



Cuba (Life-Changing Travel Experience)

Excursion Program

Day 1: Chalkida - Athens - Flight to Havana

Departure from Athens via Istanbul to Havana.

Day 2: Istanbul – Havana

Upon arrival in Havana, we will be greeted by our Greek tour guide, a permanent resident of the country. With iconic squares and examples of neocolonial architecture, which we learn about during our tour, Old Havana is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Our steps will take us to the square of Saint Francis of Assisi, with the homonymous Church and the beautiful fountain, Fuente de los Leones, where the Greek Church of Saint Nicholas is also located, which we will visit. Following is the old square and then the Arms Square, with the small church of El Templete, the Real Fuerza Castle, and the Palace of the Governors (Palacio de los Capitanes Generales). Then, the small Santo Domingo Square and the Cathedral Square. Beyond the plazas, authentic Cuba distills in its national drink! During our tour of the Habana Club museum, we will learn the history of sugarcane cultivation, as well as the secrets of the production and maturation of the Caribbean's national drink, and at the end we will have the opportunity to taste the famous Cuban rum! Finally, visit the entrance of the harbor, on the east side of Havana at the Moro and Campaña castle complex, where we will enjoy the panoramic view of the city. Transfer to our newly built luxury hotel Melia Inside Habana Catedral 5* in the heart of the historic old town of Havana, check-in to the rooms and rest.

Day 3: Old and New Havana (free afternoon)

There are futuristic cities and others that have a, almost, romantic relationship with their past. The relationship each city has with time is absolutely unique, and this is something Havana will confirm from our first ride in the American vintage convertible cars of the 1950s that will be waiting for us outside the hotel! Our tour couldn't possibly start with a panoramic stroll in Miramar. With its beautiful low-rise buildings and aristocratic architecture that testifies to the fact that before the revolution it was the place of residence of the wealthy Cubans, the iconic suburb remains intact over time, maintaining its old glory intact, while now, it hosts most of the embassies and the offices of large companies. Crossing the Cuban version of Fifth Avenue, equally wonderful, we pass through the Havana Cemetery area with its impressive architectural entrance, fascinating sculptures, and more than 500 marble mausoleums of great personalities. On the famous Revolution Square, we imagine Fidel Castro giving a passionate speech and being adored by the crowd. Next to the Palace of the Revolution, we will see the José Martí Memorial, the seat of the government, as well as the buildings of the National Theater of Cuba, the Ministries of the Interior and Communications with the portraits of Che and Camilo Cienfuegos.

The historic building of the University of Havana stands proudly in the Vedado district, and we will end up at Central Park and then at the Alicia Alonso Theater and the Capitol of Havana via the famous Malecón coastal avenue. Of course, we won't miss the iconic building of the Bacardi family, owners of the eponymous rum brand. Immediately after, we will enjoy our meal at a traditional local restaurant. What could be more exotic than wandering the picturesque streets of the unique old town? Atmospheric bars with live music, authentic Cuban cocktails, dozens of small shops with local character. Every corner of this atmospheric city gives us the opportunity to feel as if we stepped into a time capsule that transports us to the 1950s.

Day 4: Havana (Excursion to Viñales)

West of Havana, in the Pinar del Río Province, lies the Viñales Valley, one of the most impressive sights on the island and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The limestone hills, combined with the countless palm trees, create a unique landscape of natural beauty, which we can admire from the Los Jazmines observatory. The perfect panoramic view of the valley and the surrounding area makes it an ideal spot for taking memorable photos. Following is the Vinales itself with a boat ride on a highly mysterious route among stalactites and stalagmites in the famous Indian Cave, and then we will see the famous rock painting of Leovigildo Gonzalez, measuring 120 x 160 meters, which depicts the evolution of species and life in Cuba. Lunch at a quaint local restaurant serving Cuban cuisine, which offers the beautiful experience of connecting with the authentic side of Cuba beyond the tasting. Finally, one of the best cigar makers, with state awards, awaits us at the Finca Montesino farm. Here, we will watch the process of cigar making, we will try a cigar in combination with rum and coffee – Maridaje, and then we will visit the drying warehouses and the fields of cultivation of the generally accepted, best tobacco in the world! And of course, they'll offer you a Caracolillo there (we won't tell you what it is until you try it). And for the more initiated, a Maridaje. A tasting of cigar and rum. Return to Havana and, under the guidance of our tour leader, spend the evening as you wish in the enchanting Cuban capital. However, if we could suggest something, as cliché as it sounds, don't miss out on enjoying a daiquiri at the famous Floridita in the evening, just as the most famous of their regulars, the charismatic American writer Ernest Hemingway, used to.

Day 5: Havana (Guamá – Cienfuegos) – Trinidad

Near the Bay of Pigs, on the Zapata Peninsula, known from the historic battle of the Cubans against the counter-revolutionaries, is one of the most important environmental biospheres. At the Guam National Park, we visit a crocodile farm and, if we wish, we can have a gourmet tasting of their meat. We will explore the park's canals on the complex's speedboats. On the way, we admire the architecture of the Taíno Indians, as well as the sculptures that depict moments of their daily life. We disembark on one of the islets to see an accurate representation of an Indian village, to be initiated into an ancient mystical ceremony, and to admire the 25 statues that represent their life and have been sculpted by the famous Cuban sculptor Rita Longa. City-museums, rum, and French architecture, and we're off to the "New Orleans of Cuba". In Cienfuegos, known as the Pearl of the South, one of the country's most important ports, we see the French influence as it is reflected in the city's architectural monuments. The beautiful central José Martí Park, famous for its French-style government buildings and the renowned Tomás Terry Theater, which has hosted many of the world's greatest artists, impresses with its unique atmosphere and refined charm. In the panoramic tour of the city, we stop at Palacio de Valle, in Punta Gorda, the aristocratic neighborhood of the city – a masterpiece of eclecticism, overlooking the sea and the bay of Cienfuegos. Journey into the past and we continue to Trinidad, the third oldest city in Cuba, which has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The central square with its renovated buildings, the parish church of the Holy Trinity, the romantic museum, and the house of the noble Brinier are some of the sights that will catch our eye, and later, we will exclaim "Kantsachara!" happily, seeing the local tavern of the same name where we will try the local drink made of lemon and rum with crushed ice, accompanied by live traditional Cuban music. Our day will end with an afternoon arrival at the Ancon Playa beach at the newly built 5-star MELIA TRINIDAD PENINSULA All inclusive hotel.

***Note: In rare cases, the visit to the Indian Island may not be possible as it depends on the availability of fuel for the speedboats.

Day 6: Trinidad – Santa Clara – Varadero

Dozens of personal items, as well as the bones of Che Guevara and his comrades, who were assassinated in Bolivia in 1967, are located inside the museum and mausoleum of the historic city of Santa Clara. Our guide here will tell us not only the historical details, but also many interesting moments from the life of the legendary Argentine revolutionary, as well as the origin of the nickname Che. Plains of Central Cuba, Cardenas, and leisure in Varadero. Countless citrus crops pass before our eyes as we make our way to Varadero. 20 kilometers away is Cárdenas, the site of the first raising of the Cuban flag during the war of independence, a city also known for having the most bicycles in Cuba. Arrival in Varadero, check-in at our elegant rooms at the most expensive and luxurious resort in the area, the 5-star All Inclusive Melia Internacional Varadero (unlimited juices, soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, and meals). Free time to get acquainted with the wonderful tropical paradise and the amazing amenities of our hotel.

Day 7: Varadero

The locals call it "Golden Beach" and not by chance. We relax and enjoy the golden sandy powder and the deep blue sea, on a free day with all the amenities of our All Inclusive stay at the luxurious hotel in Varadero and of course on one of the most beautiful beaches in the Caribbean, so that we can enjoy this magical place as it deserves.

Optional excursion to Cayo Blanco:

We can and want to offer it to you at the official state price, without any other charges or agency fees, at a price of €101 or USD.

You declare and pay cash on the spot in Cuba.

Day 8: Varadero – Havana

We enjoy the hotel's amenities, ensuring free time for a last dip in the crystal clear waters of the beach that stretches languidly in front of us, inviting us to enjoy it. Just before we approach the familiar Havana again, we cross the northern coastline of the island and pass through Matanzas (called the Athens of Cuba), the city that sways to the rhythms of Afro-Cuban music to see the outdated oil pumping stations. Enjoy a last stroll in Havana tonight as our journey slowly comes to an end.

Day 9: Havana – Havana Airport

We return to Greece rich in images from this atmospheric journey, knowing that the soul of authentic Cuba is now a part of our own. Transfer to Havana airport and relaxation in the duty-free area for our last shopping for souvenirs, cigars, or rum.

Day 10: Athens

Arrival in Athens.

Included:

- Flights (economy class): With Turkish Airlines via Istanbul
- Accommodation: Selected 5* hotels as follows or similar: Havana, at the newly built Melia Ininside Habana Catedral 5* in the old town of Havana, Trinidad at the newly built Melia Trinidad Peninsula 5* & Varadero at the luxurious 5* Melia Internacional
- Meals: Breakfast & two (2) meals at local restaurants in Havana and Viñales, 1 day All inclusive at the hotel in Trinidad and 2 days All inclusive at the hotel in Varadero
- Transportation: As described in the program with air-conditioned transportation
- Guided Tours and Excursions: As described in the program
- Visa fees for countries that require them.
- Entrance fees (e.g., museums).
- Liability insurance.
- VAT
- Representative/Escort: Local representative services. Experienced Greek leader and tour guide, a permanent resident of Cuba
- Travel folder with useful information.
- Free travel insurance with coverage for Covid-19.



Travel & Premium Services

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Not included:

Personal expenses

Meals: Extra.

Drinks/soft drinks during meals/dinners

Anything not listed in the included items or mentioned as optional/suggested

The program may be modified to better suit the conditions (weather, delays, etc.).

Prices will be adjusted according to timely notification in the event of fuel price increases, ferry tickets, accommodations, etc.

* Please arrive at boarding points on time.

(30 minutes earlier) to avoid delays

* Boarding and gathering times must be observed for the program to function properly.

* Eating is not allowed on the bus.

In case of a delay in arrival at the boarding point, the bus will depart without the agency's responsibility and no refund will be made.

Passport with at least 6 months validity from the day of exit from the destination country

Electronic form (color pdf file, 10-300Kb) of your passport, sent to our office at least twenty (20) days before the trip's departure.



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