



CUBA ADVENTURE

CULTURE TOUR

ITINERARY 2019 MAY 4 – 11
8-days / 7-nights

Tour map



Cuba's big! Its land mass is 42,426 square miles – about 80 percent the size of Alabama. Cuba is nearly as large as Louisiana, and larger than Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky, South Carolina, Ohio or Indiana. Altogether it's bigger than Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont combined.

Full itinerary and tour activities descriptions

A Cuba expedition focused on people-to-people education, nature and cultural exchanges. This program is geared to naturalists, and lovers of the arts, music, history and architecture. The tour has a very diverse itinerary and features comfortable accommodations and authentic Cuban cuisine.

Day 1 – Saturday :: Havana ~ evening of culture and music



Arrive at Havana International airport. Collect your bags and go through customs. You will be welcomed just outside the airport by your Cuban guide and professional bus driver. Enjoy the comfort of our coach bus while taking in the scenery on route to our first location. Lunch on the first day is the only meal not included in your trip cost due to the uncertainty of arriving flight schedules. If your flight arrives in time for lunch, we will arrange a great meal for you. With our bellies full we are off to check into our first location in Havana for our overnight stay.



Once settled in, the group will enjoy a splendid meal in old Havana at Club 54 private restaurant. Enjoy your first night in a city that was first settled in 1519 by the Spanish. Rich in history and culture, Havana is a sprawling Metropolis with over 2 million inhabitants. Welcome to Hemmingway's favourite city.

Sign-Up and More Information at www.scottski.org

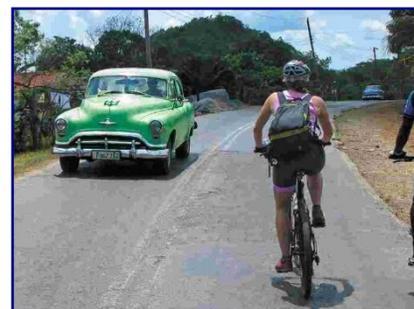
Day 2 – Sunday :: Havana ~ biking, walking & classic car tour



Colorful band of musicians and dancers on stilts on a narrow Old Havana.



After a great breakfast we depart around 9:00am on the bus to the bicycle pick-up point in western Havana. Here **we will start our bike tour** travelling through Havana towards the sea-side malecon. Enjoy the scenery and several interesting stops along the way. Biking the streets will give you a great perspective on Cuban city life. Our bike tour will last a maximum of 3 hours and circle through the old city and return back to our starting point in western Havana.



We leave the bikes behind and **continue via old classic Americano cars** through the streets of Havana to Morro Castle. This Castle was built by the Spanish to protect Havana bay and the city from pirates, buccaneers and invading countries. Our classic car ride continues into Old Havana to further explore monuments, streets, churches and shops but first we will recharge with a great lunch at Temple restaurant and then continue by foot.



Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site has 5 historic plazas, we will visit 4 of them. Havana contains the largest collection of remaining colonial-era architecture.

This is a **private tour led by your Educational Tour guide.**

1- Cathedral Square, the most beautiful and private 18th century colonial plazas on the island.

Named after the masterpiece of Cuban baroque

architecture: The Cathedral de San Cristobal de la Havana built by the Jesuit order.

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2 – Square of Arms, an ancient military parade ground for Spanish soldiers, surrounded by impressive buildings such as: Palacio de los Capitanes Generales, former seat of colonial government. Today the building houses the Museum of the city. Palacio del Segundo Cabo [Palace of the Second Lieutenant] dates from 1770. Today it is home to the Centro para la Interpretación de las Relaciones Culturales Cuba - Europa [Center for the Interpretation of Cultural Relations Cuba-Europe].

3 – We continue onto San Francisco Square, one of the oldest plazas in the historical quarter. The square is named after magnificent Iglesia y Monasterio de San Francisco de Asis dating from the 16th century. The basilica is a striking example of Cuba baroque architecture.

4 – Then on to Plaza Vieja, the only civic square of colonial times. Absent are the churches, and government buildings, and is in contrast surrounded by opulent aristocratic 17th century residences. We'll visit an important center for the visual arts. After visiting the old squares we will continue to Havana's National Art Museum. Take in the exhibits and through this expression of art the Cuban culture really enlightens its admirers. Just in front of the Art Museum is the Historical Revolution Museum. This is a great display and a reminder of Cuba's struggles for change. What a great day taking in the culture of Cuba and its people. A short bus ride takes us back to accommodations for the night.



El Morro castle in Havana with sea waves crashing on the Malecon seawall.



Dinner will be at a private restaurant called Nazdarovie. Havana's truly authentic Russian dining experience. Sleep well because tomorrow we depart to the Caribbean's largest national park lands reserve.

Day 3 – Monday :: Guama ~ crocodile farm tour, boat ride and stand up paddle board or kayak



Stand-up paddle boarding. The fastest growing sport in the world. Fun, safe, easy and fast.



Breakfast at our hotel in Havana. We then load up and are on our Guamá Islands in the Treasure Lagoon. This was once the site of a Taíno Aboriginal settlement. Here, we will stay in traditional native style cabins with thatched roofs raised on stilts above the water. Don't let these rustic cabins fool you; they are all equipped with a private bathroom, satellite T.V. and balcony with a lake view.



Before taking an exhilarating boat ride into the lagoon we will enjoy lunch at Enrique's private restaurant in Playa Larga and after a special visit to the Caribbean's largest protected natural park. Cienaga de Zapata National Park boasts some of the best bird watching in all of Cuba. Here we have been granted permission to take an afternoon excursion deep into the salt flats to observe pink flamingos, pelicans, rosette spoon-bills, herons, egrets and many more species of birds in their natural environment. Bring your camera! After enjoying the park we will make our way to the Guama landing and take a short walk to a crocodile farm. To get to Guama village we will take motor boat ride through a labyrinth of back channels to arrive at the main village. Check in and explore the numerous islands via bridges and board walks. The afternoon is yours to explore and discover.



Dinner will be served at the hotel's restaurant about 7:30pm. This amazing restaurant is featured on the 1 C.U.C coin. Enjoy nature at its finest!

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Day 4 – Tuesday :: Guajimico and Topes de Collantes ~ 4 by 4 mountain tour, coffee tasting, waterfall jungle hike



Pack up your stuff and let's head to the mountains! After breakfast we depart via bus to a junction that heads to Topes De Collates. Here we will **hop aboard a 4 by 4 Russian mountain truck at 9:15 am** to make the drive up and into the mountains. The Escambray Mountains are one of three mountain ranges in Cuba. This area is three quarters park lands and has some of the most beautiful scenery in Cuba.

This ride will take approx. 45mins. and then we will **arrive at a mountain coffee house and a botanical tea shop**. Enjoy one of over 30 different specialty coffee drinks before we carry on to our lunch stop and the start of our hike.



Nestled in the valley of the mountains is a restaurant called Casa De Gallega. Here they will be serving up a great lunch at 12:00 pm with a beautiful setting. After lunch **we will do a nature hike to a series of crystal clear pools, a cave and waterfalls**. Relax and soak up nature at it's best. Sendero Centinelas Del Rio Melodioso is the name of this hiking trail in Guanayara Park. We will be hiking approx. 2.5 hours and only covering half the trail. At the half-way point our mountain truck will be waiting for us. Load up and dress warm for the ride up out of the valley to meet our bus and drive back to Guajimico for our evening.

Day 5 – Wednesday :: Guajimico ~ nature hike, swimming or snorkeling, caving, or optional horse-back riding or scuba diving; and evening salsa lessons



Off the beaten path from your exclusive beach resort lies a hidden cave system that only you and few others will ever explore.



Guajimico is one of the best kept secrets in Cuba. Tucked away from the hustle and bustle and surrounded by pristine nature. After breakfast at the resort the group will enjoy a **nature hike to an isolated private beach** surround by massive cliffs. Bring your camera to capture this spectacular diamond in the rough. **Relax, swim or enjoy some world class snorkeling** in the turquoise waters.

On our hike back we will do a **slight detour through a massive cave system** that will take your breath away. This amazing cave system is seldom travelled and is truly off the beaten path. Lunch is at the resort.



In the afternoon if you haven't tried **stand up paddle boarding** before now is your chance to get an introduction and paddling tips from your tour leader / instructor. Paddle boarding is one of the world's fastest growing sports in the world. Time to see why and what a better place to do it than the aqua blue waters on the Caribbean Sea. Bring along a mask and snorkel to view the reefs while lying on your paddle board. The other **option is to scuba dive**. We can also arrange horseback riding and/or diving if you are interested. These activities are not included in the pricing of the program but are between \$20-\$30 CUC extra.



Dinner will be served at Villa Guajimico and after dinner enjoy a special evening learning traditional **Cuban salsa and bachata dance**. Increased mojito consumption increases your hip motion!

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Day 6 – Thursday :: Guajimico / Cayo Blanco / Trinidad ~ catamaran adventure and walking tour of Trinidad)



World class snorkeling in pristine waters awaits you on your Cuban Adventure Culture Tour. Come now and enjoy it before it gets Starbuck-ed!



Get ready for an exciting action packed day. After breakfast at the resort, the bus will depart for an hour long drive along the coast to the Ancon peninsula south of Trinidad. Here we will **climb aboard a catamaran at Marlin Marina and set sail** for Cayo Blanco Island. This Island is located approx. 10 miles south of the main land and is the ideal spot to enjoy the ocean and the beach away from the crowds. The island is 2 miles long and worth exploring. This is a great spot to **enjoy snorkeling in shallow sandy waters.**



A lunch is served on the island and around 3:00pm the catamaran will **sail back to the mainland**. We will cruise into the **old city of Trinidad for a historical tour**. Trinidad was founded in 1514 and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Enjoy a walking tour in the Plaza Mayor in the center of town. Located around the plaza are the Museo Romántico and the Iglesia Parroquial de la Santísima Trinidad. Also enjoy a visit at a community project in Trinidad.



Dinner will be at Visa Gourmet, one of the best private restaurants in the city. It's then back to Guajimico for the evening. Adventure and culture at its finest!

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Day 7 – Friday :: Cienfuegos ~ snorkeling, city tour, flamingo reserve, private restaurant



Warm clean fresh pools 365 days a year. Don't forget your swimsuit!



Good morning adventurers! Breakfast is served at the restaurant and then we **catch the boat ride back to the landing** where our bus will carry us south towards Playa Larga. On route to Cienfuegos we will make two stops. First **stop is at a great snorkeling area on the "Bay of Pigs" called Caleta Buena**. Prepare to be amazed at the diversity of fish that will surround you.



Here enjoy a couple hours of snorkeling and lunch ocean-side with a great view. With our bellies full we will continue to the town of Giron for a **quick visit to the "Bay of Pigs Battle" museum**. The "Bay of Pigs" battle location represents the first military defeat of the modern United States on April, 1961. On to Cienfuegos City, also known as "La Perla del Sur" (Pearl of the South) and the only city founded by French settlers (1819). Once we arrive **in Cienfuegos a sightseeing city tour** will give you a taste of Cuban city life and culture. Visit the city's foundation, Jose Marti Park, where the most representative buildings include the Government Palace (City Hall, current office of the Provincial Assembly of the Popular Power), San Lorenzo School, the Terry Theater, Cathedral de la Purisma Concepcion, the former Lyceum building and some residential buildings. A short bus tour down the malecon to Palacio de Valle where you will visit this beautiful National Heritage Memorial. Be sure to **climb the circular stairs up to the roof top bar** for a perfect 360-degree view of Cienfuegos and the Bay. If you look out to the east, you will see the Escambray Mountain range in the distance. We will be visiting them on day 7 of your adventure.



It's a long drive back to Havana so get cozy and relax. Our final dinner and accommodations will be in Havana. Enjoy **the evening, lights, music and buzz of Cuba's capital city one last time** before heading home with loads of great memories.

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Day 8 – Saturday :: Bye bye Cuba – for now



After breakfast, we will transfer you to the Havana Airport approx. three hours before your international flight. Remember to tip your tour guides well. Without them this amazing adventure wouldn't be possible. Our goal is to always meet or exceed your expectations.

Cuba travel is a challenge. Our staff and Cuban partners work super hard to make your tour unfold seamlessly despite Third World conditions on the island. Sometimes things don't go as planned. Flexible travelers understand this is part of their Cuban adventure.

Cuban proverb:

A true friend remembers the song in your heart when you have forgotten the lyrics.

Included in tour cost

Included in tour cost

Tour meals at your hotel and at fine restaurants

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Breakfast								
Lunch								
Dinner								

- All taxes. Prices listed are the total amounts you pay. All amounts are quoted in US dollars
- Certificate of Legal Cuba Travel in compliance with US Department of Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control regulations (OFAC) section, 1 C.F.R. § 515.565(b)
- Airport transfers: We meet you at José Martí Int'l Airport in Havana and take you to your hotel upon arrival. We return you to José Martí Int'l Airport in Havana for departure
- Hotels as listed in tour itinerary or similar
- All breakfasts, lunches and dinners as per itinerary
- An expert Cuban English-speaking guide and translator whose background matches tour content throughout the program

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- All activities, services, speakers, meetings and meals as described in tour itinerary except those noted as "optional" or "not included in cost"
- Modern air-conditioned bus and professional chauffeur
- Bottled water on bus
- Emergency collect call access to our North American staff while in Cuba
- Emergency cash advances for our tour participants who face complications accessing funds from aboard while in Cuba
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Not included in cost

- Domestic or international flights
- Mandatory Cuban medical insurance (generally included in the cost of US flights to Cuba)
- Adult beverages and purchases of a personal nature
- Mandatory Cuban Visitor Visa. Approx. \$85 per person We will assist you with this
- Gratuities for Cuban tour guide, bus driver, chambermaids, restaurant staff, porters.
- We strongly recommend trip interruption and cancellation insurance through [Allianz Global Assistance](#) for Cuba travel peace of mind. SSSC will have a group/trip plan for savings.

Adventure Hosted By: ♥ Scottsdale Sea & Ski Club

FLY DAYS:

ARRIVE in Havana on May 4 Saturday anytime
RETURN - Fly home May 11 Saturday after 11am

CANCELLATION POLICY:

Cancellation fee: *100% refundable until Oct 31, 2018.
Nov 1, 2018 – all deposits become non-refundable as per tour operator.
All SSSC Rules & Policies apply.

**It is STRONGLY advisable to take Travel Insurance. Group Policy offered.
Mandatory Cuban medical insurance (generally included in the cost of US flights to Cuba)**

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