



## CUBA CULTURAL TOUR 2021

**ITINERARY (Postponed until we can travel again safely). Subscribe to [www.travelswithtalek.com](http://www.travelswithtalek.com) to get updates and future tour dates.**

**Day 1. Arrive Havana.** Check in at local “casa particular,” a private enterprise guest house.

**Habana Vieja (Old Havana) – UNESCO World Heritage Site**



- Check in at a local “casa particular” (Cuban guest house).
- Experience the unique history, music, art, and architecture of Old Havana.
- Lunch at a “paladar” in Old Havana (included).
- Meet with artists at their workshops in Old Havana.
- Learn about “Cuban Daily Life Today.” Visit food markets, shop at a local agro-market and learn how to prepare your typical Cuban dinner with an expert cook (included).

## Day 2. Eastern Havana neighborhoods and beyond

- Breakfast every day at the casa (included).



- Visit Havana's most interesting neighborhoods.
- Lunch at a typical Cuban paladar (included).
- Historic Hotel Nacional.
- Explore Havana's rooftop culture.
- Cuban history and architecture walk.
- Tour Havana in a classic American car.
- El Malecon photo opportunity.
- Dinner at a local paladar (included).
- Visit to San Carlos Fortress for the 9PM Cannon Shoot



**Day 3. Visit to Havana's eastern beaches by day and art/music venue by night.**



- Visit to what some say are the most beautiful beaches on earth.
- Seaside lunch (included).
- Evening at the Fabrica de Arte Cubana (FAC) Cuban Art Factory, s unique art museum/club/restaurant.
- Dinner on your own at one of the many theme restaurants.

#### Day 4. Journey to Viñales, UNESCO World Heritage Site



- Visit to senior citizen center to donate clothing or supplies and meet with the residents.
- Travel through the Cuban countryside to the province of Viñales.
- Visit to Los Jazmines overlook to view the spectacular valleys.
- Check in to local casa particular.
- Lunch at a farm-to-table paladar with locally produced cuisine (included).
- Tobacco plantation. Educational opportunity to meet with farmers and understand the tobacco growing process.
- Explore the town of Viñales, visit local craftspeople and music venues
- Dinner on your own at any of the local paladars.



## Day 5. Valley of Viñales and return to Havana



- Visit to underground river and caves.
- Lunch at a local paladar (included).
- Return to Havana.
- Check in to local casa particular.
- Farewell dinner (included).

## Day 6. Return to the United States

**Option to extend to Bay of Pigs, colonial Trinidad, French influenced Cienfuegos and surrounding area for an additional 5 days for a total of 11 days (10 nights, 11 days).**

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**Day 6. Bay of Pigs and National parks. For those on the Trinidad extension.**



- Travel through Cuba's countryside to the Bay of Pigs.
- Snorkel/swim among pristine coral reefs.
- Lunch at local paladar (included).
- Visit the Cienega Zapata National Park.
- Check in to local casa particular.
- Dinner at a local paladar.



## Day 7. Time travel to the 17<sup>th</sup> in Colonial Trinidad



- Experience the most perfectly preserved colonial town in the Americas.
- Explore Trinidad's museums.
- Traditional Cuban farm lunch at local paladar (included).
- Take a salsa lesson.
- Learn about "Santeria" the Afro-Cuban religion from a high-priestess.
- Enjoy an evening of music and dance at one of Trinidad's music venues.
- Dinner at a local paladar (included).



## Day 8. Trinidad and Valley of the Sugar Mills



- Travel to Valley of the Sugar Mills, a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- Lunch at a local paladar (included).
- Visit to Topes de Collante nature reserve.
- Swim in a natural waterhole with a waterfall.
- Return to Trinidad for music venues.
- Dinner on your own at any of Trinidad's country restaurants.



## Day 9. French influenced Cienfuegos



- Travel to Cienfuegos, the Pearl of the South.
- Stroll the plazas and boulevards of Cuba's most beautiful city.
- Explore La Reina Cemetery and learn the Legend of Sleeping Beauty.
- Lunch at a local paladar (included).
- Travel to Matanzas, The Athens of Cuba.
- Check in to a local casa in Matanzas.
- Dinner at a local paladar (included).

### **Day 10. Matanzas and Varadero**



- Explore the unique architecture of Matanzas.
- Travel to world famous Varadero Beach.
- Seaside lunch at a local paladar.
- Return to Havana – free time and dinner on your own.

### **Day 11. Return to the U.S.**



# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR VISIT TO CUBA**

## **Preparing for travel**

If you are a U.S. citizen, when you purchase your airline ticket the airline will provide you with a form for you to check one of 12 reasons for your travel to Cuba. Check “Support for the Cuban People” as this trip is consistent with that section of U.S. Department of State and Treasury general license regulations for U.S. citizen travel to Cuba. The trip will be an opportunity for learning and interaction with the Cuban people. You will also have an outrageous amount of fun and take outstanding photos.

## **What to bring**

- Valid passport
- Travel card

If you are a U.S. citizen born outside of Cuba,\* you can purchase your travel card for Cuba at the counter of the airline you are flying with. The price of a travel card from Delta, Southwest, Jet Blue and United is \$50.

American Airlines sells travel cards through their associate, Cuba Travel Services. <https://cubavisaservices.com/product/aa-visa-card/> \$85 online and \$100 at the airport counter.

Citizens of countries other than the U.S. need to check entry requirements as they normally would to any country.

- If your credit card is issued on a U.S. bank, you must bring cash. Credit cards issued on U.S. banks won't work in Cuba. You must bring enough cash to last the length of your trip. If your accommodations, all breakfasts and many meals are already paid for through the Cuba Cultural Tour, factor that in when you decide how much cash to bring.
- The Cuban currency is the peso. US dollars and Euros are accepted in many locations. Exchange your money at the state run CADECAS at the airport and at many banks throughout the country.

## **Additional travel requirements**

Travel insurance during your trip to Cuba is included in the price of your airline ticket.

## **\*For Cuban-born travelers**

If you were born in Cuba, you will need a special visa which takes about 5 to 6 weeks to process and for you to receive. I have used the services of Take Me Away Travel Agency in Miami, Florida, phone 786 483 8663 and they have been reliable and efficient. However, any agency that offers flights to Cuba can provide this service.

### **What to pack for Cuba**

- Wide-brim hat.
- Sunglasses.
- Loose breathable material: T-shirts, shorts, sundress.
- Products not readily available in Cuba include: Sunscreen, feminine hygiene products, toiletries.
- Cuba is extremely informal. You should try to dress down.

You will visit charities and may want to bring donations. These include:

- Used clothing.
- School supplies such as pens, pencils, notebooks, crayons.
- Soap, aspirin, toiletries, batteries, plastic containers.

### **What's included.**

Private guide throughout.

Airport transfers.

“Casa particular” accommodation.

All breakfasts, most other meals as indicated.

Air-conditioned transportation outside Havana (most of Havana is walkable).

Entrance fees to venues on the schedule.

### **What's not included**

Anything not mentioned in the itinerary above.

Flights to Havana.

Travel insurance (mandatory)