



South destination > **Cuba**



Thursday  
26°C - 30°C



Friday  
25°C - 31°C



Saturday  
25°C - 31°C



Sunday  
26°C - 32°C



Monday  
26°C - 30°C

# Travelling to Cuba

## Summary

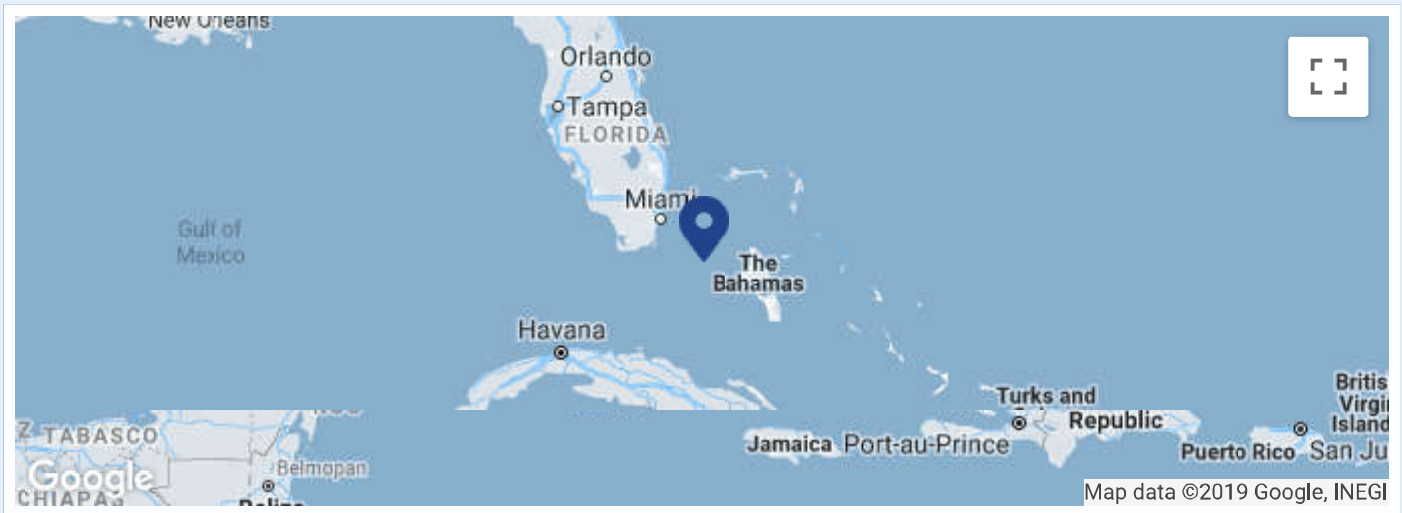
- 1 Travelling to Cuba : General Information**
- 2 The Best of Cuba**
- 3 A Trip to Cuba : One Island, 10 Destinations**
  - 3.1 Varadero
  - 3.2 Cayo Santa Maria
  - 3.3 Cayo Coco
  - 3.4 Holguin
  - 3.5 Havana
  - 3.6 Cayo Largo
  - 3.7 Cienfuegos
  - 3.8 Santiago de Cuba
  - 3.9 Manzanillo de Cuba
  - 3.10 Santa Lucia
- 4 Deals**

**Official Name**  
Republic of Cuba



<b>Capital</b>	Havana
<b>Religion</b>	Catholic
<b>Area</b>	119 884 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Population</b>	11 239 445
<b>National language</b>	Spanish
<b>Tourism language</b>	English

# Travelling to Cuba : General Information



If you are planning a **trip to Cuba**, here is some important information :

## Official Name

Republic of Cuba

## Geographic Location

This island nation of the Greater Antilles archipelago is situated between the Caribbean Sea to the south and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. It is south of Florida, east of Mexico, west of Haiti and north of Jamaica.

## Climate

Tropical. Dry season from November to March, and rainy season from April to October. Hurricane season mid-May to November. Average annual temperature: 25 °C.

## Tourist Season

December to April

## Length of Stay Allowed

Up to 6 months for Canadian travellers. Request for extension must be made at a tourist office or immigration authority before the 90<sup>th</sup> day following your arrival in Cuba.

## International Airports

Havana (HAV), Varadero (VRA), Cayo Santa Maria (SNU), Cayo Coco (CCC), Holguin (HOG), Camaguey (CMW), Santiago de Cuba (SCU), Manzanillo de Cuba (MZO), Cienfuegos (CFG), Cayo Largo (CYO)

## Airlines

Sunwing, Air Transat, Air Canada/Air Canada Rouge, Westjet, Air Cubana

## Currency

The convertible peso (CUC) is the currency used by foreigners.

Locals use the Cuban national peso or *moneda nacional* (CUP), whose value is less than the CUC: 1 CUC = 25 CUP.

You cannot obtain Cuban currency outside of Cuba.

It is better to convert Canadian currency to Cuban currency, since there is a 10% surcharge applied to convert American dollars to CUCs.

Converting currency can be done at hotels, airports, in urban areas and of course banks.

## Banks

Normally open from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Cash advance on a credit card is not possible.

## Cruise Ship Ports

Port of Havana

## Time Zone

Eastern Standard  
Time  
UTC/GMT -5

## Flying Time

Between 3.5 and 4.5  
hours

## Health and Medical Services

Excellent medical and health service  
system

## Purchases

All prices are shown in convertible pesos:  
CUC.

It is not easy to use a credit or debit card when out-and-about on the island, and automatic teller machines are rare. However, VISA credit cards and VISA debit cards from Canadian banks are accepted in most hotels and commercial centers run by the Cuban government.

## Telecommunication

A telephone network provides service inside and outside the country, and many hotels have Internet connection and access to WiFi, however access to these services is not free. You can purchase calling cards and Internet access in hotels and from local phone companies.

To call Cuba from Canada :

Dial international code : 011

Then dial Cuban national code : 53

Now dial area code and phone number.

## Electrical Outlets

220/240 volts

## Passport

Your Canadian passport must be valid for at least one month after departure date from Cuba.

## Tourist Card/Visa





A visa, known as a 'tourist card', is required for entering Cuba. The airline company will give you one at the airport or on the aircraft.

### **Other Entry Requirements**

You must have valid health insurance covering your entire stay in Cuba.

### **Departure Tax**

A tax of 25 CUCs per person must be paid to leave the country. This tax may be included in the price of your airline ticket or travel package.

### **What to Bring**

Relax...you won't forget anything if you use our

*What to Pack* checklist! : [Click here.](#)

### **What to Buy**

Cuba is a great place to buy rum, cigars, coffee, art, handmade souvenirs, Guayaberas (traditional Cuban shirts) and music CDs!

### **What to Eat**

Shellfish, seafood, fish and *ropa vieja* (pulled beef)

### **Getting Around**

You can get around by bus, taxi, coco taxi, scooter rental, car rental, bicycle, private transportation and excursions through your on-site representative.

Be careful when you rent a car or scooter. If you are responsible for an accident, Cuban authorities have the right to stop you from leaving the country until you have paid damages plus interest, or, if a trial is required, until the end of your trial.

## **The Best of Cuba**



Experience the wonders of your **trip to Cuba** thanks to:

- ✔ **Hundreds of kilometers of white, sandy beaches and crystal clear water**
- ✔ **Only 3.5 hours of flying time**
- ✔ **A culture that is rich, colorful, festive and friendly.**
- ✔ **A unique place that seems frozen in time**
- ✔ **Numerous UNESCO World Heritage sites**

Get ready to enter a world unto itself, a place that seems frozen in time. Cuba will charm you from the moment you land on the island. Marvel at the old cars still in use, children walking to school in crisp uniforms, and young people dancing to the joy of salsa beats under the watchful eye of elders, smoking cigars and playing chess in the shaded cool of *parque central*. It's a sensory explosion of sounds, sights and heat...welcome to Cuba!

Home to two *UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve* zones, Cuba is naturally blessed with diverse ecosystems. Expeditions abound, from mangrove to tropical forest, to the lush green summits of Vinales Valley. Marine plants and wildlife add to the bountiful nature of this unique island. A day at sea is a must for divers wanting to explore its pristine ocean floor.

Cuba is all about sun and sea, with over 600 white, sandy beaches and turquoise waters along its coasts – beckoning visitors to kick back and relax!

Cubans love to share their knowledge about their country via tours of coffee plantations, cigar factories, rum distilleries and sugar cane farms.

Between the ocean and mountains you'll find colonial cities and towns steeped in the fascinating history of a vibrant island culture. Stock up on souvenirs at the numerous museums and historical sites, marvel at Cuban art all around you, and why not try a few dance steps at the *discoteca*!

## A Trip to Cuba: One Island, 10 Destinations



Discover our top destinations for your trip to Cuba :

### 1. Varadero

- ✔ **21 kilometers of white sand and turquoise water**
- ✔ **be part of the local scene**
- ✔ **great night life**

A true Caribbean paradise, Cuba's Varadero peninsula offers over 21 kilometres of white sandy beaches and turquoise water – no wonder it has a reputation for the most beautiful beaches in the world. Ocean-lovers can ride on a catamaran to commune with the Atlantic, enjoy a high-sea fishing excursion or go scuba diving in Jibacoa. The whaling station and area offer excursions and activities of all kinds. Golf, explore caves, hike, discover the flora and fauna of Varahicacos Eco Reserve, visit Havana and catch an open-air show at Tropicana Matanzas Cabaret - these are but a few of the activities offered. Catch a *Hop On, Hop Off* tourist bus to discover the city. Rub shoulders with the locals at the public market and enjoy the flavours of Cuba in one of the many restaurants. Once the sun goes down, let yourself be swept away in music, fun and dancing in your favorite local bar, cabaret, disco or café.



## 2. Cayo Santa Maria

- ✓ **Idyllic beaches for relaxing with your family or partner**
- ✓ **Fascinating colonial towns to visit**
- ✓ **Paradise for water sports**

The incredible Los Cayos de Villa Clara whaling station is located in the province of Villa Clara off Cuba's Bahia de Buena Vista north coast. Part of Jardines Del Rey archipelago, it includes 3 islands: Cayo Las Brujas, Cayo Ensenachos and Cayo Santa Maria. Immaculate beaches, turquoise waters with seashells dancing in the surf make it a choice destination for a lovers' get-away. Cayo Santa Maria is the ideal, intimate environment to kick back and relax in the sun. And as hard as it may be to leave the beach, Santa Clara and Remedios are cities worth discovering! When the sun goes down and the heat starts to dissipate, travellers can venture out to Pueblo Las Estrellas, a tourist plaza with local crafts, boutiques, bars, restaurants, a nightclub and play area for children.



### 3. Cayo Coco

- ✓ 400 kilometres of coral reef
- ✓ World renowned kite-surfing area
- ✓ 22 km of shallow beaches, ideal for little ones

Cayo Coco and Cayo Guillermo are two islands of the Jardines Del Rey archipelago located in the province of Ciego de Avila. Every year sun-lovers come for rest and relaxation. Cayo Coco is famous for its beaches, such as the famous Playar Pilar with its calm, shallow waters. No wonder it's an ideal destination for families, couples or friends. Cayo Guillermo has gained a reputation for fabulous kite-surfing conditions. Scuba diving fanatics will love the 400 kilometres of coral reef. **Cuba's Cayo Coco** is more than beautiful seaside – it also boasts lush natural surroundings of mangroves and pink flamingos. Spend a day discovering its abundant biodiversity on the Jardines Del Rey Panoramic Bus Tour. The cities of Moron and Ciego de Avila are culturally rich and completely charming. Cayo Coco is the place to party - shake your booty at La Grotta dance club or watch the sun go down with cocktails on the beach.



## 4. Holguin

- ✓ Combines seaside, countryside and city
- ✓ Excellent scuba diving
- ✓ Picturesque surrounding towns

Coveted for its warm temperatures in winter months, rural scenery, lush green hills and joyful Cuban music, Holguin is a prime choice for travellers. It has the best of both worlds: a charming colonial city combined with sandy beaches and crystal clear blue water. Known as *The City of Parks* a visit to Holguin is a must for culture, history and a personality all its own. Admire its natural landscape by bicycle or riding in a funky old car. Enjoy the day at the beach and explore some of island's best diving spots. The small town of Guardalavaca near the sea is the place to shop for local crafts, and the fishing village of Santa Lucia will welcome you for a cup of coffee with the locals.





## 5. Havana

- ✓ **Historical and cultural hub**
- ✓ **Outstanding food**
- ✓ **Unbeatable nightlife and numerous entertainment options**

Cuba's capital city is also the capital of culture and history, a veritable open-air museum. Saunter down the colorful, winding cobblestone streets of Old Havana to appreciate its exceptional beauty and colonial architecture. Museums, historical sites, theatres and art galleries will whet the appetite of even the most curious. A stop at the Plaza de la Revolucion will take you back to a dramatic era in the country's history. Succumb to the charm of this unique city - meet its citizens ambling up and down the esplanade of Malecon Avenue, have a drink at the famous Bodeguita del Medio, enjoy a Cuban meal at El Patio restaurant and dive into Cuban culture at Cabaret Tropicana. For a unique and authentic experience, drop your suitcase for a few days in Havana!



## 6. Cayo Largo

- ✓ Intimate get-away
- ✓ Nudist beach
- ✓ Lush, natural environment

Have you been dreaming about a far-off get-away on a pristine island in the Caribbean? Cayo Largo is an island paradise where warm winds and gentle ocean waves will lull you into contentment. If it's your thing, drop the clothing and enjoy the sun's rays on the nudist beach. This **little island** is also the ideal spot to explore coral reefs and shipwrecks dating back to between 1563 and 1784. Observe sea turtles at the Centre for the Protection of Turtles and discover the region's renowned wildlife. The monkeys of Cayo Cantiles will make you smile, while the huge variety of exotic birds in Cayo Pajaras will leave you breathless. The nearby Island of Youth is a unique and wonderful place to visit. Water sports are top of the list, and fishing can lead to astonishing results! What could be better than fresh tuna, grouper or barracuda on the grill?



## 7. Cienfuegos

- ✓ Refined architecture and fascinating history
- ✓ Birthplace of famous Cuban singer Benny Moré.
- ✓ Trinidad, listed a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Cienfuegos, known as the Pearl of the South, is a unique and elegant city whose French colony influence still reverberates in its prestigious architecture and history. The nearby city of **Trinidad** is spectacular. It is a protected UNESCO World Heritage site, and you'll want to stay more than a few hours! The region also has gorgeous Caribbean Sea beaches, excellent seafood restaurants and live music shows. Cienfuegos is home to numerous cultural events and activities. The International Benny Moré Pop Music Festival is held here, as well as boat regattas and water-sport competitions.



## 8. Santiago de Cuba

- ✓ Many outdoor activities available
- ✓ Tour rum distilleries with tasting opportunities
- ✓ Attractive Caribbean city

Panoramic beauty abounds, between the breathtaking **Sierra Maestra** Mountains and tranquility of Santiago de Cuba bay. Get close to nature at every turn, with numerous nature and biosphere reserves in the region. Golden, sandy beaches and calm waters invite you to relax and recharge. Located in the south of Cuba, expect constant sun and fierce heat! The area is surrounded by coffee plantations and rum distilleries, and owners are happy to share their knowledge with visitors. Santiago de Cuba played an important role in the Cuban revolution. The fascinating history of this cosmopolitan city is well worth a visit for its architectural beauty, Caribbean atmosphere and rich cultural heritage. Birthplace of many styles of music - an important aspect of Cuban identity - the city is buzzing with bars, cafes, cabarets and live music venues.



## 9. Manzanillo de Cuba

- ✓ Lesser known destination = fewer tourists
- ✓ Ample outdoor activities
- ✓ Cities to visit: Manzanillo, Bayamo and Pilon

Manzanillo de Cuba, located in the province of Granma, is still a destination where fewer tourists visit. The landscape is covered with vast green spaces, Sierra Maestra mountain peaks, banana and coffee plantations, lush vegetation, quaint country villages and friendly locals. The sounds of the sea, the twitter of birds and gentle breeze on your skin make the perfect backdrop for nature hikes and outdoor activities. The Sierra Maestra National Park is a good place to start, or explore the corral reef splendors of the Gulf of Guacanayabo. Visit the cities of Manzanillo, Bayamo and Pilon to get the real flavour of Cuba.



## 10. Santa Lucia

- ✓ **Beaches as far as the eye can see - perfect for long walks in the sand.**
- ✓ **Home to one of the largest corral reefs**
- ✓ **Experience authentic cuisine at the home of a local resident**

Santa Lucia is all about long beaches and happy vacationers. Calm, shallow waters are perfect for a relaxing day at the seaside and romantic strolls at sundown. Just off the coast, divers will delight in the sizeable corral reef. The ocean floor holds many surprises for scuba diving fanatics. Paddle-boarding, kayaking and fishing are other options to keep everyone busy and happy. The area's diverse vegetation and wildlife make for impressive surroundings. Once a year the city hosts a large dance competition, giving visitors an immersion into the festive and passionate universe of Cuban music. Enjoy an authentic culinary experience in the town of La Boca, where locals invite you into their homes for a succulent lobster meal. And then there is Camaguey, a colorful city 90 kilometres inland, filled with colonial architecture and many historic monuments.