



PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

SIGNATURE CUBA: THE BEST OF THE HIGHLIGHTS

14 days from **£2,300pp**

CUBA / HAVANA / VIÑALES AND THE SIERRA DE LOS ORGANOS / LAS TERRAZAS / TRINIDAD AND THE ESCAMBRAY MOUNTAINS / CIENFUEGOS, SANTA CLARA AND BAY OF PIGS / CARIBBEAN CAYES AND COAST



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

This comprehensive highlights tour goes a step further than most. Visit Havana, the Viñales valley, forested Las Terrazas and the best historic cities: Cienfuegos, Santa Clara and Trinidad. Wind down on a Caribbean beach. The UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office currently advises against travel to Cuba.

DAY 1	Arrive in Havana. Transfer to hotel in the historic centre.
DAY 2	Guided walking tour of Old Havana.
DAY 3	By road to Viñales, western Cuba. 2 nights.
DAY 4	Half day guided walking in Viñales Valley.
DAY 5	Transfer to rural Las Terrazas. 2 nights.
DAY 6	At leisure in forested countryside.
DAY 7	By road to Cienfuegos port, Pearl of the South. Overnight.
DAY 8	Guided walking city tour. By road to colonial Trinidad. 2 nights.
DAY 9	Guided tour of the city and Sugar Mill Valley.
DAY 10	By road to Santa Clara, guided city tour, continue to Cayo Santa María
DAYS 11-12	At leisure on the beach.
DAYS 13	Transfer to Las Brujas and continue to Havana overland. Overnight.
DAY 14	Transfer to airport for international flight home.

ITINERARY

This holiday includes the main highlights of Cuba but you'll dig deeper, with walks and private excursions to help you to understand how this country really ticks. Cuba is unique and inspiring; a socialist stronghold, with a rebellious history, colonial splendour in many of the towns, spectacular countryside and a Caribbean heart. Its vibrancy and friendly people will make a lasting impression.

The trip begins in Havana, Cuba's inimitable capital, with its faded grandeur and pulsating rhythms. Head west to stroll around Viñales, a fertile valley with limestone mountains in the tobacco-growing region. After a visit to forested Las Terrazas, an eco-experiment that really works, you'll visit three of the country's contrasting cities, Cienfuegos, colonial Trinidad and Santa Clara, each with a story to tell. There's time to absorb it all on a sugar-white beach on one of the loveliest Caribbean cays, Santa María.

DAY 1

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

Private transport to your atmospheric hotel in the lively historic centre of Havana.

DAY 2

Guided walking tour of Old Havana.

Your introduction to the city is a guided walking tour of Old Havana. The streets of La Habana Vieja were declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1982, and the subsequent restoration of this part of town has transformed it into arguably Latin America's finest colonial quarter, in marked contrast to the rambling, potholed streets and crumbling façades around it.

Stroll along the cobbles, between grand, pastel-hued mansions and bustling street life; music seeps out of every doorway and the narrow streets are clogged with gargantuan, crumbling 1950s American cars, which you will have the option of hopping into and cruising down the Malecón. You'll have trouble keeping your camera by your side as iconic images flash before you round each and every corner.

DAY 3

By road to Viñales, western Cuba. 2 nights.

Continue by road to Viñales, a small, bucolic town tucked away in the Sierra de los Órganos. The shady high street is lined with trees, wooden colonnades and one-storey, red-roofed houses. Horse and carts clatter along the main road and local children play baseball with sticks and stones outside the dilapidated whitewashed church in the main square. There is a splendid old chemist's shop and a few other bare-shelved stores, as well as a couple of salsa bars that attract a lively crowd in the evening.

DAY 4

Half day guided walking in Viñales Valley.

The valley has a distinctive landscape, with dramatic limestone mountains, known as mogotes, which jut into the sky from a lush, fertile plain. Using oxen and carts, local farmers cultivate the red soil of the valley floor for fruit, vegetables and tobacco, and the countryside is peppered with thatched curing barns for drying the tobacco leaves. Included is a 9KM walk through this beautiful valley; the trail passes alongside fields being tilled by straw-hatted farmers driving their oxen, and you may have the opportunity to visit members of a campesino family in their home, where they'll brew you up a coffee, roll a cigar and talk to you about life on the land.

DAY 5

Transfer to rural Las Terrazas. 2 nights.

Travel on by land to visit the community project of Las Terrazas in the Sierra del Rosario UNESCO biosphere reserve. This is Cuba's premier centre for ecotourism, which offers the opportunity to get close to the local community, who coexist harmoniously with their surroundings.

DAY 6

At leisure in forested countryside.

At leisure at Las Terrazas. Sierra del Rosario Biosphere Reserve sits on an impressive mountain range of tropical and semi-deciduous forest within the coffee-producing region of Pinar del Rio. The reserve is rich in flora and fauna and offers some of the island's best bird-watching. Other notable wildlife includes bats, frogs and lizards. You have time to choose between optional activities such as hiking the trails, swimming under the waterfalls, bird watching or visiting an orchid farm or old coffee plantation.

DAY 7

By road to Cienfuegos port, Pearl of the South. Overnight.

Today you head through the central heartland of Cuba, a transition between the pre-Revolutionary prosperous western plantations and the cattle pasture of the poorer east. The elegant city of Cienfuegos is an important port town founded by French settlers from Louisiana in 1819. Its French founders left their mark in broad neoclassical boulevards, art deco façades and blond inhabitants but there's also a strong Afro-Caribbean presence. This is a seafaring city with salt in the air; it's the world's primary sugar port. The ambience and architectural style is distinct from that of the rest of the island.

DAY 8

Guided walking city tour. By road to colonial Trinidad. 2 nights.

You have a walking tour of this easy-going place, identified by the sobriquet the 'Pearl of the South', so very different from the other cities in Cuba. Later drive on to the city of Trinidad.

DAY 9

Guided tour of the city and Sugar Mill Valley.

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.

You'll have a guided tour of the city and venture into the surrounding countryside, the Valle de los Ingenios (valley of sugar mills). In the 18th and 19th centuries, this region was one of the wealthiest as a result of its participation in the sugar boom. Visit the Manaca-Iznaga tower, climb to the top and enjoy some of the best views in Cuba. From here, the plantation owner kept a watchful eye on the slaves working in the fields below. The views across the valleys of sugar cane fields are breathtaking in the late afternoon light.

DAY 10

By road to Santa Clara, guided city tour, continue to Cayo Santa María

Continue by road to Santa Clara (2 hrs). Half a century ago the capture of the railway here, by Che Guevara assisted by just 18 guerrillas, was instrumental in the triumph of the Revolution. Today, this vibrant university town is home to an excellent museum dedicated to the events of the late 1950s and to Che Guevara. There's a guided tour with time to visit the armoured train ambushed by Che Guevara's revolutionaries, Che's mausoleum and a monument and plaza dedicated to the man and the Revolution.

Continue by road to the beautiful Caribbean beaches of Cayo Santa María.

DAYS 11-12

At leisure on the beach.

Transfer to Cayo Santa María, one of a string of small tropical coral cayes (they form part of the Jardins del Rey archipelago) connected to the town of Caibarién on the mainland by a 48km causeway. The little island (2 x 13km) is blessed with gorgeous powdery white sand beaches, mangroves and calm turquoise waters, ideal for snorkelling and diving. The eponymous national park has interesting wildlife, especially birds and reptiles. The island is served solely by a small cluster of resort hotels and has no real local village life. This is your beach time, relax on the sand or take part in water sports organised from your all-inclusive hotel.

DAYS 13

Transfer to Las Brujas and continue to Havana overland. Overnight.

Transfer by road from Cayo Las Brujas overland to Havana.

DAY 14

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

Half day guided walking tour of Old Havana

Half day guided walking tour of Viñales Valley

Half day guided walking tour of Cienfuegos

Full day excursion, exploring Trinidad and visiting the Sugar Mill Valley

Half day city tour of Santa Clara with visit to Che Guevara Mausoleum

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

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS

14 days, 13 nights: Havana 2; Viñales 2; Las Terrazas 2; Cienfuegos 1; Trinidad 2; Cayo Santa María 3; Havana 1.

ACCOMMODATION

This trip uses independent mid-range accommodation that we think is great value, comfortable, well-located and which showcases a touch of local character. Properties vary in heritage from colonial style to resort-style lodges, but will all be well-equipped with rooms that have private bathrooms. All accommodation is flexible and can be tailored to meet your specific preferences and requirements.

TRANSPORT

8 scenic road journeys.

MEALS

Breakfast daily; lunch day 9; full board days 10-12.

GUIDES

Our local, trusted and carefully selected partners understand the expectations of our customers very well, and their staff and guides are consistently singled out for praise by clients on their return. On this holiday, you will be joined by different guides for each activity and or region, ensuring you benefit from specialised expertise and knowledge, often from someone local to the area.

OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

As well as any included activities, this Private Journey includes some free time for optional excursions. As optional excursions are often subject to availability, we recommend you discuss and arrange them with your Travel Expert as early as possible before you depart.



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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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