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Cuban Highlights Ride Trip Notes

Ways to Travel: Guided Group
Destinations: Cuba
Programmes: Cycling

Trip Code:
MAC



9 Days Flight Inclusive
8 Days Land only
Min age: 16

Trip Overview

Cycle through lush Cuban countryside, colourful colonial towns and alongside quiet coastal roads where the inviting waters of the Caribbean await. Cuba is the ideal destination for a cycling holiday, with a refreshing mojito to reward your efforts at the end of the day! Out of the saddle discover Cuba's fascinating revolutionary history, visiting the Bay of Pigs and Che Guevara's Mausoleum. The UNESCO towns of Cienfuegos and Trinidad are bursting with music and Cuban spirit, not forgetting enigmatic, charming Old Havana where this trip ends.

At a Glance

- 4 nights Casas Particulares and 3 nights hotels
- 6 days cycling with full vehicle support
- 90% tarmac roads, 10% unpaved tracks
- Countries visited: Cuba

Trip Highlights

- Time to relax, swim and sample Cuba's famous mojito's
- Immerse yourself in the unique Cuban history and culture
- Cycle gently through stunning tropical scenery
- Full vehicle support throughout trip
- Cycling leaders trained to UK leadership standards (CTC Bike Tour Leader Award)
- Cuban Tourist Cards included for all UK residents
- Direct flights with Virgin Atlantic usually available

Is This Trip for You?

This trip is classified Road.

Activity Level: 2 (Leisurely/Moderate).

Please see the introductory pages of the cycling holidays brochure for more important information on classification and grading.

Average daily distance: 40km (25 miles)

Number of days cycling: 6

Vehicle Support: 100%

Terrain and route: surface 90% tarmac, 10% dirt roads, some hills. Overall the trip is not too strenuous but a reasonable level of fitness is required. Many of the roads are in good condition but you should expect potholes and poor road conditions in some sections. The roads are almost always free of heavy traffic, except in the towns. Mountain bikes with hybrid tyres are ideal for this trip and flat bars are preferable, but a good strong tourer will suffice (though make sure you have suitably low gearing).

Please remember to drink lots of water when cycling as the heat and humidity can be high (applies especially to June/July/August departures). We usually have departures over the UK summer due to the popularity of the trip however levels of humidity are high, so it is important to bear this in mind. Some group members may want to do a slightly reduced distance each day in order to avoid cycling in the middle of the day. If this is the case our back up vehicle will be available. It is possible for the rest of the group to continue on the itinerary as planned, but please don't forget to drink plenty of water to keep hydrated.

Please be aware that mobile networks don't make or receive calls particularly well in Cuba, and coverage may not be available in many locations. 3G was introduced in Cuba in December 2018 for the first time but not all phone networks work in Cuba, so please check with your service provider. Also please note that few hotels have Wi-Fi. Some will have internet in their lobby, and you will also find some Wi-Fi spots in the main plazas in towns. Using the internet in Cuba is relatively expensive, around 2-4 CUC per hour and you have to purchase WiFi scratch cards at either official shops or at some hotels, often you'll encounter long queues. Wi-Fi can be very slow, so it's best to assume that you won't be able to find a reliable internet connection whilst travelling.

A limited tourism infrastructure on the island means that some hotels and other service providers are struggling to honour their agreements. Last minute overbookings and price increases are becoming commonplace.

Fortunately, over the years we have built strong working relationships with suppliers and we have managed to prevent any major problems from affecting our groups. Nevertheless, all travellers should be aware that last minute hotel cancellations are a possibility and could affect your trip, especially during the high season in Havana (Oct to March). In the event of any necessary changes we will endeavour to ensure a property of the same standard and similar location is used. On some occasions an overnight hotel stay may be replaced with a night in a casa, or vice versa.

In addition to being prepared for potential last minute hotel changes, it is possible that you will be confronted by other minor frustrations whilst travelling in Cuba. We encourage all travellers to go with an open mind, and with realistic expectations at what a visit to Cuba entails. If your guide announces a change of plans then please be assured that everything possible has been done behind the scenes in order to make satisfactory alternative arrangements.

Please note: As an American owned company, Exodus programmes to Cuba are fully compliant with the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) general license for People to People travel.

Following a review of all our trips we have categorised this trip as generally not suitable for persons of reduced mobility. However if you are a regular traveller on such trips, please contact customer services to discuss the trip and your personal condition.

Group

1 Guide up to 18 passengers. A bike mechanic also assists the leader and joins groups of 8 or more passengers.

Our guides are local cycle tour leaders, experienced at working with groups, English speaking, and very knowledgeable about their country.

Adult min age: 16

Min group size: 4

Max group size: 18

Itinerary

Land Only

Start City: Havana

End City: Havana

Flight Inclusive

Start City: London

End City: London

Land Only Itinerary

Day 1

Start Havana.

The group flight arrives in the afternoon and we transfer to our hotel. Those on Land Only arrangements should join us at the hotel in the evening.

Standard Hotel

Day 2

Havana cycle tour; to the Bay of Pigs.

After being fitted with our bikes we have a cycling tour of Havana with members of the Cuban 'Masters' Road Cycling Club. This club is made up of veteran Cuban cyclists who regularly compete in races in their respective age groups and will give us an insight into competitive cycling in Cuba. We stop for coffee at Cuba Libro, the only English-speaking second-hand bookshop in Havana and a hub for creative projects.

Following a transfer to Playa Larga, we stay overnight at the Bay of Pigs and have dinner at a small beachfront restaurant with a large Cuban welcome. The speciality here is fresh fish caught by local fisherman just off the coast.

Casas Particulares

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 24 km / 15 miles

Altitude gain (m): 163

Altitude loss (m): 169

Day 3**Coastal cycle ride; to Cienfuegos.**

Our day begins with a coastal cycle ride from Playa Larga to Playa Giron where we visit a museum to learn about the Bay of Pigs invasion and the region's historical significance. Afterwards we cycle to the coast and a place called Caleta Buena for lunch and a swim, before transferring onwards to Cienfuegos. Today's riding will be along a flat road that clings to the shimmering Caribbean coastline. The city of Cienfuegos is full of architectural delights, with a beautiful main square and restored buildings. One of the best ways to get around is by Bici Taxi, a fun tour using Cuba's eco-friendly and typical city transport. Each Bici Taxi can accommodate two people and will be pedalled by a local resident (most of whom like to introduce their guests to reggaeton music!) The Bici Taxi tour is a great time to talk to local Cienfuegos residents and have a go at practising your Spanish. Afterwards we check into our casas for the night. Casas will be located close to the town centre, and to some great paladares. The malecon coastal road is usually a lively place to soak up the atmosphere with locals.

Casas Particulares

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Distance covered: 46 km / 29 miles

Altitude gain (m): 119

Altitude loss (m): 118

Day 4**Ride from Cienfuegos to Rancho La Vega farm; to the World Heritage Site of Trinidad.**

On today's cycle ride we are joined by members of the Cienfuegos Cycling team, there will be plenty of time to chat before and during the ride at the various pit-stops. This morning we cycle from Cienfuegos to Rancho La Vega farm. During our visit we will have time to have some fruit juices or coffee.

Trinidad has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1988 and is perhaps the best-preserved colonial town on the island. Exploring Trinidad can feel like entering a time warp, its colourful, cobbled streets and horse drawn transportation whisking us back. There are many interesting museums housed in old colonial buildings and music drifts through the streets and plazas, bringing the town to life. We will be joined by a local resident to have a walking tour who will give us an insider perspective of what it's like to live in Trinidad.

We'll stay overnight in charming Casa Particulares, private Bed and Breakfast accommodation in local Cuban houses. Our dinner this evening will be at Alberto & Osmar's new restaurant or casa, where a local collective of musicians will perform interpretations of classic Cuban trova songs. This is sure to be a lively evening and a wonderful opportunity to enjoy Cuban music with its distinct rhythms.

Casas Particulares

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 50 km / 31 miles

Altitude gain (m): 476

Altitude loss (m): 351

Day 5**Cycle to Playa Ancon and back; salsa class.**

We cycle to the fishing village of La Boca which is a popular spot with local fisherman going about their daily business, before continuing our ride to Playa Ancon, a classic white sand Caribbean beach, where weather dependent we will have a picnic lunch. Otherwise our cycle continues to Casilda where our lunch will be taken at La Marinera, a private family run paladar.

We will have a short cycle to get back to Trinidad, where this evening we take part in a salsa class with Cuban dance partners. There will be one dance partner for each member of the group, to assist with teaching the correct salsa moves. Trinidad is known for its nightlife, so after we've learnt the basics of salsa we'll go to the town's 'Casa de la Trova' live music venue to listen to local musicians playing authentic Cuban music. This venue is always lively and sociable, with plenty of local Cuban's keen to let us practice our dancing with them!

Casas Particulares

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Distance covered: 25 km / 15 miles

Altitude gain (m): 476

Altitude loss (m): 351

Day 6**Cycle to Rio Seibabo; transfer to Hanabanilla.**

After breakfast we will cycle to Rio Seibabo in the heart of the Sierra del Escambray mountain range. On route we will stop at the Manaca Iznaga textiles market where we will meet traditional textile makers and sellers. Our next stop will be at the house of campesinos and are introduced to a local farmer and his family who make delicious honey. We will also go to a small coffee farm where a family of coffee growers welcome us to taste their freshly roasted coffee. Hanabanilla is situated on the shores of Lake Hanabanilla and surrounded by lush tropical hills. This is one of the most beautiful days in terms of scenery. Afterwards we will transfer to Hanabanilla, we eat at a private paladar for a taste of authentic Cuban cuisine.

Standard Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 37 km / 23 miles

Altitude gain (m): 544

Altitude loss (m): 194

Day 7**Cycle to Matagua; transfer to Che Guevara Mausoleum in Santa Clara; to Havana.**

This morning we have short ride from Hanabanilla to Matagua, stopping along the way to visit a tobacco factory before transferring onwards to Santa Clara. Santa Clara was the first major city to be liberated by Castro's army in December 1958. Today several monuments commemorate this important period of Cuba's history, including the mausoleum of the legendary Che Guevara, where we'll stop for a short visit. Afterwards we transfer back to Havana. There is no better way to see Havana than by classic car, travelling in immaculately looked after classic cars in vibrant colours. Visiting both the old and new areas of the city, we discover the distinct neighbourhoods of the capital, stopping at points of interest for explanations and stories. Feel free to ask questions about why the streets of Cuba are filled with classic American cars manufactured in the 1950's and how on earth the owners manage to maintain them! This evening we have dinner at a private paladar in Havana.

Standard Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 32 km / 20 miles

Altitude gain (m): 263

Altitude loss (m): 458

Day 8**Sightseeing in Old Havana; transfer to the airport.**

This morning we'll have a walking tour of old and new Havana, Cuba's capital and the largest city in the Caribbean. Havana is a busy, bustling, energetic capital. It is one of the finest colonial cities in the Americas with narrow streets, spacious plazas and glorious architecture. There is an air of faded grandeur about the place with paint peeling off buildings. The area of Old Havana is often described as a living museum, with its marvellous monuments, cathedrals and palaces. During our tour we visit a ration store, food market and artisan market for a chance to buy some souvenirs.

Those on group flights will transfer approx. 30 - 40 minutes this afternoon to Havana airport for the return flight to London.

Meals included: Breakfast

All ascents, descents and distances listed above have been measured by our local partners or tour leaders. Please note that different GPS measuring devices can give differing results dependent on the barometric pressures at the time. Measurements stated throughout these trips notes are given to help you understand the types of terrain and distances you will encounter.

Accommodation**Casas Particulares & Hotels**

You will spend 4 nights in Casas Particulares and 3 nights in hotels. All of our Cuban itineraries include staying in privately-run 'Casas Particulares' in at least one destination as an alternative to staying in standard hotels. These are Cuban properties that enable you to have a rewarding insight into the local lifestyle and culture by staying as a guest in a Cuban home. Rooms are on a twin-share basis with air conditioning. Please note that power cuts do regularly occur in Cuba, and hot water supplies are not always guaranteed.

All properties that we use have been inspected and assessed by our local operator in Cuba. Some are large multi-room houses that are home to entire families, others are run by individuals, and in some cases the owners live elsewhere.

Where a single supplement is available, paying for a single only guarantees a room for single use. It does not always mean a twin or double room will be provided for sole occupancy.

Single supplement from \$358.75 AUD

Food & Transport**Eating & Drinking**

7 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 4 dinners are included, allowing the option to try some local restaurants on the other evenings.

We provide basic packed lunches during the day and there are plenty of water and fruit refreshment stops. 3 litres of water per person is included on cycling days. You may wish to bring some of your own energy snacks, as food shops, cafes and restaurants are scarce in many of the rural areas we visit. Cuba is not renowned for its culinary excellence (although it is improving). Food can sometimes be relatively unexciting and expensive - in no small part due to the long trade embargo implemented by the US. Vegetarians will find the food choice limited. Meals will be more varied for everyone in Havana and seafood is available on the coast. We recommend that you allow CUC 20 to CUC 30 pp per day for the lunches and evening meals on the days where food is not included. If you need more bottled water than provided, it is available for approx. CUC 1.50 per bottle.

Transportation

The support vehicle will carry all your luggage and personal belongings. The vehicle will follow the riders all of the time, allowing you to cycle as much or as little as you like.

Weather & Seasonality

Weather Information

The dry season runs from November through to April (with December to March being the peak holiday months for traditional style tourism). It is very humid between May and October, with heavy rains at times and the possibility of hurricanes. July and August are some of the most popular months to visit Cuba by sun-seekers from Europe and Canada but are extremely hot (average 28°C) and wet. Cuba has an average of 6 hours sunshine per day with a more or less constant humidity of 62%. Water temperature normally ranges from 24° to 28°C.

Weather Charts

Havana

Trinidad

Joining Instructions

Travelling flight inclusive

9 days, normally depart London Thu, return Fri

Itinerary Start

The group flight from London is a daytime flight departing on Day 1 of the itinerary.

Flights from London

We normally use the scheduled services of Virgin Atlantic (depending on availability). As flight timings and schedules change regularly we recommend you call one of our specialist sales staff or your agent to confirm up-to-date timings. Please note timings may change at a later date and cannot be confirmed until approximately two weeks before departure.

Travelling land only

8 days, normally start Havana Thu, end Havana Thu

Itinerary Start

Your trip normally starts at our accommodation in Havana in the afternoon of Day 1 of the itinerary. Details of how to reach the start point are provided in the Final Joining Instructions - sent approximately two weeks before departure.

Regional Flights

The Flight Inclusive price is based on a London departure, but we are happy to tailor this to your local or regional airport. **Please ask about flights from local or regional airports. (/au/regionaldepartures)**

If booking regional flights other than with Exodus, you must allow a minimum connecting time (in addition to the international check-in time) of 1 hour at Gatwick, and 1.5 hours at Heathrow; this is longer than the official minimum, but baggage handling is known to be subject to delays.

Free Transfers

Exodus offers FREE airport arrival and departure transfers on any flight for this trip, for both Land Only and Flight Inclusive clients. Unless specified otherwise, the transfer will be to the Exodus start (or pre-tour) hotel and from the end (or post-tour) hotel, and will be on the date on which the tour starts/ends; transfers to other hotels in the same city and/or on different dates may attract an extra charge. Transfers may be shared with other Exodus customers on the same flight, or on a flight with similar arrival times. All those taking advantage of the free airport transfers must provide full flight details for both arrival and departure in advance.

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers will be sent to you as part of our Final Joining Instructions. If you do not receive these at least a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our office or your travel agent.

Location start: Havana

Location end: Havana

What to Take

Essential Equipment

- Cycling helmet (compulsory on this trip)
- Water bottle(s)
- Cycling shorts
- Waterproof jacket
- High factor sun cream
- Sun hat
- Sunglasses
- Hand sanitiser

Optional Equipment

- Your own saddle
- Your own pedals
- Cycling gloves
- Long sleeved shirts and light trousers are good for helping to keep mosquitoes off during the evenings.
- Mosquito repellent containing DEET is generally thought to be the most effective deterrent.
- GPS systems are not allowed to be brought into Cuba.

Equipment Hire

Local Bike Details: Trek 8.3 DS Mountain Bikes with hybrid tyres and mechanical disc brakes.

A quality local hire bike is now included in the overall price of our cycling holidays. At the time of booking we will take your height in order to reserve equipment. There may on occasions be insufficient bikes available in the correct size; we will endeavour to find suitable alternative equipment but this cannot be guaranteed. We will tell you before you book whether suitably sized bikes are available.

Conditions

1. The equipment remains the property of the supplier and you may not sell, hire out or part possession with the equipment.
2. You must not misuse the equipment and must return it in the same condition as when received (ordinary wear and tear excepted). The supplier is entitled to charge for any damage caused to the equipment during the period of hire.
3. You must ensure that the equipment is adequately secured when not in use. In the event of the equipment being lost or stolen, you may be liable for the replacement value of the equipment

4. You must not use the equipment whilst under the influence of drink or drugs and should immediately notify the Supplier in the event of breakdown or loss.

Bringing Your Own Bike

If you prefer the familiarity of your own bike, you may of course bring it along. Please advise us at the time of booking and you will receive a discount off the price of the holiday, as specified above. You will be responsible for any extra baggage charges, please speak to our Sales team for individual airline fees. Any clients bringing their own bike should ensure they have adequate cover for loss, damage or theft under their travel, home contents or a specialist insurance policy. If Exodus is confident that we have taken all reasonable care to ensure the safety of your bike, in the rare event of loss, damage or theft you will need to claim under your own insurance policy.

Extra Bike Bits

You may like to bring your own pedals and saddle (excluding the seat post) or gel saddle cover to fit to the hire bikes. We encourage this, if it is your preference. However, please note that you are responsible for your own equipment, and removing your saddle/pedals at the end of the trip. We cannot guarantee the return of any bike parts left behind.

Exodus Policy on Cycling Helmets

Wearing a helmet is mandatory for anyone taking part in any guided Exodus cycling holiday. Group members must bring their own helmets, as they are not available for hire, even if they are hiring a bike from Exodus.

For self-guided cycling holidays wearing a helmet is highly recommended. Customers who choose to ignore our advice do so entirely at their own risk and on the understanding that it may affect the validity of their travel insurance. It should also be noted that in some countries we travel to wearing a helmet is already a legal requirement.

Cycling of all kinds has its dangers and accidents can happen from time to time. Please ensure that you are properly prepared for the riding you are going to undertake.

Recommended Cycling Clothing

Padded cycling shorts (with loose 'over-shorts' where recommended), breathable clothing, and a lightweight waterproof/windproof top. Shoes with relatively stiff soles are better for biking, but are not essential unless you are cycling long distances. Most people want to carry certain items with them during the day while cycling, for this we recommend a large bum-bag or small close-fitting daysack.

Practical Information

Passport

Cuba

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information below is primarily for UK passport holders, and other nationalities should check with their travel agent or the relevant embassies. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Visa

Cuba

British and most Western European passport holders do not require a visa but do require a tourist card. Your Cuban tourist card (valid for 30 days) is included and will be posted to you by Exodus approx. 4 weeks before travel. We will send instructions on how to fill it in but please be careful doing this as any mistakes may result in you having to purchase a new card at a cost of GBP17.00 per person + admin fee.

We will send a tourist card free of charge as long as you live at a UK or Ireland address and are national of an EU country, Canada, Australia, New Zealand or Japan. If you are not national of one of these countries or are not resident in the UK or Eire you must contact your nearest Cuban Consulate to check what visa is required - Exodus cannot provide a tourist card for you.

The Cuban entry immigration is time-consuming and most visitors encounter delays when queuing for entry into the country.

The Cuban Government passed a law stating that all tourists visiting Cuba must have travel insurance to cover medical costs. It is possible that you may be asked to provide proof of your travel insurance policy when you arrive at Havana airport, so please ensure your documents are easily accessible.

Visa regulations can change without notice: please check the current regulations in good time to obtain a visa if one is required.

Vaccination

Cuba

There are no mandatory vaccination requirements. Recommended vaccinations are: Tetanus, Hepatitis A. We are advised that there is no risk of malaria. Dengue fever is a known risk in places visited. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available for Dengue, and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

Zika fever is a mosquito-borne viral disease and a known risk in places visited on this trip. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available, we therefore strongly recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health Clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure for up-to-date information.

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

The Travel Health Pro website recommends to have a rabies vaccination on this trip, as cycling is considered a higher risk activity.

We are advised that there is no risk of malaria on this trip.

Dengue fever and/or Chikungunya are known risks in places visited on this trip. Both are tropical viral diseases spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available for either, and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health Clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure for up-to-date information. Please note: vaccinations that are routinely recommended to residents of the UK, North America or Australasia are not considered to form part of the travel health advice, and you should ensure these are kept up to date where necessary.

For additional information please visit: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries> (<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>)

Insurance - are you adequately covered?

It is a condition of joining any of our holidays that you must be fully insured against medical and personal accident risks (to include repatriation costs and air ambulance or helicopter rescue services where appropriate). On arrival in destination for your trip, you will be asked to present details to your leader or local representative of your policy.

If you are resident in the UK we strongly recommend the **Exodus travel insurance policy (/au/insurance)**, this is specifically designed to cover all activities on your trip. If arranging your own policy please ensure that you are covered for all activities that are part of the trip, optional activities that you intend to take part in and/or on high altitude itineraries, that you are covered up to the maximum altitude of the trip.

Local Time

Cuba's Timezone: America/Havana CDT (GMT -04:00)

Electricity

Cuba's Electricity: Always 2 flat pins. Most casas just have 110v, some hotels will have a combination of 110v and 220v.

Money

Cuba's Currency

The national currency of Cuba is the Cuban Convertible Peso (CUC), with an exchange rate at the time of publication (June 2017) of approximately 1.26 to the GBP, 0.74 to the CAD, 1.13 to the EUR, 0.71 to the AUD and 0.68 to the NZD.

Please note this is the official exchange rate, however in practice, the exchange rate on the ground at official 'cadedas' changes every day.

You can't bring CUC in or out of the country.

Recommended to bring GBP, CAD, Euros, or AUD cash to exchange.

There is a 'cadedca' currency change facility outside of Terminal 3 at the airport (where the VS flights arrive) or the closest cadeca to the start hotel is within the nearby Hotel Nacional. You can also usually change GBP or most common currencies over the reception desk in the start hotel. It is recommended to bring new unmarked bank notes if possible to avoid hassle in cadecas.

ATM Availability

ATMs are increasingly available in Cuba, but are not yet widespread and they are regularly either out of order or empty. When working there can be long queues. They are presently confined to the larger cities and resorts and should not be relied on, hence why we suggest that you take cash with you. Credit cards may be accepted for expensive purchases in tourist shops, but acceptance is not widespread and like ATMs should not be relied upon.

Important Note: Using cards for banks which are fully or partially US owned is not possible in Cuba. Australian and Canadian travellers in particular should check with their banks prior to travel if they intend to withdraw cash. Electronic payments are not commonplace at all in Cuba, so come prepared to use cash only.

Extra Expenses & Spending Money

We strongly advise that you take all spending money in Euros or Sterling cash, which can be easily exchanged into local currency upon arrival in Cuba. Scottish currency is not accepted in Cuba. Travellers cheques are difficult to exchange and there is limited time to stop for this purpose. In addition, credit/debit cards drawn on US banks are not accepted anywhere in Cuba. The hotel in which we spend the first night in Havana has an exchange bureau situated in the back left of the lobby, around behind the main reception desk. Otherwise you can exchange money at the airport.

Tipping

If you are happy with the services of the guide and driver, we recommend a tip of around 30 CUC per person, which you can divide in favour of the guide.

Tipping is at your own discretion but is very much part of the culture in Cuba and is usually expected. Your tour leader will offer to arrange and look after a group tipping kitty which will be used to tip local guides at individual museums and attractions, musicians and waiting staff for included meals etc. throughout the holiday. The guide will usually collect around 10 CUC from each group member at the start of the trip to cover this.

Tipping is also expected in restaurants - add about 10% to the bill.

Responsible Tourism

At Exodus we believe in the power of Responsible Travel.

Every time we travel, we are part of a global movement that creates jobs, builds more sustainable societies, encourages cultural understanding and safeguards common natural and cultural heritage. To learn more about what Responsible Travel means to Exodus [click here \(/au/responsible-travel\)](#)..

Exodus Community

Join the Exodus online community

Don't forget to visit the Community area on our website. You can view the range of Exodus videos and podcasts, read trip write-ups which have featured in the national media and take advantage of some special deals on travel gear and equipment.

In the Community Travel Forum you'll find the Departure Lounge where you can discuss your trip with fellow travellers before you depart. When you get back from your holiday remember to upload your images to the relevant trip page on our website. This helps other people see what our holidays are really like and you'll be entered automatically into our monthly photo competition.

To make full use of the **Community (/au/community)** you'll need to join My Exodus. It's free, registration is simple and easy, so what are you waiting for?

Important Information

On all guided trips

Although our leaders are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorise them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.

Although rarely enforced, by booking this trip you agree to section 14 of our Booking Conditions which clearly states that our leaders have the authority to do this. In these circumstances we will ensure anyone sitting out is safely provided for and offered alternative options where possible. Refunds will not be provided for activities missed and customers may be liable for additional costs incurred.

On all trips

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call the Exodus office and ask to speak to one of the experts on this itinerary.

In an emergency, please contact our 24 hour out of hours service on +44 (0) 844 326 7041.

Every time that you travel abroad you should take the time to read the warnings in the **essential information (/au/about-exodus/essential-information)** in the brochure.

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers, and details of how to reach the start point, will be sent to you approximately 2 to 3 weeks prior to departure. If you do not receive these at least a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our office or your travel agent.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure or website, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure and website. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared to be flexible where necessary. Occasionally, as stated in our brochure, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned. This may be for a variety of reasons - climatic, political, physical or other. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements that maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

As fuel prices, airport taxes and exchange rates fluctuate, and airlines manage their rates to match demand, it is proving harder than ever to guarantee our Flight Inclusive prices. Although we endeavour to keep our website as accurate as possible, daily fluctuations mean that our Flight Inclusive price may be out of date. For accurate prices we recommend that you contact one of our Travel Experts, or your Travel Agent.

This trip includes time by a lake, river or sea, where there may be opportunities to swim. Swimming results in more tourists deaths than any other activity. All customers should always seek local advice before deciding whether to swim, and are requested to treat the sea with extreme caution if they choose to enter the water. Details on how to keep yourself safe while swimming are shown **here** (https://www.exodus.co.uk/sites/exod/files/open_water_safety_guide_lr.pdf?t=1HGtOV&_hstc=173457148.54af21c7415c562c45136efa0f63971f.1561705245580.1565838996419.1565845226376.98__hssc=173457148.1.1565845226376&_hsfp=4;

TRAVEL AWARE -STAY SAFE & HEALTHY ABROAD

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the NHS have up-to-date advice on staying safe and healthy abroad. For more on security, local laws, plus passport and visa information, see <https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/> (<https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/>)

Keep informed of current travel health news by visiting <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/> (<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/>)

Advice can change so check regularly for updates.

For all latest travel information about your holiday, please visit our **Travel Safety Advice (/au/travel-safety-advice)** page.



How to Book

1. Check availability

Go online to check availability, or contact us by phone or email.

2. Secure your place

You can provisionally hold a place on this trip, usually for between three and seven days.

3. Complete your booking and payment

When you're ready to book, go to www.exodus.co.uk (**/au/homepage**) for online booking, book over the phone or you can complete a booking form (available online or on request by calling us). We accept all major credit and debit cards, or you can pay by cheque. Book with confidence: Exodus is fully licensed and bonded as a tour operator. We hold Air Traffic Organisers Licence (ATOL) number 2582 issued and bonded with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). We are also bonded to the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and we are members of the Federation of Tour Operators (FTO) and ABTA - The Travel Association. This means you can book your Exodus holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected.

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid from the "Current as" date on page one. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure; if there are any updates that significantly impact the inclusions or itinerary bookers will be written to separately. All customers will also receive a link to the most up-to-date version of the Trip Notes with their Final Joining Instructions pre-travel.

Version 1