

# EXPLORE!

Book with confidence



## Classic Cuba

CUBA - TRIP CODE DCL

DISCOVERY

### Why book this trip?

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Based in premium hotels, this trip is an excellent opportunity to visit Cuba in style. Discover Fidel Castro's revolutionary headquarters, visit the infamous Bay of Pigs and sip rum cocktails under the stars. Two nights in Trinidad's characterful 'casas particulares', or homestays, offer a deeper experience of Cuban life.

- **Havana** - Experience the faded colonial splendour of Cuba's capital, from the historic Hotel Nacional
- **Comandancia de la Plata** - Hike through the jungle to Fidel's 1950's rebel headquarters
- **Relaxation** - Enjoy the white-sand beaches of Cayo Ensenachos.



**INCLUDED MEALS**  
Breakfast: 14  
Lunch: 6  
Dinner: 3



**TRIP STAFF**  
Explore Tour  
Leader  
Driver(s)  
Local Guide(s)



**TRANSPORT**  
Bus



**ACCOMMODATION**  
2 nights  
comfortable casas  
particulares  
10 nights premium  
hotel  
2 nights  
comfortable hotel



**TRIP PACE:**  
Full on



**GROUP SIZE:**  
10 - 16

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Join trip in Havana

Arrive in Havana. Built around a deep natural harbour, Havana is one of the most impressive cities in the Americas. It's also one of the most exciting: the modern city is a fascinating mix of old and new, with crumbling tenement blocks and 1950s American Cadillacs rubbing shoulders with grand colonial buildings and monuments to the revolution.

Due to the number of evening flights into Havana, our local Leader plans to do the welcome briefing in the morning of day two, and will leave a message in reception with details on timings and everything else that you'll need for the day. There are no other activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Havana at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into Havana's Jose Marti International Airport (airport code HAV) which is 23km, around 45 minutes from the airport. A representative from our local partners in Cuba will meet you at Havana Airport and assist you with the transfer formalities.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, you may wish to take a walk down the scenic Malecon esplanade with fine views of the city, or sit outside in the gardens of our hotel, sipping a mojito in front of the Caribbean Sea.



**ACCOMMODATION:**  
Hotel Nacional (or similar)

**Grade: Premium Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

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## DAY 2 - Tour of Havana's highlights, free afternoon

This morning, our tour explores the highlights of Havana's Vieja (Old) district; the art deco architecture of coastal Malecon and the Vedado and Miramar suburbs, where kids play baseball below rusting street lights.

After taking in the opulent marbled grandeur of the Capitolio and the symbolic expanse of the Plaza de la Revolucion, we take a stroll through old Havana. Here we will find beautiful neoclassical buildings at the Plaza de Armas (main square) and an impressive baroque cathedral, before a lunch visit to the famous La Bodeguita del Melia, home to Hemingway's favourite Mojito.

Havana truly is a city in which to immerse yourself and, after our brief introduction this morning, the afternoon has been left free to continue exploring at your leisure. You may wish to visit the City Museum, or the captivating Museum of the Revolution, where you can find the revered hull of the Granma, the boat that brought Castro back from exile and onto the world stage in 1956.

Alternatively, you may wish to return to Old Havana to enjoy a stroll through its cobbled streets, stopping to enjoy a mojito at a local bar.

In the late afternoon, once the freshening cool breeze blows in from the Caribbean, you may be tempted to enjoy a lively sunset stroll along the Malecon, where fishermen and locals take in the magical setting before the imposing ramparts of its old Spanish forts.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel Nacional (or similar)

**Grade: Premium Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

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### DAY 3 - Full day trip to the picturesque Vinales countryside

This morning we head into what is arguably the most picturesque part of Cuba - the Vinales Valley. In this World Heritage Site, surreal mountains jut out of the landscape, formed by the erosion of limestone over millions of years. These 'mogotes' translate as 'haystacks' - a good word for them considering their steep sides and rounded, jungly tops. Around them, the iron-rich, red soil creates a patchwork of fields growing some of the best tobacco in the world - the raw material for Cuba's celebrated cigars.

We will walk through this spectacular landscape to El Palmaito, with mogotes towering above us as we pass tobacco and coffee plantations. This remarkably diverse area contains endemic flora and a rich selection of birdlife, including hummingbirds, Cuban trogons and mockingbirds. We will stop to have lunch before visiting the Cueva del Indio - the largest cave system in the country, filled with surreal rock formations and subterranean pools. Later this afternoon, we return to Havana.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel Nacional (or similar)



Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

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### DAY 4 - Travel to Trinidad via the Bay of Pigs Museum

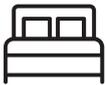
Today, we head east on our journey to Trinidad, driving through giant citrus and sugar plantations and out onto the Zapata Peninsula. Our journey is broken up with a wonderful swimming opportunity in a 'cenote', where the ceiling of an underground river has collapsed. We plan to arrive in Playa Giron by mid-afternoon. Here we will visit the museum dedicated to the infamous 'Bay of Pigs' invasion - a US-supported attack by Cuban exiles which failed to overthrow the Communist regime in 1961.

We then travel to Cienfuegos, a colonial seaport, where we take a walking tour of the town, including the Marti Park overlooked by the grand Italian-style Tomas Terry Theatre. Our journey continues, past the wooded Escambray Mountains and hugging the coastline, with views over the sparkling turquoise waters

of the Caribbean Sea.

Upon arrival in Trinidad, you will have some free time to wander through the old centre, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here, cobblestone streets and colonial architecture make it one of the most bewitching heritage sites in the country.

In Trinidad, we will be staying in 'casas particulares', or local guesthouses, which are a style of accommodation unique to Cuba. The industry began in the early '90s when entrepreneurial homeowners rented out rooms in their houses for a little extra cash, a side hustle that was initially illegal in a country that did not allow for private enterprise. In 1997 the Cuban government legalised the business, and while you can now find some large casas that are run more as a typical bed and breakfast, the majority are still a couple of rooms in the owner's house. The beauty of the casas is that each one is very different. You will have ensuite bathrooms, hot water, a delicious breakfast and air conditioning across the board, but that is where the similarities end. Décor and aesthetics vary dramatically not just between cities but also between streets. Some are still the primary residence for the owners, which is a great opportunity to interact with local people, or practice your Spanish. In other cases, the owner may live elsewhere. In Trinidad, many (although not all) of the casas have some outdoor space, whether it is a terrace, balcony or courtyard. So while everyone's experience will be different, using casas gives us a great alternative to staying in standard hotels, and a new perspective on Cuban life.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Casa Particulares - Trinidad (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Casas Particulares



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## DAY 5 - Explore Trinidad; optional excursion to Playa Ancon

This morning, a walking tour takes us through the cobbled streets of the old centre of Trinidad, discovering its fine palaces, churches and cafes. A paradise for photographers, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is a perfectly preserved colonial settlement unlike any other. In the early 19th century, French settlers fleeing a slave revolt in Haiti, landed here and started to grow sugar cane in the Valle de Los Ingenios. This crop generated considerable wealth and consequently the town had to be regularly defended from pirates.

Subject to opening hours, we will visit a local museum before our free afternoon. You may choose to relax on the six kilometres of Playa Ancon's white-sand beach nearby, or take a boat trip to the equally stunning beach on Cayo Blanco. There is also the opportunity to take a salsa lesson with a local teacher. Alternatively, you might prefer to wander for longer through Trinidad's streets to soak up more of the unique atmosphere.

Later, those keen to sample some of Cuba's famed nightlife can visit the open-air Casa de la Musica, just

off the main square.



ACCOMMODATION:

Casa Particulares - Trinidad (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Casas Particulares**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 6 - Stop in Camaguey en route to Bayamo**

Today's drive to Bayamo in South East Cuba takes us via two of the original seven settlements founded by Diego Velasquez when he claimed Cuba for Spain. After a brief stop in Sancti Spiritus, we continue to Camaguey for lunch. Cuba's third largest city is a cultural centre for music, ballet and art. It has a beautiful colonial heritage hidden amongst a labyrinthine network of narrow streets that we will have time to wander through during our time here.

Bayamo, our base for the night, is another of the original seven Spanish settlements. Despite its inhabitants burning much of it to the ground in an act of rebellion in 1869, it has retained some of its colonial architecture. Today, it is known for its laid back atmosphere and its chess players, who while away hours playing the game in the main square.

On the 15th February and 21st March departures, we will be staying at Hotel Sierra Maestra in Bayamo.



ACCOMMODATION:

Royalton Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



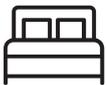
MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## DAY 7 - Visit La Comandancia de la Plata, drive to Santiago

An early start sees us heading into the beautiful mountain landscapes of the Sierra Maestra to enjoy one of the country's most fascinating and authentic experiences - a trek deep into the jungle to the revolutionary headquarters of La Comandancia de La Plata. We transfer into 4WD vehicles at Bartolome Maso to allow us to ascend the steep asphalt road to Alto de Naranjo, 950 metres above sea level. From here, we trek for three kilometres through virgin rainforest. The path is uneven and can be muddy, helping us to understand the appeal of our destination's remoteness. Upon reaching the hideaway where Fidel Castro and Che Guevara took refuge for two years, we discover what seems like a snapshot in time of one of the most pivotal periods in Cuba's history. It was here that Fidel began to formulate his plans for the future of the country and the site presents us with a captivating glimpse of life during those dangerous days. Castro's simple camp bed and fridge (which someone impressively carted up the mountain for him) still remain, along with a trap door for a speedy exit if under attack. Also, the original broadcast hut for 'Radio Rebelde' still stands, as well as Che's hospital hut where he worked as a doctor. Previously forbidden, it is now possible to take photos around the site for a small fee.

We will complete our day with a journey to Santiago - Cuba's second city and the epicentre of revolutionary ideals since the time of Cespedes. Founded by Diego Velazquez de Cuellar in 1514, the city has been at the heart of Cuban culture and history since its inception. Briefly the country's capital, it rose to prominence during the 17th and 18th centuries, with first the arrival of Spanish settlers from Jamaica, then French plantation owners from Haiti. The region saw much of the fighting of both wars for independence and it was in Santiago that success against Batista's forces was finally, and very publicly, acknowledged by Fidel Castro on 1st January 1959. Little wonder then that the city has earned itself the moniker of 'Hero City of the Republic of Cuba'. Santiago itself is an eclectic mix of all the best and worst of Cuban life. Its colonial architecture glimmers in attractive shades of pastel, whilst its Afro-Caribbean mix affords it the unmistakable vibrancy of a true city of the revolution.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Melia Santiago (or similar)

Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

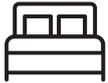
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## DAY 8 - See the sights of Santiago de Cuba, free afternoon

This morning, we will enjoy a guided tour of Cuba's second city, taking in many of the colonial buildings which are painted in attractive, traditional pastel shades. We plan to stop-off at the Plaza de la Revolucion with its fine monument to the heroes of the Independence Wars, before visiting the remarkable cemetery where independence hero, Jose Marti, is buried. The Moncada Barracks are a particular highlight as you can still see the bullet holes on the outside of the building which Castro and 118 students unsuccessfully attacked in 1953. There may also be an opportunity to visit a rum museum / shop.

The afternoon is left free for you to explore in your own time. There are many museums, squares and churches to discover, or it may be possible to arrange dance lessons.

This evening, we have the opportunity to experience Santiago's lively nightlife.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Melia Santiago (or similar)

**Grade: Premium Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## **DAY 9 - Drive to Sancti Spiritus, free time to explore**

Today we have a long drive to return to Sancti Spiritus, where we can spend the remainder of the day wandering through the colonial architecture remnants from the great days of the sugar cane production in the area.

Please note that the specified hotel in Sancti Spiritus is our preferred option, but is subject to last minute changes. If it changes prior to your trip we will inform you, and if we are unable to accommodate you in a hotel of a premium standard, we will advise you of any refund payable.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel Del Rijo (or similar)

**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 10 - Head to Cayo Ensenachos on the Sabana archipelago**

Our destination today is the all-inclusive resort of the Iberostar Ensenachos on the island of Cayo Ensenachos, lying close to the spectacular Caribbean jewels of the Archipelago de Sabana. The island is connected to the mainland by a causeway. On arrival, there will be time to relax and enjoy the luxurious pleasure of two of Cuba's most pristine beaches.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Iberostar Ensenachos (or similar)

Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

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### **DAY 11 - Free in Cayo Ensenachos to relax on the beach**

Today is left free for you to do as you wish. Whilst enjoying the many water-based activities on offer, you are likely to see interesting birdlife, such as flamingos, who make a home for themselves on the small sandy islands that dot this archipelago. On dry land, activities such as tennis and volleyball can be enjoyed. Alternatively, you may choose to simply relax on one of the glorious beaches or in a hammock while sipping a Cuban cocktail.



ACCOMMODATION:

Iberostar Ensenachos (or similar)

**Grade: Premium Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 12 - In Cayo Ensenachos, optional water based activities**

Once again, today is left free to enjoy at your leisure.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Iberostar Ensenachos (or similar)

**Grade: Premium Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 13 - Return to Havana via Santa Clara**

After a last free morning at the resort, we return to Havana. En route, we will visit Che's Mausoleum in Santa Clara, the final resting place of one of the world's most iconic and recognisable revolutionary figures. Guevara was buried here with full military honours in 1997 after his exhumed remains were discovered in Bolivia and returned to Cuba. A flame lit by Fidel Castro burns eternally to honour him. We will also visit the museum dedicated to Guevara's life, containing many interesting letters and artefacts.

On arrival in Havana, you will have a free evening to wander the streets of the Vieja district, enjoying the live music and perhaps a final Cuban cocktail, or two.

Please note that the specified hotel in Havana is our preferred option, but is subject to last minute changes. If it changes prior to your trip we will inform you, and if we are unable to accommodate you in a hotel of premium standard, we will advise you of any refund payable.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel Nacional (or similar)

**Grade: Premium Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE

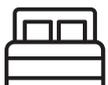


MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 14 - To Las Terrazas; walks and birdwatching**

Today we will spend the day at Las Terrazas - a fascinating eco-tourism centre where valuable biodiversity research is being undertaken. Here, we can enjoy interesting walks through old coffee plantations within a picturesque hill setting. Bird watching opportunities abound and we hope to sight the rare Cuban trogon, Cuba's national bird, as well as small songbirds, including nightingales. Other wildlife includes reptiles, such as water lizards, and one of the smallest species of frog in the world. You may also choose to enjoy an optional zip wire ride in the canopy or swim in the San Juan River before our return to Havana.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel Nacional (or similar)

**Grade: Premium Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

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### DAY 15 - Trip ends Havana

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Havana.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Havana at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from Havana's Jose Marti International Airport (airport code: HAV) which is 23km, around 45 minutes from the hotel.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## Trip information

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### Climate and country information

#### Cuba

##### Climate

The dry season is from November to April. Average temperatures are 22-26C. Though the sky is often cloudless during the dry season, cold wet snaps do come in from North America especially in Dec and Jan, when the temperatures can drop to as low as 5C at night. From May to October there are normally fine mornings and clear evenings, afternoon rains tend to be short & heavy. Temperatures are hot and humid.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
-5	2 Pin Flat and 2 Pin Round	60% Catholic	Spanish

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### Budgeting and packing

### Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated

costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Havana - Museo de la Ciudad CUC3, CUC8 with guide; Museo de la Revolucion & Arte Colonial CUC8 each, CUC10 with guide; Rum museum CUC7 .

Trinidad - Cayo Blanco or Cayo Las Iguanas Boat Excursion CUC60 (this is a full day so will shorten your time for Trinidad tour) plus transport 10CUC per taxi each way; Excursion to Playa Ancon CUC10 per taxi each way.

Comandancia de la Plata - Camera charge CUC5 and video CUC10.

Please note - most museums in Cuba charge for use of cameras and camcorders, this can be up to 7 CUC per usage.

## **Clothing**

Include light cotton clothing plus something warmer for the evenings in the hills when it can get cool. A light fleece and waterproof would be useful except December-January when a heavier fleece and waterproof are recommended. An umbrella is useful in the rainy season. Please note there is a smart dress code for the Iberostar Ensenachos which includes no shorts and closed shoes in the restaurants

## **Footwear**

Comfortable walking boots. Shoes and trainers or sandals.

## **Luggage**

20kg

## **Luggage: On tour**

One main piece of luggage and a shoulder bag or daysac. Remember you may be expected to carry your own luggage, so don't overload yourself.

## **Equipment**

A torch, water bottle, good quality sunglasses, insect repellent and high factor sunscreen are all essential. You may also wish to bring a pocket-knife with you, and your own mask and snorkel for your stay at the Iberostar Ensenachos.

## **Tipping**

### **Explore leader**

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline

### **Local crew**

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order

to make things easier for you, your leader may organise a group's tips kitty for included activities and meals and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow CUC40 for group tipping

For all non-included services and meals on your trip please tip independently at your discretion.

Please note tipping is also customary for musicians and for public conveniences so small notes and coins are always handy

## Cuba

### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

<b>Dinner price</b>	<b>Beer price</b>	<b>Water price</b>
£12.00-15.00	£2	£1.5

### Foreign Exchange

#### Local currency

Cuban National Peso (CUP)

#### Recommended Currency For Exchange

The CUP is a closed currency so you will not be able to change your money in advance. You will be able to change at the airport on arrival. When changing money, just change a small amount for your first few days and cross-check the amount that you're given with the receipt. The exchange rate with the CUP is approximately CUP 33 to the British Pound. US dollars are not accepted in shops and other businesses, exchanging dollars you will have to pay a 20% commission. We recommend you take clean Euro, Canadian dollars or Sterling cash as these are easier to exchange. Please note that Scottish Pounds are not accepted in Cuba. Please check on line for up to date information The departure lounge Havana airport only accept US\$, Euros or CAN\$. Any spare CUP need to be spent or exchanged before entering the departure lounge.

#### Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

#### ATM Availability

Please note ATM are not widely available

#### Credit Card Acceptance

Please note credit and debit cards associated with American Banks are not accepted. Credit cards are useful and can be used in some places, but may be subject to a service charge

#### Travellers Cheques

We do not recommend Travellers Cheques.

## Transport Information

Bus

## Accommodation notes

Accommodation and service levels in Cuba have improved in recent years but there is an ongoing trade embargo and lack of investment in infrastructure. Even the premium-rated accommodation can occasionally suffer with unreliable water and electricity supply, and service levels in government hotels, shops and restaurants are generally poor. This is not a service-oriented culture. Of course, this is all part of seeing the 'real Cuba' and while we think you'll be pleasantly surprised by most of the hotels we use, you should be prepared for simply furnished rooms, some out-dated furniture and varying levels of service. Most of the hotels have air conditioning.

In Havana we stay at the memorable Hotel Nacional. Although some of the rooms do look a little dated now, the history in this hotel is incredible, having hosted Hollywood royalty, provided the setting for an important meeting between the US and Sicilian mafia families, been a site of the Cold War and seen countless other changes in Havana's turbulent past. With an enormous garden and beautiful views over the bay, it is a fitting beginning and end to this Cuban journey.

On Cayo Ensenachos, we use the Hotel Iberostar as larger hotels are the norm in Cuba's beach areas. This 5 star resort has access to two white-sand beaches, a variety of pool and spa areas, watersport opportunities and a great bar.

We use casas particulares in Trinidad, which is a Spanish term meaning private accommodation or homestay, specific to Cuba. Staying in a casa offers the visitor a unique opportunity to experience Cuban hospitality in local accommodation adapted for tourism. The number of rooms, quality, facilities and access to other areas of the house such as the living room varies massively between houses, which means that each one has a unique character of their own. Your Explore Leader will coordinate accommodation arrangements on tour.

## Cuba

### Food and drink

Food supplies to Cuba are sometimes in short supply as a result of their economic situation as well as the restrictions due to the US embargo. For this reason it is not uncommon for some restaurants and hotels to run short of ingredients. In addition, Cubans tend not to use much spice in their cooking and there can be a lack of variety resulting in the same meals being repeatedly offered. That said, local produce is usually very fresh and often organic.

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## Essential Information

### Government Travel Safety Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK citizens, check the latest Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice.

Please refer to our COVID-19 entry requirements page for any country-specific conditions of entry. Whilst we strive to update this on a regular basis we recommend you also check the FCDO website for the latest advice on entry requirements in this fast-evolving situation. Information can change at any time.

### **Under 18 immigration guidance**

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### **Price Guarantee**

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

### **Visa and Passport Information**

Cuba: Visas or Tourist cards are required by all nationalities travelling to Cuba. Explore can only supply the Cuban Tourist Cards to citizens of the EU, Canada, Australia and New Zealand who are resident in the UK. This currently costs £15. Please contact Explore or your Travel Agent to arrange this service and we will send your tourist card with your final documentation.

Alternatively they can be obtained directly through Cuban embassies and consulates. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

Due to US Treasury Department Regulations we are unable to accept bookings from US passport holders. These Regulations set out different categories under which it is possible for US citizens to travel to Cuba; our trips do not fall under any of the permissible categories. As a tour operator we have an obligation to follow legal procedures, and as such we are unable to sell our trips to US passport holders.

Travelling for tourism reasons directly from the USA to Cuba isn't allowed under US law. The law applies to US nationals and all foreign nationals who are either resident in the USA, or travelling through the USA en route to Cuba. Those travelling on direct flights between the UK and Cuba, or via other countries excluding the USA, are unaffected by this US legislation.

Canada: An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity

for your chosen destination.

## Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

## Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them here.

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Ability to swim

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

## Cuba

### Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, TB, infectious hepatitis and polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

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## Additional Information



## Explore staff love Cuba!

Read about their experiences and what you can expect from your trip.

## Why book this trip

This trip is an excellent opportunity to visit Cuba in style, before changes start to happen. We use premium hotels across most of the island, including the Hotel Nacional in Havana, and the 2 nights in Casas Particulares offer a deeper experience of Cuban life - often an unexpected highlight of the trip.

## Reviews



AWARD WINNING  
EXPLORE LEADERS



PRICE GUARANTEE  
PROMISE



AIRPORT  
TRANSFERS