



PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

LUXURY CUBA: COLONIAL CLASSICS AND COAST

10 days from **£2,690pp**

**CUBA / HAVANA / TRINIDAD AND THE ESCAMBRAY MOUNTAINS / CARIBBEAN CAYES
AND COAST**

WITH OVER 40 YEARS EXPERIENCE, NO-ONE KNOWS LATIN AMERICA LIKE WE DO

EXPERIENCE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY

WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

A passion for the region runs through all we do

All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America

Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

Fully bonded and licensed

ATOL-protected

On your side when it matters

Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks

We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions

Let us show you the Latin America we know and love



OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

Stay at top quality accommodation to discover Old Havana, colonial Trinidad, and relax on the Caribbean beaches of Cayo Santa María island at the country's premier resort hotel.

DAY 1	Arrive in Havana. Transfer to hotel in the historic city centre.
DAY 2	Guided vintage car tour of Old Havana.
DAY 3	Transfer by car to UNESCO World Heritage Site Trinidad, in southern Cuba.
DAY 4	Guided colonial city tour.
DAY 5	Day at leisure or to explore the Escambray mountains.
DAY 6	Land transfer to first class resort hotel on Cayo Santa María.
DAYS 7-8	At leisure
DAY 9	Transfer to Havana overland .
DAY 10	Transfer to airport for international flight home.

ITINERARY

With a direct flight from the UK, you spend just 10 days on a luxury break to experience the hospitality of the people, their extraordinary history, living culture, music and dance. Stay in the country's top of-the-range accommodation on a first class holiday where you will explore both by day and at night old Havana's evocative historic quarters and Trinidad's elegant colonial streets.

Finally, you'll soak up the sun on the chalky white sand beach at the Caribbean island Cayo Santa María, the largest and most developed of an archipelago of coral islets. There's time at leisure to choose optional excursions and activities at your top quality resort hotel, or just lie on the beach with a mojito or piña colada in your hand.

DAY 1

Arrive in Havana. Transfer to hotel in the historic city centre.

Transfer to your hotel in the historic centre.

DAY 2

Guided vintage car tour of Old Havana.

Soak up the atmosphere from the seat of a vintage car as you are driven around one of the world's most vibrant capitals and along the famous malecón (seafront promenade), including highlights such as the revolutionary square famed for being the platform for Fidel's lengthy speeches. Before you climb into the back seat of your polished classic car you'll stroll along the pedestrian cobbles of La Habana Vieja, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Music seems to seep out of every doorway in the pastel-hued mansions and the more modest homes of narrow, shaded alleys of the busy centre. The subsequent restoration of this part of town has transformed it into what is arguably Latin America's finest colonial quarter, standing in marked contrast to the potholed streets and crumbling façades around it.

In the evening you'll have an appointment with the world famous Tropicana Cabaret. Over the top it may be but its flamboyance reflects the Cubans' love of music and dressing up. Founded in the 1930s the Tropicana club harks back to Havana's flashy mid-century heyday, when the jet set flocked here to live it up amongst the casinos, cocktail bars and luxury hotels and the city was a byword for Caribbean exoticism.

Make your own way across the cobbled streets of Havana to the Salón Bajo las Estrellas ('Hall Under the Stars') for this extravaganza of tropical colour and rhythm, beginning at 10pm. Included are some light bites to eat, a ¼ bottle of Havana rum, tonic water and a glass of sparkling wine. Watch enthralled as singers in show-stopping Carmen-Miranda-style costumes command the stage and dancers perform larger-than-life routines to the mesmerising beat of salsa. The dress code is smart/smart-casual. There is a small fee to take cameras into the cabaret.

DAY 3

Transfer by car to UNESCO World Heritage Site Trinidad, in southern Cuba.

Transfer by car to Trinidad, a beautifully preserved colonial town with numerous eateries and live music venues set in some of Cuba's loveliest scenery. Trinidad was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988. Its popularity has not affected its colonial charm and unhurried atmosphere. Low-rise, brightly painted houses with vast shutters open out onto cobbled streets, palm trees dot the main plaza and evening entertainment continues into the early hours with dancing and music each night.

DAY 4

Guided colonial city tour.

Guided tour through Trinidad's cobbled streets and elegantly crumbling town houses which lead to vibrant plazas frequently filled with music and salsa dancing. As you visit the Plaza Mayor and Museo Romántico, you'll be introduced to the history of the city which seems barely touched by the modern world. Stop at an authentic Cuban bar, La Canchánchara to sample a traditional cocktail, before heading off to a ceramics workshop, La Casa del Alfarero.

DAY 5

Day at leisure or to explore the Escambray mountains.

At leisure during the day. You might visit the nearby crisp white beach or head off into the Topes de Collantes National Park in the Escambray mountains behind the city, where there are cool forests, lakes, waterfalls and a number of hiking trails.

In the evening there's a unique guided excursion taking you around the bustling streets of colonial Trinidad by night. You'll head out at around 9pm, accompanied by a knowledgeable and friendly Trinidadian resident for an evening filled with music, dance and authentic Cuban bars. Your drinks and entry costs are payable locally.

DAY 6

Land transfer to first class resort hotel on Cayo Santa María.

Transfer by road to Cayo Santa María. A string of small tropical cays (which form part of the Jardins del Rey archipelago) are connected to the town of Caibarién on the mainland by a 48km causeway. This island (2 x 13km) is blessed with gorgeous powdery white sand beaches, mangroves and calm turquoise waters, ideal for snorkelling and diving.

DAYS 7-8

At leisure

At leisure on the beach.

DAY 9

Transfer to Havana overland.

Transfer back to Havana overland.

DAY 10

Transfer to airport for international flight home.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Services of our team of experts in our London office

Services of Journey Latin America local representatives and guides

All land and air transport within Latin America

Accommodation as specified

Meals as specified

Excursions as specified, including entrance fees

INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

Guided vintage car tour of Old Havana

Tropicana Club cabaret

Guided city tour in Trinidad

Guided city tour by night Trinidad

Included activities at beach resort

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Tips and gratuities

Meals other than specified

International flights to Latin America

Airport taxes, when not included in the ticket

Optional excursions

ESSENTIALS

TRANSPORT

3 private road journeys (the longest is approx 6 hrs)

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation on this trip is in the most luxurious hotels Cuba has to offer in the chosen places. In Cuba standards of amenities and service can be erratic, but are constantly improving. You'll find well-equipped rooms, private bathroom and air-conditioning.

MEALS

Breakfast daily. Lunch day 4, full board days 6-8.

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS

10 days, 9 nights: Havana 2; Trinidad 3; Cayo Santa María 3; Havana 1.

CURRENCY

The unit of currency in Cuba is the Cuban peso.

HOW TO TAKE IT

The Cuban National Peso (CUP) is the only official cash currency in Cuba, however many outlets will accept US dollars and some may also accept Euros. We recommend you bring your funds in US\$ cash and exchange a small amount into CUPs when in Cuba. You can also exchange Euros but we don't recommend Sterling. Your bank notes should not be damaged in any way. As a foreign tourist you should receive a considerably better exchange rate than the 'official' rate used for commercial transactions.

A limited number of ATM's are available around Cuba, but queues can be large, charges can be high, and the official rate of exchange is given which makes them much less attractive.

Changing small amounts at a time into CUPs will help to avoid having leftover currency when you leave Cuba (it is not always easy to exchange CUPs back to other currencies). It is worth noting that CUPs are not accepted at Havana Airport.

Private hotels, bars and restaurants often accept payments directly in US\$ cash. For these transactions, bring small denominations if possible, and note that coins will not be accepted. Change may sometimes be given in CUPs.

Euros may also be accepted, but locals often see them as interchangeable with US\$, meaning you will pay the same amount in Euros that you would in US\$.

You'll generally need to use a credit/debit card to cover transactions in government shops and hotels, as well as car-rental extras such as petrol and local fees. However, some clients have issues using cards in Cuba so don't rely on them as your only source of funding. Be sure to check with your bank that your cards are accepted in Cuba (cards linked to US banks are not accepted locally). At Cadeca exchange offices it is now possible to purchase a prepaid card (Tarjeta Clasica) which can be bought in cash with US Dollars/Euros. These can be used to obtain petrol. Clasica credit cannot be applied to any other purchases.

Using money changers in the street is not recommended as it is illegal and you are more likely to receive forgeries.

DAILY SPEND

It is very difficult to give a guideline for essential expenses but a budget of around £25 per day should cover the cost of meals not included in the holiday itinerary, drinks and the odd souvenir. Eat at the best restaurants and you will pay considerably more.

TIPPING

Tips are expected and local guides often rely on their tip as a significant proportion of their income.

Most service industry workers will expect a tip of some kind and so it is useful to have spare change for hotel porters, taxi drivers and the like. It is common to leave 10 – 12% in restaurants.

INSURANCE

Travel insurance is essential. Cuban authorities require visitors to have travel insurance, and specifically for the medical and repatriation element of cover to be from an approved provider. For example, Journey Latin America's recommended insurance company is Campbell Irvine, and their medical and repatriation cover is handled by International Medical Assistance, who are approved by Cuba. Please check with your insurance company that their provider is similarly approved.

Details of our recommended policy can be found on our Travel Insurance page.

AIRPORT TAXES

If you have purchased your flights through Journey Latin America, the international departure tax is usually included in the ticket.

Departure tax from Cuba is included in the price of your ticket.

TRIP SUITABILITY

Generally this holiday is suitable for all able, reasonably fit visitors, including families.

Bear in mind that there are some walking tours on this trip, though nothing especially demanding. This journey uses a combination of tourist bus services and private transport. Be aware that although there are timetables for buses in Cuba, there are often delays and occasional cancellations – patience and a flexible attitude will be a virtue in these situations.

CLIMATE

As Cuba lies in the Caribbean Sea, it has a tropical climate that is split into two seasons, one wet and one dry.

However, Cuba is generally hot throughout the year (18-32°C) with regular rainfall and high humidity. The rainy season runs from May to October and from July to September, humidity can be very high. The east of the island is hotter and more humid than the west. Hurricanes and tropical storms are possible from July to October.

VISAS

Holders of a full British passport do not require a visa, although passports must be valid for at least 6 months after the trip begins. A completed Cuban tourist card is essential for all UK citizens travelling to Cuba, we will organise this for you. Clients with a different nationality should contact us or check with the Cuban consulate.

CLOTHING AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

No special clothing or equipment is required although comfortable walking shoes or trainers, and sandals would be useful. Light, summer clothing will be adequate for these hot temperatures, and the dress code is very casual everywhere. Thin, long-sleeved garments may be useful for evenings, and a lightweight raincoat is the best protection against tropical downpours. We also recommend that you pack a torch as lighting can be poor at night.

Protection against the sun (sunblock, sun hat) and mosquito repellent are essential and you should bring swimwear. A daypack is useful for carrying sunblock, guidebook, water and any extra layers.

VACCINATIONS

Preventative vaccinations are recommended against the following; typhoid; polio; tetanus; hepatitis A. For specific requirements you must consult your GP.

You can also find helpful information on the Masta Travel Health website.

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GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

GIVE US A CALL

We'd love to chat

0208 747 8315

OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

SEND US AN EMAIL

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