal dress required*
- ☆ *Venue opens at 8.30pm, with the performance starting at 10.00pm*
- ☆ *Price includes: Return private transfers from Havana accommodation, welcome drink, ¼ bottle rum, 1 cola, cold nibbles*

Note that seating at the Tropicana is on large shared tables close together. Rum, cola and nibbles are shared between guests sat at your table. Dinner is not included.





Destination Information | Havana

Havana, the capital of Cuba, is a vibrant city with a strong sense of its unique history and literally bursting with character. Here you will find a diverse mix of building design, a dynamic music scene, impressive monuments and museums, and a city known for its passion for music and dance.

The city's architecture is an eclectic mix of Baroque, Neo-classical and Art Deco styles, and pastel-shaded Old Havana is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Seemingly frozen in time yet peppered with modern touches, Havana is home to crumbling buildings that lie alongside beautifully restored colonial homes and 20th Century high rises from a more austere age. This is a city like no other, a place of rusting Cadillacs, fruit carts, dilapidated colonial buildings, Sovietesque monuments to revolutionary heroes, and locals chatting on the seafront wall or dancing and singing in the heat of the day.

Havana is very safe to explore day and night, and you can visit museums and galleries, enjoy a vast array of music in bars, clubs and other venues throughout the city. Spend an evening at the Opera or Ballet in the ornate Grand Theatre, or just relax at a café or bar and watch the absorbing street life. Dine in one of many new hidden-away private restaurants and you will be amazed at the quality and service, the myths of Cuba having bland or substandard food has been banished! Chat to the friendly and approachable locals, explore this intriguing metropolis, and if you want a break from the bustling city, head to the beaches of East Havana for a swim and relax!

Tuesday | Day 3 – Vinales Valley & Las Terrazas

Breakfast at accommodation.

After breakfast, you will leave Havana and head west to the immensely picturesque Vinales Valley, an area protected by UNESCO as a world heritage site for its outstanding natural beauty, dominated by unusual limestone mountain formations called 'Mogotes'.

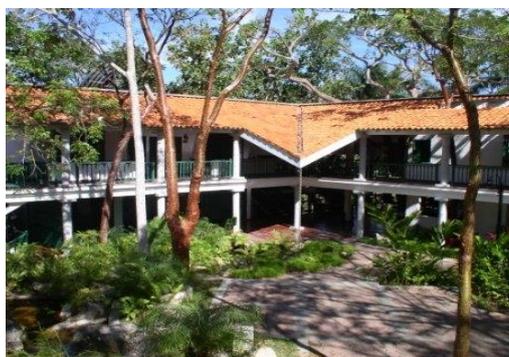
The valley is also the home of Cuba's tobacco plantations and during your time in Vinales, there will be a subterranean boat ride through the El Indio cave system, and a visit to a typical tobacco drying house to see how the tobacco crops are turned into the world's best cigars.

A fabulous unique lunch will be served at a local organic farm affording wonderful views across the valley and you can learn a little more about the farm and its organic methods which attracted the attention of President Obama when he visited Cuba.

In the late afternoon you will leave Vinales and head to Las Terrazas National Park an area of outstanding natural beauty which is protected as one of Cuba's most important National Parks. After settling in at the Moka Hotel for the night, there will be a short tour of the National Reserve, local village and an introduction to the eco-activities and farming practices that take place here.

There will be another unique dinner tonight at the organic vegetarian restaurant in the village which uses only locally sourced organic ingredients.

Overnight in Las Terrazas.



Destination Information | Vinales Valley

Vinales Valley is arguably one of Cuba's most beautiful regions and this spectacular area has been preserved by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Vinales is also home to the tobacco plantations that produce Cuba's world-famous cigars and unique limestone mountain outcrops that rise almost vertically out of the valley floor, known locally as 'Mogotes'.

A rich and fertile area with tobacco and coffee plantations, beautiful rivers, natural springs and unique landscapes, Vinales offers a wonderful introduction to rural life in Cuba and provides a peaceful contrast to the hustle and bustle of Havana and other colonial cities.

There is also little or nothing in the way of highly developed tourism and the towns and villages which dot the undulating landscape appear to be in something of a charming time warp. The local country folk are devoted largely to the production of tobacco and the leaves rolled here account for the very best cigars that Cuba produces. An area of peacefulness and tranquillity with country life taking place all around.

Destination Information | Las Terrazas National Reserve

Las Terrazas was once a deforested landscape of scrubby grassland in western Cuba, just 74km from Havana, however the area was chosen by Fidel Castro as the site for an experiment in re-establishing the forests and original lush tropical vegetation, using a terrace technique on the hillsides. The project was a huge success, gaining interest from around the world and UNESCO designated the local community and its land a biosphere reserve in 1985.

Now it stands testament to the robust vibrancy of nature, with a rich variety of flora and fauna, deep lakes, rushing streams and walking trails. It has become a very popular tourist attraction, and our guests choose to stay here to relax and admire the beauty of the local countryside in the cool climate or take part in outdoor activities such as walking and trekking, birdwatching, horse riding, biking and taking the longest zip wire ride in Cuba across the lake.

There is also a small, typical country community living close to the Moka Hotel where clients stay when visiting the reserve, and can enjoy a number of restaurants and bars, coffees shops and galleries within the community. Locals are welcoming and friendly, and eager to meet visitors.

Wednesday | Day 4 – Santa Clara & Trinidad

Breakfast at accommodation.

After breakfast, you will leave Las Terrazas and head past Havana, down the very 'quiet' motorway towards the east, where our first stop will be to explore Santa Clara, a city of major historical significance in Cuba.

You will visit the final resting place of Che Guevara at the very symbolic mausoleum with time to visit the museum dedicated to his life, as well as Tren Blindado, a small museum and the iconic remains of the government train that was attacked by Che Guevara and his revolutionaries, a significant turning point in the Cuba Revolution. The city itself has a delightful, small colonial centre and enjoys a large student population who add to the vibrant and friendly nature of this important Cuban city.

A light lunch will be offered in a local restaurant in the centre before you take the picturesque road through the Escambray Mountains towards Sugar Mill Valley where the 145ft Manaca Iznaga Tower stands as a silent witness to Cuba's history of slavery where over 30,000 slaves worked in the sugar plantations overlooked by the tower! A ghostly visit. As the day draws to a close you will head along the picturesque road to Trinidad, preserved by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, for a two-night stay and dinner will await in one of our chosen casa particular restaurants.

Overnight in Trinidad.



Destination Information | Santa Clara

A likeable colonial city and provincial capital, Santa Clara is most famous for its pivotal role in the Cuban revolution. On December 31, 1958, the combined forces of Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos, attacked the city by de-railing a train carrying military supplies for the dictator Fulgencio Batista's troops. Once Che and Camilo had captured the city, Cuba was effectively split in half, cutting off all communication between the west and east of the island. This was the decisive moment in the revolution and Batista fled the country a few hours later. Then on 1 January 1959 the victorious revolutionaries, including Fidel Castro, arrived in Havana seizing power and starting a new era in Cuban history.

Part of the train is still on display in the city and there is a huge memorial where Che Guevara and other revolutionaries are buried in the city's Plaza de la Revolución, both locations offer a fascinating insight into Santa Clara's history.



Thursday | Day 5 - Trinidad

Breakfast at accommodation.

After breakfast there will be a comprehensive tour of the center of Trinidad including a visit to the History Museum focusing on a family's life in Cuba in the 1800s, and the you can sample the unique Trinidad rum and sugar cane cocktail at La Canchanchara, an old house dating back to the 18th Century, beware delicious but very strong!

After lunch in a local restaurant, the remainder of the afternoon will be free to relax in the city, or perhaps take a taxi to the nearby Caribbean beach of Playa Ancon and enjoy the beach and perhaps even sunset there.

Dinner tonight will be at a local private restaurant. It is the final evening in Trinidad, and dancing to local live music is a must so feel free to visit one of Trinidad's growing number of bars and listen to some excellent live music!

Overnight in Trinidad.

Destination Information | Trinidad

Located close to the Caribbean Sea on the south coast of Cuba, lies the fascinating small city of Trinidad. Similar in size to a typical UK market town and sitting proudly between the coastline and the impressive Escambray Mountains, lies Cuba's most beautiful and cultured city.

Trinidad was founded in 1514 by the Spanish conquistador Diego Velasquez and became a major centre for trading sugar and slaves for almost 200 years. The wealth generated by the landowners during this region's dark past, is reflected in the treasures found in Trinidad's museums, as well as the ornate colonial architecture found in the centre.

Declared an UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988, Trinidad is regularly described as a living museum. Cobbled streets are lined with pastel-coloured houses, while the beautiful plazas are overlooked by striking 18th and 19th Century buildings.

The centre is home to a number of lovely squares, churches, museums and mansions and can easily be explored on foot. There is also a growing market scene with a range of local artworks and handicrafts on sale, and Trinidad is particularly known for its lace and pottery.

In the evening, Trinidad offers a vibrant and growing selection of lively venues to sample Cuban food, music and dancing. The Casa de la Trova and Casa de la Musica are also both really lively with locals and visitors alike, and feature live music, dancing and typical Cuban fare.

Also, very close to Trinidad lie sugar-white Caribbean beaches and the warm clear ocean, perfect to spend some relaxing time away from the heat of the city. Many enjoy sunrise or sunset on the beaches, and they are easy to reach by taxi.

Friday | Day 6 - Cienfuegos

Breakfast at accommodation.

An early departure from Trinidad takes you towards Cienfuegos, with a visit to El Nicho Park, a marvel of nature with dozens of waterfalls and natural pools in an area virtually untouched, hidden among the mountains and one of the most beautiful spots in Cuba. A scenic area which combines tropical vegetation, rivers and numerous waterfalls, where water plunges more than 30 metres and you will reach the area by taking a very scenic route through many quaint rural villages.

During the tour, you can walk up through numerous walking paths with 'El Reino de las Aguas', a gentle hiking trail of 2 km (1.2 miles). Observe the flora and fauna and enjoy swimming in the cool river pools at the end of the walk. Lunch will then be enjoyed here.

Continuing after El Nicho to the French influenced small colonial city of Cienfuegos, which sits overlooking a picturesque bay. En route there will be a tour of the famous Botanical Gardens, one of the largest in the Americas with an abundance species of plant from tropical regions. On arrival to Cienfuegos there will be a stroll through the colonial centre and along the seafront 'malecon' promenade.

Dinner tonight will be at your accommodation and the evening will be free to enjoy Cienfuegos at your leisure.

Overnight in Cienfuegos.



Destination Information - Cienfuegos

Known as 'The Pearl of the South', Cienfuegos is a small city overlooking a large Caribbean bay which served as a refuge against storms for explorers and pirates long ago. In 1745 the 'Castillo de Jagua' was built at the entrance to the bay for protection against Caribbean pirates and the colonial town was later founded in 1819. Initially settled by French immigrants, Cienfuegos became one of the chief seaports of the Cuban sugar, coffee and tobacco trades. This rich and culturally diverse heritage has left an eclectic legacy of French influenced colonial and neo-classical style buildings in the UNESCO listed historic centre. The beautiful bay, historic buildings and harbour-front Malecón make it a wonderful city to explore.

In the busy centre is Parque Jose Marti, here you will find locals relaxing and chatting under the shade of a tree. Surrounding the park are a variety of buildings of interest including the ornate Teatro Tomas Terry and the Paseo del Prado. The longest boulevard in Cuba is close by, also lined by many beautiful buildings. Along the bay, just outside of the town centre is a beautiful old Moorish style palace called Palacio de Valle. This building is well worth a visit to see the stunning architecture, or you may want to enjoy a meal in the restaurant or have sunset drinks at the rooftop bar. The Palace is located in the Punta Gorda area of Cienfuegos, a narrow headland in the bay.

In the evening there is a good choice of venues to listen to traditional Cuban music throughout this small city, and Cienfuegos has a strong link to Cuban music as it was the home to the world-famous musician Beny More.

Within a short drive of Cienfuegos, you can find a number of unspoilt beaches, ideal for a peaceful walk, swim or relaxation and the foothills of the Escambray Mountains are also not too far away. Cienfuegos also boasts one of the largest botanical gardens in the Americas on the outskirts of the city, and another off the beaten track location is the small bay popular with hundreds of flamingos.



Saturday | Day 7 – The Bay of Pigs & Havana

Breakfast at accommodation.

After leaving Cienfuegos you will continue to the Bay of Pigs, the site of the failed CIA backed invasion of Cuba that was repelled by Fidel and Che and their revolutionaries. There will be a short visit to the museum to gain an insight into one of the major world events from the 1960s and an important date in Cuba's revolutionary history.

Lunch will take place in a local restaurant in Playa Larga and you can wander through the village and along the beach.

The next stop is Guama, a replica village of Cuba's earliest settlers the Taino Indians who lived on the island in the 1100s, the original settlers on the island. Located on a string of small islands and reached by an exhilarating boat ride through the mangroves, there are also a number of life size sculptures depicting the life of these early settlers.

After arriving into Havana and settling in, there will be a farewell dinner in a carefully chosen private restaurant in Old Havana, before heading to a performance by 'Legendarios de Guajirito', This outstanding band is made with former members of the Buena Vista Social Club and the Afro-Cuban All Stars. Dancing is guaranteed, and the evening is a fitting finale to an unforgettable week exploring Cuba.

Overnight in Havana.

Sunday | Day 8 - Havana

Breakfast at accommodation.

Today is free for you to explore Havana independently, relax or leave Havana for your beach extension in Varadero, the 'Cayos' or eastern Cuba.

For those leaving Cuba today, a transfer will collect you from the hotel and take you to the airport for your departure flight home.

Accommodation Included



- Havana 2 nights at a recommended casa particular or Iberostar Parque Central both on B&B basis**
- Las Terrazas 1 night at the Moka Hotel on HB basis
- Trinidad 2 nights at a recommended casa particular (night 1 HB, night 2 B&B basis)
- Cienfuegos 1 night at a recommended casa particular or a centrally located hotel on HB basis
- Havana 1 night at a recommended casa particular or the Iberostar Parque Central on B&B basis**

**We have based prices on staying at an authentic and unique superior Casas Particulares in Old Havana, offering an authentic and comfortable stay in the heart of the city. Alternatively, for a supplement, you can stay in the Iberostar Parque Central Hotel, also located in Old Havana, which is centrally located with a swimming pool. Please refer to 'optional alternative accommodation / upgraded rooms' for more information.

If you would prefer alternative accommodation, please contact us.

Transportation and Guide Included

- All transportation as required in the itinerary using fully air-conditioned transportation
- The services of an English-speaking guide from the morning of Day 2 to late afternoon / evening on Day 7

Restaurant Lunches and Dinners Included

Breakfast is included throughout the tour and will be taken at your accommodation.

- Day 2 Lunch at La Imprenta Restaurant, Havana or similar
Light Tapas at Jibaro Bar, Havana
- Day 3 Lunch at Organic Farm Restaurant, Vinales Las Terrazas
Dinner at La Romero Organic Vegetarian Restaurant, Las Terrazas
- Day 4 Light Lunch at a local restaurant Santa Clara
Dinner at chosen Casa Particular Restaurant, Trinidad
- Day 5 Lunch at El Barracon in Trinidad or similar
Dinner at Local Private Restaurant, Trinidad
- Day 6 Lunch at El Nicho Park, Cienfuegos
Dinner at the chosen accommodation Cienfuegos
- Day 7 Light Lunch at Chosen Restaurant, Playa Larga
Dinner at 5 Sentidos Restaurant, Havana

Entrances Included

- Day 2 Cigar Factory, Havana
- Day 2 Museum of the Revolution, Havana
- Day 2 Old American Car Tour, Havana
- Day 2 Cocktail Making Lesson Havana

- Day 3 El Indio Limestone Cave System, Vinales Valley
- Day 3 Tobacco Drying House, Vinales Valley
- Day 3 Las Terrazas Nacional Park, Las Terrazas
- Day 4 Che Guevara's Museum and Mausoleum, Santa Clara
- Day 4 Tren Blindado, Santa Clara
- Day 4 Manaca Iznaga, Sugar Mill Valley, Trinidad
- Day 5 History Museum, Trinidad
- Day 5 La Canchanchara, Trinidad
- Day 6 El Nicho Waterfall National Park
- Day 6 Botanical Gardens Cienfuegos
- Day 7 Bay of Pigs Museum, Playa Giron
- Day 7 Taino Village and Boat Ride, Guama
- Day 7 Legendarios de Guajirito Performance, Havana

Optional Alternative Accommodation / Upgraded Rooms (Upon Request)

Prices given are additional supplements per person per night

Location	Accommodation	Room Type	Double/Twin	Single	Peak Supplement 22 Dec–4 Jan Inclusive
Havana	Casa Particular	Junior suite	£30 pppn	£50 pppn	N/A
Havana	Iberostar Parque Central	Double Modern	£95	£105 pppn	£40pppn-double £60pppn-single
Las Terrazas	Hotel Moka	Junior Suite	£20 pppn	£30 pppn	N/A
Trinidad	Deluxe Casa (excludes La Casona)	Standard	£25 pppn	£50 pppn	N/A
Trinidad	La Casona	Standard	£45 pppn	£70 pppn	N/A
Trinidad	Iberostar Grand Hotel	Standard	£120 pppn	£145 pppn	£55pppn-double £80pppn-single

If you would prefer alternative accommodation, please contact us.

Tour Extensions

As an extension to the tour, you can continue your journey to the beach resorts of Varadero, Cayo Santa Maria, Cayo Coco, Guillermo or enjoy instead a second week exploring Eastern Cuba on our Best of Cuba or Ultimate Cuba tours. Alternatively, we can arrange further nights in Havana or further afield.

Cayo Santa Maria Beach Extensions

For those customers wishing to extend their tour with a beach stay in Cayo Santa Maria, the best option is to take a private transfer from Cienfuegos to Cayo Santa Maria on day 7 of the tour. You will leave for Cayo Santa Maria after visiting El Nicho and completing the Cienfuegos tour, arriving in Cayo Santa Maria around 17.00/18.00 hrs. After your Cayo Santa Maria stay, we will then arrange a last night in Havana with dinner and the show (which is included as part of the tour and you would have missed when you went to Cayo Santa Maria) noting that you will do this alone without a guide and not in a group.

Tour on a Private Basis

We are able to organise this tour on a private basis, enabling guests to travel with a personal guide. On a private tour, it is also possible to tailor the tour further if you require (before departure). Visits can be added, as can duration, or a specialist interest can be catered for. Please talk to one of our travel design team for further information.

Journey Times

Approximate journey times by road without breaking to give an indication of travel required. Road closures and other local conditions may mean changes, so please treat as a rough guide rather than definitive times.

	From	To	Hours
Day 1	Havana Airport	Havana City	0.5
Day 3	Havana	Vinales	3
Day 3	Vinales	Las Terrazas	1.5
Day 4	Las Terrazas	Santa Clara	4.5
Day 4	Santa Clara	Sugar Mill Valley	1.5
Day 4	Sugar Mill Valley	Trinidad	0.5
Day 6	Trinidad	El Nicho	1.5
Day 6	El Nicho	Cienfuegos	1.5
Day 7	Cienfuegos	Bay of Pigs	2
Day 7	Bay of Pigs	Havana	2.5

Important Information

- Guide services commence (i.e. the point at which the tour becomes 'escorted') from day 2 in the morning at approx. 9am. Guide services conclude (i.e. the point at which the tour stops being 'escorted') after the Legendarios de Guajirito when you are escorted by the guide back to your Havana accommodation on day 7
- Any timings and order of activities provided are for guidance only, and may vary considerably due to local availability, constraints and demand
- As our tours are set up many months in advance, changes can occur to accommodation, restaurants and places to be visited as a result of changes in the local provision of services in Cuba. This is especially apparent in the winter season as Cuba continues to cope and change as a result of unprecedented global demand for the island, as well as a rapidly emerging USA visitor market that is both politically and commercially important to the Cuban Government and Tourism Authorities
- Please refer to the end of this document for important information on required mobility and fitness required for this tour. Please talk to us if you have any concerns and we can advise you further
- On rare occasions, where this tour departs with six passengers or less, there will be a dedicated guide service in each location visited rather than the same guide travelling with the group throughout the tour. In this instance guides will be very experienced English-speaking specialists. Customers will be informed before departure if the tour will be operating with local guides instead of one guide throughout.

Not Included

- Dinner on arrival day (day 1)
- Tour guide on arrival and departure day (day 1 and day 8)
- Lunch and dinner on departure day (day 8)
- Tips (discretionary)
- Drinks (soft drinks/alcohol)
- Services of a porter / assistance carrying baggage
- Laundry
- Telephone calls, WIFI / internet
- Local camera / filming fees
- Costs when on 'free time' e.g. taxis arranged locally or optional extras
- Travel insurance / medical insurance

Important Information

We operate our escorted tours using small groups. Maximum group size can be up to 21 guests, usually with an average of 8 – 14. Our escorted tours are usually busier/booked full in winter months. Tours run with a minimum of 2 passengers, and once 2 passengers are booked, the tour is guaranteed to operate. We will never cancel a tour due to lack of numbers.

All of our escorted tours include accommodation, air-conditioned transportation, services of an English-speaking guide, restaurants for dinner and lunch, and entrances to the places we visit (please refer to the tour inclusions for more specific information on exactly what is included/excluded).

Drivers, local staff at accommodation, attractions/places visited, restaurants/bars and local/specialist guides that you may encounter may not speak English (or languages other than Spanish). Your English-speaking tour guide is there to assist on these occasions.

If you are planning on booking our 2-week 'Ultimate Cuba' tour, please be aware that this is made up of our two 1-week tours booked back-to-back therefore there may be different people and/or more/less guests on the second week to the first. The same situation applies to the Best of Cuba Tour which is made up of our 7-night Essential Cuba Tour plus 4 nights of the Ultimate Tour.

Please note that as our escorted tours are set up many months in advance, changes can occur to accommodation, restaurants and places visited as a result of changes in the local provision of services in Cuba. This is especially apparent in the winter season as Cuba continues to cope and change as a result of unprecedented global demand for the island, as well as a rapidly emerging USA visitor market that is both politically and commercially

important to the Cuban Government and Tourism Authorities. While we do our best to operate our tours as closely to published itineraries as we can, local conditions, demand for services, delays and availability can change from one day to the next, so tour modifications may be needed with no advance warning.

Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements resulting from previous client feedback, guide/local staff comments and our own findings and research. Ultimately, we are trying to provide you with the best possible experience, which may not always be immediately apparent as factors unknown to you such as bureaucracy and local availability can affect an itinerary running smoothly.

Our escorted tours are also marketed and sold by travel agents and other tour operators who have their own target markets. Age, nationality, likes/dislikes, lifestyle, and background of our escorted tour guests do vary.

All guests on our escorted tours are required to comply with Cuban law and refrain from any illegal activities, bearing in mind your behaviour may impact on others on the tour. Anyone found to be participating in illegal activities will have their place on the tour cancelled immediately, and no refund or compensation provided.

Mobility, Access and Fitness

Our escorted tour itineraries are generally fast paced and will keep you busy, and a considerable amount of walking is involved (including stairs) so an average/decent level of fitness and mobility is required, and you should be physically fit and also able to carry your own luggage. Comfortable and supportive walking footwear is required for all of our tours.

Where tour accommodation is located in a narrow side street where a larger vehicle/bus cannot access easily, or road rules (which may be sudden/unexpected for reasons such as roadworks or underground infrastructure work) imposed restrict the driver from pulling up outside, you may be required to walk with your own luggage to the closest access point.

Some casa particular bedrooms and their facilities are accessed by narrow stairways, and lifts/elevators may not be available. If you do struggle with stairs it is important that you let us know at the time of booking, so we can make sure we understand your requirements, and can advise and assist accordingly.

Havana, Trinidad and other cities visited on our tours typically have uneven/high/low kerbs and steps and cobbled streets.

When visiting Vinales, Las Terrazas, and El Nicho, you may be required to climb stairs, walk up-hill and navigate countryside terrain (which may be wet or slippery after rain) so an average/decent level on fitness is required in these locations if you wish to fully participate.

[La Plata / Comandancia de la Plata](#)
(Day 2 Essence of Cuba Tour, Day 8 Best of Cuba Tour, Day 8 The Ultimate Cuba Tour)

A considerable amount of walking and hiking is involved so a decent level of fitness and mobility is required. The La Plata walk is approximately a 6km round trip. The terrain around Comandancia de la Plata can be uneven, rocky and possibly muddy (especially after rain) with some fairly steep climbs. For guests not wanting to take part in this day due to a concern of it being too challenging, it is possible to relax instead at Villa Santo Domingo whilst others take part. Whilst there is an easier trek available locally, we do not include it in the tour due to the La Plata walk being much more impressive and significant historically.

Please ensure you read our booking conditions and Cuba destination advice before booking.



Captivating Cuba Ltd.
Suite G09/G10
Business and Technology Centre
Bessemer Drive
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG1 2DX
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)1438 419111

enquiries@captivatingcuba.com
www.captivatingcuba.com

