



An introduction to Cuba

We have put together this guide to introduce Cuba to you knowing that is very easy to get bamboozled by too much information. We hope this short guide will be enough to set you on the right course, without being too detailed. As such it is not meant to be definitive - for further details we strongly recommend that you look at our website or get in touch as we would be delighted to talk to you all about Cuba.

Country summary

A Cuba Holiday should be at the top of every intrepid traveller's list. Cuba is famed for its revolutionary history and slow concessions to the 21st century, but it is beginning to change, and now is the perfect time to holiday in [Cuba](#). This intriguing Caribbean island moves to a unique and mesmerising rhythm and we love it; we are full of ideas and tips that we would like to share with you.





Highlights of Cuba

The following locations have proven very popular with those that have travelled with South America Odyssey to Cuba. We know the pros and cons of each destination and if you have any further questions about these locations, as well as other destinations, please do get in touch as we would love to speak to you about them.



Havana

Landing into Havana and driving through the suburbs of this crumbling city always fills me with excitement and anticipation. Havana is a city like no other where so much has been written about it, but you need to go to experience it first hand to understand Havana. Music, old American cars, small taverns serving mojitos with their in house bands blasting out Cuban hits and world class museums and interesting architecture and more gives those visiting a plethora of options. There are lots to experiences and we suggest a minimum of three or four nights in Havana.



Trinidad

A small UNESCO World Heritage city with a vibrant music scene that comes together every evening to entertain locals and tourists. Trinidad is a pretty looking city that is also a great base from which to explore the nearby Escambray Mountains or the pristine nearby beaches. This small town was built on the back of a sugar boom in the area and the history of the city and how it thrived is particularly interesting. Two or three nights in Trinidad is essential on any touring itinerary of Cuba

Vinales

The rural, sleepy and old fashioned area of western Cuba that is famed for growing the best tobacco in the world. Vinales is very laid back and whilst here you can rest, relax and explore this agricultural heartland that has not yet let modern ways of life seep into the culture of the region.

Beaches

Cuba is blessed with miles upon miles of golden sandy beaches and crystal clear waters. If you fancy a few days on a beach then you are in a good place. Along the northern coast there are many large all-inclusive options, a couple are decent for three or four nights, but there are some areas that we never recommend. Near Trinidad you can visit the beaches during the day and retreat back to the city at night for some food and music. There is also a very small island for complete escapism where you can stay in a little bungalow on the beach.

Cuba FAQ's

When is the best time to visit Cuba? The best season is from the middle of November to late April. During these months the weather is hot and sunny. May and June are beginning to get humid and September and October is the hurricane season and should be avoided.

Do I need a visa to visit Cuba? Yes, but for European citizens it is very easy and we can advise you on how to acquire one post booking. For American citizens it all depends on the purpose of your visit.

How do I get to Cuba? The main airport is Havana airport and there are direct flights from London Gatwick two times a week. There are also daily flights from Amsterdam, Paris and Madrid.

Are the hotels in Cuba outdated? In all honesty, yes. The majority of the hotels in Cuba are outdated, yet it all adds to the charm of being in a country that has not changed much. In Havana there are a couple of more comfortable "luxury" options that are comparable to a good 4 star hotel. Outside of the capital then accommodation usually comprises of a clean and comfortable ensuite with antique furniture and old art.

Has Cuba changed a lot and lost its charm as a tourist destination? Cuba has changed a little since our first visit in 2005, but nothing happens quickly in Cuba. You can still see the old American cars, listen to the music of the island and visit a country that for the main has not changed much for decades.

Is visiting Cuba good value? We think so. However, it is not a super cheap country. The good quality guides, renting reliable cars and staying at the best hotels can all add up and the government heavily controls prices. Food and drink in Cuba is reasonably priced.



How much does a Cuba holiday cost? As a guidance then a 12 day three/four centre trip with a private driver and guide would cost from £3,000/\$3,900 per person.

How long do you recommend for my Cuba holiday? We suggest around 12 days as being ample to soak up the highlights of central and western Cuba. If you want to venture further east then 2 weeks is a minimum.

What should we expect from a Cuba holiday?

We love Cuba, however it can be a tricky place to visit and a sense of humour is often required. Cubans are utterly fun and charming people, especially when not working, but things can take a while to get accomplished. The plumbing can sometimes break and occasionally there are electricity shortages for a few hours. But Cuba is wonderful and for those ready to experience something unique then you will love Cuba.

Why South America Odyssey?

First and foremost, the team here at Odyssey Travel love South America and have spent many years exploring and working in the continent in a variety of capacities. We have stayed at the hotels we work with, we have built loyal relationships with the best guides in their respective fields, and we now use our love and first-hand knowledge to craft individual tailor made itineraries. It is our intimate knowledge of the continent, combined with our relationships that help us continually deliver exceptional and authentic holidays to the continent. Our promise to you is first class service, unrivalled country knowledge and value for money.

- ✓ First class service
- ✓ Super knowledgeable itinerary designers
- ✓ Fantastic value for money

Our price promise

Booking through us will cost no more - and often considerably less - than booking the same trip with all the individual suppliers directly. We are able to negotiate excellent rates with suppliers, which results in savings for you. In the very unlikely event that you get a cheaper quote for the same trip from a reputable UK bonded tour operator, we will match that quote.

We are ATOL bonded (ATOL 5397) so whatever might happen to us, your money is protected.

No surcharge for currency fluctuations Once your itinerary is confirmed and your deposit has been paid, we guarantee that we will make no surcharge for currency fluctuations, whatever happens to exchange rates before you actually travel.

In summary, we are able to package a holiday for less than you will be able to arrange directly, without any exchange risk, and you will benefit from our decades of experience in arranging similar trips, our impartial opinions, and the financial security that our ATOL bond offers!

