

# Cuba

The tropical islands of Cuba collectively form the largest of the Caribbean countries. Its sheer beauty with stunning, pure white-sand beaches, dramatic rock formations and picturesque colonial cities blends perfectly with the unique Afro-Latin culture of the compellingly warm-hearted Cubans. Seemingly everywhere the salsa and rumba rhythms fill the air while delicious mojitos and the world's finest cigars tantalise the senses. The country is also blessed with possibilities for the more adventurous traveller, including deep-sea treasures for divers, hiking, cycling and horse riding. Cuba's most fascinating appeal however, is its extraordinary variety and unique history, best experienced on a round-trip of the island.



## Cuba Travel Tips

- **Time:** GMT -5.
  - **Flying Time from UK:** Approx 9.5 hours.
  - **Language:** The official language is Spanish. English is spoken in most of the larger hotels and tourist areas.
  - **Currency:** Cuban Peso Convertible (CUC) £1 = CUC 1.88. In larger tourist areas and airports all major non-US issued credit cards are accepted and currencies exchanged.
  - **Visa Requirements:** UK passport holders require a Tourist Card, valid for 30 days, which must be obtained before departure from the UK at the Cuban Consulate, 167 High Holborn, London W1CV 6PA, Tel: 0870 2403675.
  - **Festivals, Events & Busy Times:** Carnival in Havana and Santiago de Cuba (July), and New Year are the main holidays in Cuba.
  - **Departure Tax:** CUC\$25 subject to change.
  - **Tourist Office:** Contact Cuba Tourist Board, 154 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8JT. Tel 020 7240 6655 or [www.cubatravel.cu](http://www.cubatravel.cu)
- For more useful information, see pages 96-97.

## Havana

A destination in its own right, withered yet characterful Havana is enthralling. The historic centre, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is full of resplendent Spanish colonial mansions, cathedrals and castles. There are intriguing museums, a lively arts scene, colourful street markets and a vibrant nightlife. Countless vintage cars fill the streets, giving the place an air of nostalgia. The warm-hearted Cubans relish their passion for music and for life making Havana an intoxicating place to visit.

## Beach Resorts – Varadero & the Cayes

Varadero is Cuba's premier beach resort with a stunning setting on the Hicacos Peninsula and miles of beautiful sandy beaches. All inclusive resorts are plentiful offering

everything from golf to water sports including scuba diving and snorkelling. For something a little quieter, Cayo Santa Maria consists of a series of exquisite coral cays fringed by white-sand beaches and turquoise waters.

## Viñales Valley & Las Terrazas

Famed for the most magnificent landscape on the entire island, one should not miss the spectacular limestone formations of the Viñales Valley, providing a fascinating backdrop for Cuba's finest tobacco fields and deep green plains. Nature and wildlife lovers are lured to Las Terrazas, Cuba's most developed eco-resort, where you can partake in horseback riding, hiking on nature trails, soak in thermal pools and visit the remains of 18th century coffee plantations.

## Cienfuegos & Trinidad

Cienfuegos, the 'Pearl of the South' is an utterly charming city known as the focal point for Cuba's sugar trade as well as for its pretty colonial architecture and attractive bay side location. The beautiful hill town of Trinidad is a definite highlight of any trip to Cuba. Listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in recognition of its rich colonial history dating from 1514, the town is festooned with impressive mansions and pretty cobblestone streets. Trinidad is also just minutes from popular Playa Ancón beach, close to the scenic Escambray Mountains and is also a centre for the country's tobacco industry.

## Cuba – Pearl of the Caribbean

8 Days from £1075. Private Tour.

### Highlights Include

- Experience Havana, one of the most vibrant and fascinating cities in the world
- Explore the stunning Viñales Valley, famous for its limestone formations and tobacco plantations
- Visit the eco-resort of Las Terrazas in the heart of the Sierra del Rosario
- Enjoy sightseeing in the pretty colonial cities Cienfuegos and Trinidad
- View the Che Guevara Mausoleum and Museum in Santa Clara

**Departures:** Daily

### Day 1: Arrive Havana

Pick-up at Havana airport by your personal driver and guide. Enjoy a cocktail in the VIP lounge before a private transfer to your chosen hotel for two nights.

*Standard:* Hotel Florida

*Superior:* Hotel NH Parque Central

### Day 2: Havana Sightseeing

Discover Cuba's unique and fascinating capital Havana on a private walking tour, including a visit to the second oldest fortress in America, Cathedral Square and the Revolutionary Museum. Follow the famous Hemmingway Trail and see the room at the Ambos Mundos Hotel where Hemmingway wrote the great book 'For Whom the Bells Toll'. Continue to La Bodeguita Bar that he used to frequent for his Mojito cocktails. The afternoon and evening are free to enjoy at your own leisure. We recommend a nostalgic trip in a classical American car and a visit to the world-famous Tropicana cabaret (not included; see page 92). **(B)**

### Day 3: Havana – Viñales Valley

No trip to Cuba would be complete without a visit to the famous Viñales Valley to experience why and how Cuban cigars are considered the best in the world! This morning, travel to Alejandro Robaina's house and tobacco plantation in the Pinar del Rio Province where you have the chance to taste some of his excellent cigars and learn about the growing and curing processes of tobacco. Travel through the beautiful Viñales Valley and marvel at the amazing mogotes (limestone formations), unique only to Cuba and China. The rest of the afternoon is free to enjoy the picturesque surroundings or just relax at the pool of the colonial-style Los Jazmines, your hotel for the night. **(B)**

*Standard & Superior:* Los Jazmines Hotel



### Day 4: Viñales Valley – Las Terrazas – La Moka

After breakfast, transfer to Las Terrazas, one of the best places in Cuba for bird watching and the habitat of Cuba's national bird, the Toco-ro. Visit the local community and enjoy a delicious Cuban coffee at Maria's house, popular for the charcoal-roasted coffee beans that give the coffee its unique flavour. Continue to Cafetal Buenavista which preserves the ruins of an 18th Century French Coffee Plantation. On a good day enjoy the spectacular views over the expansive plains to the Gulf of Mexico in the north and the Caribbean Sea in the south. Check into La Moka Hotel in the heart of the biosphere reserve of La Sierra del Rosario. **(B)**

*Standard & Superior:* La Moka Hotel

### Day 5: La Moka – Cienfuegos

An early morning start today for your private transfer to the harbour city of Cienfuegos, also dubbed "Pearl of the South", a name earned from its beautiful location on a picturesque Caribbean bay. The city's appeal lies partly in its European flavour with a wide Parisian-style boulevard and elegant colonnades in its central world heritage area. Embark on a city tour upon arrival to see the beautiful colonial architecture, the main square Parque Marti, surrounded by the impressive Palacio del Ayuntamiento, the elegant Italian-style Teatro Tomas Terry and the neo-classical cathedral. **(B)**

*Standard & Superior:* La Union Hotel



### Day 6: Cienfuegos – Trinidad

After breakfast, travel to the beautiful colonial town of Trinidad, ideally located near the sugary-white sands of Playa Ancon and in the lee of the magnificent Escambray mountains. On a half-day tour of this World Heritage Site, explore the neoclassical and baroque architecture, the narrow cobblestone streets and enjoy a visit to Brunet Palace Museum, to the History Museum and to the Canchanchara Bar. The afternoon is at your own leisure. Enjoy the beach or embark on an optional two-hour excursion to the famous Valley of the Sugar Mills (not included; please enquire about prices). **(B)**

*Standard & Superior:* Iberostar Trinidad

### Day 7: Trinidad – Santa Clara – Havana or Beaches

A scenic drive via the Sierra Escambray with spectacular views over the surrounding mountain range, dense forests and lush valleys awaits. In Santa Clara, stop for a visit to the Che Guevara Mausoleum looming over the wide hilltop Plaza de la Revolución, and to the Che Guevara Museum. Transfer back to Havana to enjoy your last night in the bustling capital. Alternatively continue to Varadero or the Cayes for a relaxing beach stay (see page 93). **(B)**

*Standard:* Hotel Florida

*Superior:* Hotel NH Parque Central

### Day 8: Depart Havana

Your tour comes to an end with a private transfer to Havana airport. **(B)**

### Prices Include

- 7 nights accommodation including breakfast
- All transfers and touring on private basis as detailed
- Services of an English-speaking guide whilst touring

### Prices Exclude

- All flights and local airport taxes
- Portage, gratuities and items of a personal nature

### Tour Prices

Prices per person, in £'s from	Pearl of the Caribbean			
	Standard		Superior	
	Twin	Single	Twin	Single
01Jan09-04Apr09	1149	1965	1215	2029
05Apr09-12Apr09	1209	2029	1275	2095
13Apr09-30Apr09	1149	1965	1215	2029
01May09-14Jul09	1075	1889	1139	1949
15Jul09-31Aug09	1149	1965	1215	2029
01Sep09-31Oct09	1075	1889	1139	1949
01Nov09-21Dec09	1189	1999	1255	2065
22Dec09-31Dec09	1245	2069	1309	2129

Supplements apply during Christmas & New Years, please call for details.



Trinidad

# Havana & Beyond

Built on the west side of a sweeping bay, Havana is one of the most unique and captivating of Caribbean cities. At its heart is enthralling Old Havana, a living museum containing perhaps the most interesting collection of buildings in Latin America in a variety of architectural styles, from graceful Spanish-colonial, neo-classical and art deco, to 1950s and modern architecture. Cuba's capital city also has an unrivalled arts scene with first-rate galleries, boutique stores and lively music venues, playing everything from Afro-Caribbean rhythms to classical music and jazz.

To complement your cultural Havana trip or encompassed Cuba tour, relax at the stunning beaches of Varadero or the Cayes which are just a short distance away.



Varadero



## Essential Havana

3 Nights from £239



### Day 1: Arrive Havana

On arrival in Havana you will be met by your guide and transferred to your chosen hotel.

Standard: Hotel Telegrafo

Superior: Hotel NH Parque Central

### Day 2: Havana Walking Tour & Cigar Factory

This morning, experience the historical sights of Old Havana on a half-day private walking tour. Amongst the many treasures of Havana visit Morro, the second oldest fortress in the Americas, Cathedral Square and the Revolutionary Museum. Follow the Trail of Hemmingway, the great author and hunter who lived in Cuba for 20 years, and visit the Bodeguita Bar that he used to frequent for his Mojito cocktails. Continue with a private tour of one of the famous cigar factories such as Romeo y Julieta or Partagas and discover the processes involved in hand rolling the best cigars in the world. (B)

### Day 3: Day at Leisure & Tropicana Cabaret Show

Free day to explore Havana's sights further. This evening, enjoy an exhilarating show at the Tropicana, the world

famous open air cabaret boasting over 200 performers, a fabulous orchestra and astonishing acrobatic feats. (B)

### Day 4: Depart Havana

Private transfer from your hotel to Havana airport. (B)

### Prices Include

- 3 nights at your chosen hotel including breakfast
- Return private airport/hotel transfers
- Half-day private Havana Walking Tour & Cigar Factory
- Tropicana Cabaret Show on shared basis

Tour Dates	Essential Havana			
	Standard		Superior	
Prices per person, in £'s from	Twin	Single	Twin	Single
01Jan09-02Jan09	318	374	352	427
03Jan09-30Apr09	280	333	318	393
01May09-15Jul09	239	292	280	352
16Jul09-20Aug09	280	333	292	367
21Aug09-24Aug09	239	292	292	352
25Aug09-31Oct09	239	292	280	352
01Nov09-30Nov09	292	348	333	404
01Dec09-31Dec09	254	307	333	404

Supplements apply during Easter, Christmas & New Years, please call for details.

## Panoramic Tour with American Cars



Departures Daily  
Duration 3hrs.  
Take a nostalgic trip in a classical American vintage car visiting Revolutionary Square, the Colon Cemetery and ending with a Daiquiri cocktail at the Floridita Bar, made famous by Hemmingway.  
Price £50 per person (private).

## Tropicana Cabaret Show



Departures Nightly  
Duration 3-4hrs.  
One cannot leave Havana without saying they have been to the world famous Tropicana Cabaret where 100's of artists perform under the stars (weather permitting).  
Price £70 per person, incl. drinks & snack package.

## Viñales Valley Excursion



Departures Daily  
Duration 8hrs.  
Enjoy a full day tour to discover the stunning Viñales Valley in the Pinar del Rio Province with its famous tobacco plantations and amazing limestone formations.  
Price £63 per person, including lunch.

# Havana & Beach Hotels



## Hotel Telegrafo, Havana 3+★

Having occupied its current site in Old Havana since 1911, the Telegrafo is an institution in its own right, offering a nice medium of old world elegance and modern cosmopolitan style. The hotel is conveniently located for sightseeing with most attractions on your doorstep. During your stay, take time out from the tourist trail with a coffee in the hotel's pavement café, perfectly located to watch Havana's eclectic population and vintage cars go by.

**Facilities** restaurant • bar • café • shop

**Rooms** 63 rooms • mini-bar • satellite TV • air-con • room service



## Hotel NH Parque Central, Havana 4+★

*Like much of old Havana, the prestigious but charming Hotel Parque Central alludes to a bygone era of classical style, elegance and colonial opulence. But this hotel has also managed to keep up with today's world, with most of the modern facilities and services expected by contemporary travellers. A landmark in its own right, the Hotel Parque Central makes a perfect base from which to explore this fascinating city. As the name suggests the hotel is located just opposite the main city park and also close to most of the key tourist attractions including the Capitol, the Garcia Lorca Theatre and the Museum of Modern Arts to name but a few. If the excitement of the city gets too much you can retreat to the large Greek-style rooftop pool, a haven from the bustle of the streets below, and the adjoining bar with its spectacular views across the city is a great place to start your evening.*

**Facilities** 2 restaurants • 2 bars • business centre • internet & wifi access • fitness room • rooftop pool • massage • laundry • shop

**Rooms** 427 rooms in main & tower building • mini-bar • satellite TV • internet (in tower rooms & suites) • air-con • room service



Map ref: 1

Prices per person per night, including breakfast, in £'s from

Standard	Twin	Single	Junior Suite	Twin	Single
01Jan09-30Apr09	50	68	01Jan09-30Apr09	73	90
01May09-15Jul09	36	54	01May09-15Jul09	59	76
16Jul09-20Aug09	50	68	16Jul09-20Aug09	73	90
21Aug09-31Oct09	36	54	21Aug09-31Oct09	59	76
01Nov09-30Nov09	54	73	01Nov09-30Nov09	76	94
01Dec09-31Dec09	41	59	01Dec09-31Dec09	63	80

Supplements apply 22-31Dec09, please call for details.

Map ref: 2

Prices per person per night, including breakfast, in £'s from

Parque Central	Twin	Single	Parque Central Tower	Twin	Single
01Jan09-02Jan09	74	99	25Aug09-31Oct09	50	74
03Jan09-04Apr09	63	88	01Nov09-31Dec09	68	91
05Apr09-12Apr09	69	93	03Jan09-04Apr09	65	91
13Apr09-30Apr09	63	88	05Apr09-12Apr09	71	96
01May09-14Jul09	50	74	13Apr09-30Apr09	65	91
15Jul09-24Aug09	54	79	01May09-14Jul09	53	79
			15Jul09-24Aug09	56	83

Supplements apply 22-31Dec09, please call for details. Compulsory gala dinner 24Dec09 & 31Dec09 £30 (Parque Central) & £46 (Parque Central Tower).



## Sol Palmeras, Varadero 3+★

With a great position on Cuba's flagship Varadero Beach, the Sol Palmeras is an excellent value All-Inclusive resort perfectly appointed and situated for a comprehensive Caribbean holiday experience. Day and night, you'll never be stuck for choice with the dazzling array of restaurants, bars, activities and entertainments guaranteed to keep you occupied throughout your stay. The difficult thing will be tearing yourself from the magnificent white sands and turquoise waters of the hotel's beautiful beach!

**Facilities** 6 restaurants • 5 bars • 3 outdoor pools • badminton • archery • watersports • beauty salon • gift shop • laundry • kids' clubs

**Rooms** 408 rooms & suites, 200 bungalows • mini-bar • satellite TV • air-con • balcony or terrace



## Melia Cayo Santa Maria 4+★

Located on the little island of Cayo Santa Maria on the beautiful Jardines del Rey Archipelago, the All-Inclusive adult only Melia Cayo Santa Maria is a haven of tranquility and isolation. The hotel's immaculate and beautiful beach seems almost endless with dazzlingly white sands cascading gently into serene aquamarine waters. The hotel is surrounded by lush green vegetation and the area has been designated a Biosphere Reserve, testament to its natural beauty.

**Facilities** 4 restaurants • café • 4 bars • gym • large free-form pool • tennis courts • watersports • dive centre • ecological excursions • spa • beauty parlour • laundry

**Rooms** 358 rooms • mini-bar • satellite TV • air-con • coffee maker • balcony or terrace



## Paradisus Princesa del Mar Resort & Spa, Varadero 5★

This adults only, ultra All-Inclusive luxury hotel is located on the famous Varadero Beach, one of Cuba's finest with white sands and picture perfect turquoise Caribbean waters. The Paradisus Princesa del Mar resort is 100% about holiday fun and relaxation with a large variety of restaurants, bars, entertainment and activities included to suit all moods.

**Facilities** 8 restaurants • café • 6 bars including cigar bar & nightclub • fitness centre • large freeform pool with whirlpools • internet access • floodlit tennis • spa (local charge) • sauna • beauty parlour • laundry • shop

**Rooms** 434 suites • mini-bar • satellite TV • CD player • air-con • tea & coffee • balcony or terrace • 24hr room service

Prices per person per night, all inclusive, in £'s from

Standard	Twin	Single	Twin	Single
01Jan09-03Jan09	76	113	22Dec09-03Jan10	84
04Jan09-31Jan09	51	70	04Jan10-31Jan10	59
01Feb09-14Jul09	55	74	01Feb10-31Mar10	63
15Jul09-24Aug09	68	85		
25Aug09-31Oct09	55	86		
01Nov09-21Dec09	56	75		

Includes accommodation, meals, drinks, cocktails, entertainment, tips & gratuities.

Prices per person per night, all inclusive, in £'s from

Standard	Twin	Single	Twin	Single
01Jan09-03Jan09	75	104	01Nov09-21Dec09	61
04Jan09-30Apr09	54	75	22Dec09-03Jan10	84
01May09-14Jul09	51	79	04Jan10-31Mar10	63
15Jul09-24Aug09	66	94		
25Aug09-15Sep09	58	85		
16Sep09-31Oct09	51	79		

Includes accommodation, meals, drinks, cocktails, entertainment, ecological trips, tips & gratuities.

Prices per person per night, all inclusive, in £'s from

Junior Suite	Twin	Single	Twin	Single
01Jan09-03Jan09	131	178	22Dec09-03Jan10	140
04Jan09-30Apr09	110	148	04Jan10-31Mar10	120
01May09-14Jul09	96	133		
15Jul09-24Aug09	106	143		
25Aug09-31Oct09	96	133		
01Nov09-21Dec09	105	141		

Includes accommodation, meals, drinks, cocktails, entertainment, tips & gratuities.