

TRIP NOTES

CUBAN ACTIVE ADVENTURE

Cuba from a different perspective – cycling, snorkelling, trekking and kayaking!

 DURATION	 ACTIVITY LEVEL	INCLUDED
8 DAYS	MODERATE	    

HIGHLIGHTS

- Cycle through the streets of Havana.
- Visit Las Terrazas Biosphere Reserve.
- Explore caves in Matanzas province.
- Walk in Topes de Collantes National Park.
- Kayak in the Bay of Cienfuegos.



WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Transfers from airport upon arrival and departure.
- Transfer of luggage throughout but not hotel portage.
- Bike Hire: Trek or specialized hybrid bikes with front fork suspension.
- Kayaking equipment (kayak, paddle and life jacket), mask and snorkel.
- Accommodation: 2 nights in hotel, 5 nights in casas particulares on B&B basis.
- Meals: all breakfasts, 6 lunches and 2 dinners. Lunches will be in restaurants or picnics depending on the day.
- Vintage American car tour in Havana; entrances to Las Terrazas Biosphere, caves in Matanzas, Che Guevara's Mausoleum and museum; walk in Topes de Collantes National Park.
- Staff: Local English-speaking Cuban active guide throughout, specialist local guides for some activities, driver.
- Transport: all bus transfers in private air-conditioned bus.
- Support: 100% vehicle support during rides.
- Mineral water included on all active days.

WHAT ISN'T INCLUDED?

- Flights to and from Cuba.
- Travel/medical insurance (compulsory to provide proof of cover for entry into Cuba).
- Personal expenses (drinks, laundry, phone calls etc).
- Vaccinations.
- Visas (Tourist Cards).
- Cycling helmet (compulsory) and water bottle.
- Tips for guide, driver and local staff. We recommend that each participant contributes a minimum of CUC 25 – CUC 30 to be shared between the local staff.

IS THIS TOUR RIGHT FOR ME?

- Group Style: Small
4 – 18 people of mixed nationalities and walking ability. Minimum age 16 years (accompanied by an adult).
- Busy days with a variety of activities, travel and exposure to Cuban culture. You need to be a confident swimmer to participate in the water activities. Hot and humid conditions, especially during summer months.
- You enjoy exercising and being active.



DAY 1

🏠 Casa Particular, Havana

ARRIVAL IN HAVANA

Welcome to Cuba! A Cubania representative will meet you upon arrival at the airport and transfer you to your accommodation in the heart of Havana. The largest island in the Caribbean, Hemingway’s much-loved abode and one of the last planned economies in the world. You’re soon to discover that Cuba is all that and much, much more, but first relax and enjoy your first night in enchanting Havana.

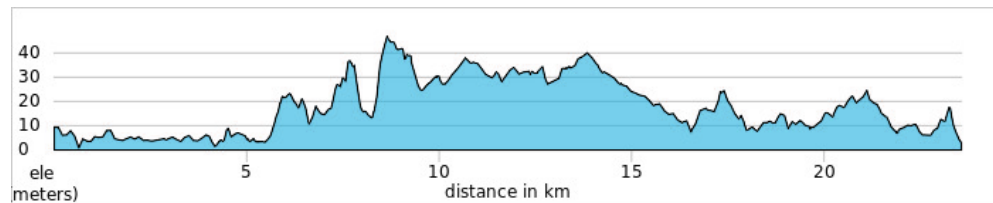
DAY 2

🏠 Casa Particular, Havana 🍳 Breakfast, Lunch

HAVANA BY BIKE AND CLASSIC CAR

This morning we’ll drive to the start point of our city cycle and get acquainted with our bikes before setting off on a two-wheel tour of Havana. We’ll visit the well-to-do 1950s Miramar district, home to some of Havana’s most striking 20th century architecture. Keep an eye out for the imposing Russian embassy and the elegant neoclassical homes, many of which are now embassies. We’ll then cycle through Parque Metropolitano de la Habana and Nuevo Vedado, before stopping at Plaza de la Revolución, the hub of Revolutionary Cuba. From here we wheel through young and vibrant Vedado towards the famous *Hotel Nacional*, which has offered shelter to many a celebrity over the years, including Winston Churchill and members of the Mafia. Now we whizz through bustling Centro Habana to the famous Capitolio building, a mirror-image of Washington’s Capitol Building. With the Capitolio behind us we veer left down the regal Prado promenade, a favourite with street artists and skateboarders alike. We finish our cycling tour on the edge of the Old Town next to the Bay of Havana. After lunch in a typical Old Town restaurant, the rest of the afternoon is at leisure. We’ll then re-group in the early evening for the quintessential Havana experience – a tour of Havana in 1950s classic American cars. Enjoy the evening at leisure.

🚲 24 km ↓↑ +163m -169m



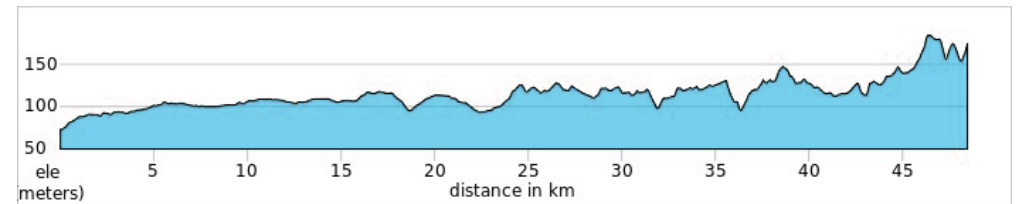
DAY 3

🏠 Hotel Villa Tropic, Playa Jibacoa 🍳 Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

TO LAS TERRAZAS AND PLAYA JIBACOA

This morning we transfer to the outskirts of Havana to start our ride to Las Terrazas. We will be entering the Sierra de Rosario; the closest mountain range to Havana and an area UNESCO declared a Biosphere Reserve. The Las Terrazas community was created in 1971 so that farmers in the area who had been living in desperate poverty and isolation could participate in reforestation of precious hardwoods. Nowadays Las Terrazas is a sustainable community surrounded by spectacular landscapes. Enjoy a traditional lunch in a community-run restaurant. After lunch you will have the opportunity to ride Las Terrazas’ famous zip line (optional), affording an adrenaline-fuelled panoramic view of this lush biosphere. This afternoon transfer to Playa Jibacoa, a Cuban beach getaway, just 60 kilometres east of Havana. Enjoy the evening at leisure.

🚲 48 km ↓↑ +377m -278m



DAY 4

🏠 Hotel or Casa Particular in Santa Clara 🍳 Breakfast, Lunch

SNORKELLING; CAVING; TO SANTA CLARA

This morning snorkel and relax on Jibacoa beach before visiting a cave network near Matanzas. Afterwards we’ll transfer south to *Finca Coincidencia*, an organic farm and ceramic workshop. Enjoy a delicious homecooked lunch and a tour of this charmingly eccentric farm. After lunch we will transfer further east to the provincial capital, Santa Clara. Santa Clara is best-known for the historic events that surround revolutionary Che Guevara. Che led his rebel forces in the battle of Santa Clara, a decisive victory over Batista’s army that resulted in the Triumph of the Revolution. Che’s remains were brought here from Bolivia in 1997 and are kept in an impressive mausoleum which we will visit. Enjoy the evening at leisure in this charming university town.



DAY 5

🏠 Casas Particular, Trinidad 🍴 Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

TREKKING; TO TRINIDAD

This morning we will transfer to Topes de Collantes in the stunning Escambray mountain range, where we will trek along the Guanayara trail, stopping for a dip at a spectacular waterfall. Enjoy lunch at an atmospheric eco-restaurant tucked away in the forest before transferring to Trinidad, the jewel in Cuba's patrimonial crown. Named a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1988, Trinidad's collection of beautifully preserved colonial buildings have the Sierra del Escambray as a backdrop and overlook the Caribbean Sea. Much of the city's fortune was made during the sugar boom of the early 19th century when the city's nucleus of elegant mansions was built. In the late afternoon have a salsa class with a local teacher and we'll dine together in a local casa that serves wonderful cuisine. Later this evening you might like to sample Trinidad's lively nightlife and try out your new moves!

🚶 7 km

DAY 6

🏠 Casa particular, Cienfuegos 🍴 Breakfast, Lunch

PLAYA ANCÓN; TO CIENFUEGOS

This morning we'll take a walking tour of Trinidad: the city's cobbled streets and pastel houses will make you feel as though you're walking through a time capsule. Afterwards we'll drive the short distance to nearby Playa Ancon beach, where we'll have time for a swim. In the afternoon we transfer along the coastline to Cienfuegos. The city of Cienfuegos is known amongst Cubans as 'The Pearl of the South' and its colonial centre was named a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2005. Cienfuegos is the only city in Cuba founded by French migrants fleeing the slave revolution in Haiti in the early 19th century. Enjoy the evening at leisure.

DAY 7

🏠 Casa particular, Havana 🍴 Breakfast, Lunch

KAYAKING IN CIENFUEGOS; TO HAVANA

This morning we will go on a kayaking excursion in the bay of Cienfuegos. We set off from the Cienfuegos Yacht Club harbour after receiving an instruction and safety briefing. Donning our life jackets, we set off across the bay, a wide natural harbour which provides sheltered kayaking. We paddle towards the narrow mouth of the harbour at Pasacaballo where we can admire the imposing Castillo de Jagua before finishing at Rancho Cristal for lunch. After lunch we return to Havana, where you can enjoy the evening at leisure.

🚣 3.5 km

DAY 8

🍴 Breakfast

WALKING TOUR IN HAVANA AND DEPARTURE DAY

This morning your guide will take you on a walking tour of Old Havana which is the finest surviving Spanish colonial city in the Americas. Since it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site millions of dollars have been invested in its restoration. The many marvellous monuments, cathedrals and palaces of the city's historical centre are brought to life by a constant hustle and bustle and the unmistakable sound of Cuban Son. After this morning's tour it's time to part ways and say *Adiós*, or, as we prefer to say *hasta luego*, see you later! Afternoon transfer (30-40 minutes approx.) to Havana airport.

🚶 City Tour



WHAT TO BRING?

ESSENTIAL PACKING LIST

- Cycling helmet compulsory.
- Water bottle.
- Comfortable cycling clothes, cycling shorts are preferable.
- Lightweight waterproof/windproof top or jacket.
- Swimwear.
- For kayaking and snorkelling you may want to bring a UVA top or T shirt.
- Breathable clothing.
- Sturdy trainers suitable for uneven and slippery surfaces.
- High factor sun cream (50+), sunglasses and sun hat.
- Hand sanitizer.
- Insect repellent – tropical strength.
- Long sleeved shirts and light trousers for the evenings.
- A sense of humour and patience are useful in Cuba!

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Most people bring a small back pack which they keep on the bus for easy access during the day. Typically they will carry a spare T shirt, their valuables, snacks and a camera.
- Shoes with relatively stiff soles are better for biking but are not essential.
- Cycling gloves.
- You may like to bring your own pedals and saddle (excluding the seat post) or gel saddle cover to fit to the hire bikes. However, please remember to retrieve your own equipment at the end of the trip!
- If you have a mask, snorkel and fins, and would prefer to use your own, feel free to bring them.
- Torch.

ACTIVITY

CYCLING

- Cycling mostly on paved, quiet rural roads, with some potholes.
- No. of days cycling: 2.
- Total Distance: 72 km (see ride profiles).
- Moderate Pace: approx.15–20 kmph.
- 100% vehicle support throughout rides—jump on the bus whenever you like!

TREKKING AND CAVING

- Walking on uneven paths and trails. Expect a variety of surfaces which can be slippery when wet. Please bring appropriate footwear.

KAYAKING

- Takes place in the bay of Cienfuegos. Participants must be confident swimmers.
- Local kayaking guide will provide instruction and safety briefing before you set off.
- Lifejacket provided and compulsory.

SNORKELLING

- Independent snorkelling on a reef close to the beach. Participants must be confident swimmers.
- Masks and snorkel provided. Fins available for hire in the hotel.



PRACTICAL ADVICE

Please see our Destination Guide or [website](#) for all Cuba-related practical advice and travel information on our [need to know](#) section. Check with your doctor prior to travel & also your government's official advice.

ACCOMMODATION

Throughout the tour we stay in a range of accommodation typical to any trip to Cuba, with a mixture of hotels and private accommodation (*casas particulares*). It's fair to say that the standard of Cuban accommodation is not always comparable to that which you would expect in other countries owing to years of isolation, under-investment in the country's infrastructure and effect of the US trade Embargo. Anyone travelling to the island should be prepared to rough it a bit at times! Décor tends to be a little dated, there might be the occasional power cut, and you may find that your water pressure isn't all it could be. Fortunately, it's warm enough most days that the lack of hot water is not a major problem!

Most of the hotels we use are 3 star with en suite bathrooms and air conditioning. The hotel in Jibacoa is a relatively modern International style hotel and the hotel in Santa Clara is inspired by indigenous Cuban culture.

We use *Casas Particulares* in Havana, Trinidad and Cienfuegos. Most people love the opportunity this gives to stay in a relatively normal Cuban home and see how Cubans live. These homes are simple compared to ours but the welcome is warm and rooms clean. All the *casas* also have air conditioning and en suite bathrooms. You'll be spoilt at breakfast in the mornings.

FOOD & DRINK

Cuba doesn't have the same variety of international cuisine we might be used to although in recent years lots of privately run restaurants (*paladars*) have opened (particularly in Havana) offering a wider choice and better quality food than the government run establishments. Think soul food – rice, black beans, slow roast pork and chicken, fresh fish, lobster and plenty of tropical fruit.

For those with special dietary requirements, be prepared for a very limited menu while you are in Cuba. There are very few vegetarians and vegans

in Cuba so there are sometimes misperceptions as to what you can eat. Vegetarians often bring snacks and spreads to liven up their meals.

It can also be difficult to find a decent sandwich in Cuba so please don't give your guide a hard time if he recommends a proper sit-down meal for lunch! Cubans generally eat two full meals a day and don't have many places that cater for snack lunches yet, so the sandwiches tend to be pretty basic.

Cuba is the land of the Mojito, Daiquiri and Cuba Libre. You'll find that plenty of rum-based drinks all over the country with prices ranging from 2–6 CUC for most cocktails. But beware, they don't use measuring glasses, so they might be stronger than the ones you have tried at home!

GUIDES

All our guides at Cubania are Cuban nationals who are registered with and trained by Cuba's Ministry of Tourism. They come from all kinds of different personal and professional backgrounds. They've been teachers, I.T. professionals, bakers, vets, army officers and even underwear salesmen! What they have in common is that they are all highly educated graduates who are passionate about guiding and proud of their beautiful country. They all speak excellent English and receive annual training in First Aid.

We are especially proud of the additional training that we have given our biking and adventure guides. We are the first travel company in Cuba to take cycling safety seriously and give all our biking guides have received Bike Leader certification from British Cycling. Their staff travel to Cuba annually to deliver the training exclusively to our guides. These high standards have been maintained for more than a decade meaning that we are recognised as the most experienced and well-respected adventure travel company on the island.



INTERNET ACCESS

Cuba is one of the last countries on Earth to join the mobile internet so be prepared for a digital detox! 3G Wifi was only introduced in December 2018 and is only accessible through buying and ETECSA Prepaid Internet Card. The cards come in 1 hour and 5-hour denominations and cost CUC1.5/hour (so that's CUC1.5 for 1-hour card and CUC7.5 for a 5-hour card) and are sold at ETECSA offices and hotels across the country. Each ETECSA card has a unique Username (*Usuario*) and Password (*Contraseña*), which you need to log into the ETECSA internet service. You can use the cards on your laptop and your phone.

Make sure you check roaming costs with your service provider before travelling to Cuba. It can be very expensive to connect via roaming.

Since internet access is slow and expensive we recommend you download the following apps before travelling to Cuba:

MAPS.ME

Offline map of Cuba which uses phone grid to pinpoint your location. Great for finding your way round Havana and for navigating your way round the rest of Cuba.

A LA MESA

Offline restaurant and food delivery app. Reviews and contact details of the best places to eat in Havana and other cities throughout Cuba.

SHAZAM

Name that song! Next time you hear that reggaetón hit that's become the soundtrack to your holiday, play it to Shazam and find out what it's called and who sang it.

WHATSAPP/FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM

Cubans are as in love with these apps as you were 15 years ago! They all have them and love using them.

cubaniatravel.com

TRIP EXTENSIONS

PRE OR POST TOUR NIGHTS IN HAVANA

- Choose between hotels in Old Town, Vedado, or Playa district.
- Range of hotels or boutique *Casas Particulares*.

VARADERO BEACH EXTENSION

- Transfers to and from Havana (2 hours) to your choice of all-inclusive hotel at Varadero beach.

CAYO LEVISA BEACH EXTENSION

- Transfers to and from Havana (3 hours) to quiet island retreat in the western Pinar del Rio province.

Please contact us for prices & availability:
sales@cubaniatravel.com

DESTINATION GUIDES

We have created a separate destination guide full of general and practical information relating to visiting Cuba. You can find this in your confirmation email, or ask a member of our staff to send you a copy via email.

BOOKING CONDITIONS

Please refer to our website for a full transcript of Cubania Travel booking Conditions:
cubaniatravel.com/need-to-know/booking-conditions

CUBANIA TRAVEL CONTACT DETAILS

sales@cubaniatravel.com
or info@cubaniatravel.com
(visit our website cubaniatravel.com)

LONDON OFFICE

Office hours: 10.00 – 18.00 (GMT)
Telephone: **+44 (0) 203 950 9928**

HAVANA OFFICE

Office hours: 09.00 – 17.00 (GMT-5)
Telephone: **+53 7 207 9888** or **+53 7 206 9966**

CUBANIA TRAVEL,
Oficina 408-A, Edificio Habana,
Miramar Trade Center,
5ta Avenida, e/76 y 78,
Miramar, Playa,
Ciudad de la Habana,
Cuba

24-hour emergency
Telephone in Cuba: **+53 5 287 0805**

Caribbean Biking Company Ltd (Cubania Travel)
UK Registered Company Address: 2 Minton Place, Victoria Road, Bicester, OXON, OX26 6QB
Company Registration No: 08205075 (England and Wales)
VAT Registration Number: 161255234
ABTA: Caribbean Biking Company Ltd is a Member of ABTA with membership numbers Y6409 (UK Office) and Y6408 (Cuba Office)