Cuba People & Culture: Havana, Trinidad & Cienfuegos

Pre-departure information for your tour

GO AHEAD TOURS

Passport, visa & entry requirements

- In order to enter Cuba, U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport with an expiration date extending at least six months beyond the date of reentry.
- We recommend having at least two blank passport pages for entry stamps.
- In order to enter Cuba, U.S. and Canadian passport holders must obtain a Cuban Tourist Card (commonly referred to as a visa). You may purchase your Cuban Tourist Card online through Cuba Travel Services—or directly from a gate agent, depending on the airline you are flying and your flight routing. Please check with the airline(s) for more details on what is required at the gate at least 30 days prior to departure if you plan on purchasing your Cuba Tourist Card at the gate (if available).
- All travelers must complete the DViajeros Advance Information of Travelers form a maximum of 48 hours before departure to Cuba. Travelers will receive a QR code by email after completing the form. Travelers must show an electronic or printed version of the QR code to the authorities upon arrival.
- Airline tickets purchased by Go Ahead Tours include the required medical insurance coverage required by Cuba for the duration of tour. Please note required coverage is only for medical-related incidents while in Cuba and does not serve as broader travel insurance *(trip cancellation, baggage delay/loss, airline delays, etc.)*. For more information on Go Ahead Tour's Travel Protection plans, please visit our website.
- As part of federal requirements, you should keep a copy of your Cuban travel itinerary and airline ticket receipt on file for five years.
- If you are not a U.S. citizen, you must contact your country's consulate for specific entry requirements.
- The Cuban government does not recognize the dual nationality of those who are Cuba-born or the children of Cuban parents.
- Cuba-born citizens and the children of Cuban nationals may be required to hold a Cuban passport and/or HE-11 visa, and will be responsible for any additional costs incurred. If you were born in Cuba or are the child of Cuban nationals, please contact our Customer Experience Team at your earliest convenience.
- You can see the most up-to-date entry requirements for the destination(s) you'll visit on tour by going to goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements and searching the code CUB.

Tour pacing & mobility

- You will walk for about 3 hours daily across moderately uneven terrain, including cobblestones and unpaved paths, with few hills or stairs.
- Travelers should be in reasonable health to take our included walks.
- You should feel comfortable managing your own baggage at all times.
- Please note that summers in Cuba can get very hot and that this is a very full itinerary.
- Go Ahead Tours and the Tour Director who accompanies your group are unable to provide special, individual mobility assistance to travelers on tour. The responsibility of the Tour Director is to ensure the group as a whole enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing, individualized assistance to any one traveler.
- If you have any mobility concerns or physical restrictions, please contact our Customer Experience Team so that we can review all necessary information with you.

Transportation & arrival information

- Your round-trip flights must be purchased through Go Ahead Tours due to visa and medical insurance requirements specific to Cuba travel.
- Due to airline scheduling and availability, some travelers may be required to depart one day early to arrive to tour on time.
- Transfers to and from the airport at your destination are included in the price of your Go Ahead Tours airfare package.
- Taxis are the best way to get around on your own. However, if you choose to take a taxi, please note that drivers will most likely speak only Spanish. You should make a point to agree on the cost of the fare before getting into the cab. Additionally, cab fare may be paid in USD, or in CUC, a local Cuban currency commonly used by tourists.
- A round trip ferry transfer from Viñales to Cayo Levisa is included in the price of the tour extension.
- All other included transportation on this tour is by private motor coach.

Baggage allowance

- Please note that our travelers are limited to one checked bag and one carry-on bag per person due to storage limitations on motor coaches and other transfers, which may include train connections or flights.
- Contact your airline(s) for baggage size and weight restrictions for your flights, which may include on-tour flights in addition to your round-trip flights to and from tour. Please note that your included on-tour flights may have more restrictive baggage limits.
- Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage or exceed baggage size and weight restrictions. Be advised that you are responsible for any baggage fees incurred on all flights.
- Make sure you label your baggage and keep valuables, medication, and documents in your carry-on bag

Clothing & packing tips

- We recommend packing lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that can be easily layered to accommodate varying temperatures, as well as a light jacket or rainwear.
- A sturdy pair of walking shoes or sneakers is recommended for sightseeing.
- In addition, we recommend packing insect repellent, sunglasses, sunscreen, a bathing suit, a sun hat, and hand sanitizer, as well as washcloths, as most hotels do not provide them. You may also want to bring your own toilet tissue for use in public restrooms.
- Please note that it is preferable not to visit churches or other religious sites with bare legs or shoulders (entrance may be denied on this basis).

CUB23_329
© 2024 EF Education First

Cuba People & Culture: Havana, Trinidad & Cienfuegos

Pre-departure information for your tour

GO AHEAD TOURS

Health

- At least 60 days prior to departure, check with your doctor or healthcare provider for the latest updates and entry requirements, or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at cdc.gov.
- We strongly recommend speaking with your doctor prior to your departure to review any medical concerns.
- In order to obtain medical care in Cuba, you will need to show your airline boarding pass which serves as proof of health insurance, as well as your passport *(make sure to carry a photocopy of your passport at all times).*
- If you take any daily medication, be sure you have enough for each day of the tour as well as any possible delays encountered.
- Bring a small first-aid kit that includes antacids, anti-diarrhea medication, and any other medications you regularly need.
- If you have dietary restrictions and/or food allergies, please notify Go Ahead Tours at least 30 days prior to your departure by logging in to your account and updating your traveler info. To update this information closer to your departure date, please call our Customer Experience Team.
- Drink bottled water. Aside from the hotels where you will be staying and the restaurants you will be visiting, where water is purified, it is not advisable to drink tap water.
- You can see the most up-to-date entry requirements for the destination(s) you'll visit on tour by going to goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements and searching the code CUB.

Cuisine

- As a result of Spain's historical colonization of the country, Cuban cuisine is known for its Spanish influences.
- African and Caribbean flavors also play an important part in traditional dishes. Common foods often include pork, chicken, yucca, plantains, beans, and rice. Cuban coffee is also popular and is known for being strongly brewed.

Currency

- You will use the Cuba Peso (CUP) on tour.
- In Cuba, you can exchange USD or CAD for CUP at the Havana airport, hotels, exchange bureaus, and in some banks. Currently, there is a 8% surcharge fee for exchanging USD to CUP.
- When exchanging currency, your passport will be required at the time of transaction. It is also important to note that most places will not accept torn or marked bills when converting to CUP.
- Credit cards, debit cards, and ATM cards issued by U.S. banks are currently unusable in Cuba. As such, purchases and payments for services must be made in local currency. You should plan on bringing enough cash with you for meals that are not included and anything else you may wish to purchase.
- Although some small businesses and taxi drivers will accept USD, paying in CUP is strongly encouraged.

Electricity & air conditioning

- Cuba generally operates on 220 volts. However, there may be both 220- and 110-volt outlets in some hotels. The outlets will work with Types A, B, C, or L plugs with two or three prongs. An adapter will be required.
- The strength of the air conditioning in Cuban hotels is often not as strong or as cool as what you might be used to in the U.S. or Canada. When air conditioning is available, it is usually regulated seasonally and controlled centrally by the hotel.

Connectivity

- Even with the purchase of an international service plan, U.S. cell phones do not currently work in Cuba.
- If necessary, you may use the phone in your hotel room by arranging payment with the hotel front desk. However, placing a call to the U.S. can be expensive, sometimes costing more than $2.50USD per minute. Connection charges may also apply.
- While Cuba is a technologically developing country with Wi-Fi not readily available at all hotels, some hotels may have business centers where internet service is available. Charges for use may be up to $4.50USD per hour.

Time zones

- Cuba is on the equivalent of U.S. Eastern Time (ET).
- When it's noon in New York, it's also noon in Cuba.

Tour Director

- In addition to your Tour Director, you'll be accompanied by a Cuban National Guide for the duration of your trip. Your Cuban National Guide is there to assist with any and all matters, including emergencies, providing a local's perspective, and any issues that may arise.

Tipping

- At the conclusion of your tour, it's customary to offer your Tour Director a gratuity in local currency. Please keep current exchange rates in mind.
- We recommend tipping the equivalent of $8USD to $10USD per person per day for your Tour Director and the equivalent of $3USD per person per day for your driver.
- Tips for the Cuban National Guide have already been covered by Go Ahead Tours and additional tipping is not required.
- In Cuba, tipping is an important part of the local economy. Local salaries are extremely low and many Cubans depend on tips for their livelihood.
- For your convenience, your Tour Director will collect tips at the start of tour for the following components of your tour in Cuba: Local guides, speakers, community project staff, musicians, bus drivers.
- Please budget up to the equivalent of $140USD per person in smaller denominations to cover these tips for this tour.
- Tips can only be paid in cash.

U.S. Customs

- Per U.S. regulations, you are allowed to bring back $800USD worth of goods for personal

CUB23_329
© 2024 EF Education First

use.

- Travelers returning from Cuba may be asked questions by Customs and Immigration officers. It's possible you may need to show proof or provide a copy of your DViajeros Advance Information of Travelers form and undergo additional screening in the Customs area.

Participation

- As part of the people-to-people agreement, U.S. law requires that all travelers participate in all of the tour's scheduled activities. Deviation from this itinerary, even in part, is not permitted.
- Specific itinerary inclusions, such as meetings with individuals and visits to organizations and homes, are dependent on outside factors and may sometimes be substituted or changed while on tour.
- It is important to go into this experience with a very open mind. Your guide will be good at swapping out activities for others when needed, and your flexibility is appreciated.
- International travel is, by its very nature, unpredictable. We must therefore reserve the right to change this itinerary, without advance notice, to meet with local conditions at the time of travel. We appreciate your understanding. Please refer to our website for Terms & Conditions, dates, and prices.