

A vibrant street scene in Havana, Cuba, featuring colorful buildings and classic cars. The street is lined with multi-story buildings in various colors like yellow, green, and blue. Several classic cars, including a prominent yellow one in the foreground, are parked or driving on the road. People are walking on the sidewalks, and the overall atmosphere is bright and lively.

Alaska

AIRLINES

BUSINESS & TRADE

Delegation Trip to Cuba

January 5-7, 2017

LA BIENVENIDA A CUBA



ITINERARY

January 5, 2017

7:30am

Press conference at LAX

8:50am

Alaska Airlines flight 286 departs Los Angeles

4:55pm

Arrival Havana and proceed through immigration and customs

6:00pm

Greeting at the airport upon arrival by a bilingual guide. Proceed by motor coach to the hotel

6:30pm

Bus tour through Plaza de la Revolución

7:00pm

Check-in at Parque Central Hotel

8:00pm

Welcome reception

January 6, 2017

7:00-9:00am

Buffet breakfast at the hotel

8:30am

Presentation on Cuba's Economy

10:00am

Guided city tour of Old Havana

12:00pm

Lunch at La Moneda Cubana, located at Plaza de la Catedral

2:00-3:30pm

Visit to the Presidential Palace and the Granma Memorial

3:30-6:00pm

Meeting with local officials [or personal time]

6:00pm

Depart for an evening performance by Camerata Romeau

7:30pm

Private Dinner at L'Atelier with live music

January 7, 2017

7:00-9:00am

Buffet breakfast at the hotel

9:00am

Check out of the hotel

9:30am

Visit to the Ernest Hemingway Home Finca La Vigia (Drive is about 25 minutes)

11:30am

Visit to the home studio of famous artist Jose Fuster

12:15pm

After touring the neighborhood and studio enjoy a private lunch at Fus

2:30pm

Free time at the local craft market

3:30pm

Transfer to the airport

5:55pm

Alaska Airlines Flight 287 departs

8:45pm

Arrive in Los Angeles and proceed through U.S. Customs



Flights

Jan. 5 - Flight 286

Dept SEA 0500 arr. LAX 0734
Dept LAX 0850 arr. HAV 1655

Jan. 7 - Flight 287

Dept HAV 1755 arr. LAX 2045
Dept LAX 2345 arr. SEA 0230 (next day).

Parque Central Hotel

This hotel is located in the historical center of Havana and is highly rated for its service and accommodations. Here is the link to their website to give you a sense of the property and surrounding area.

Website: hotelparquecentral.com

Phone: +53 7 8606627

Address: Neptuno e/ Prado y Zulueta, Habana Vieja,
Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba

Thursday, January 5: Havana

Departure

Depart Los Angeles with gate ceremony.

Arrival

Arrive in Havana and proceed through immigration with gate ceremony.

Plaza de la Revolución

Meet your local Cuban guide and proceed to drive into Havana stopping at the Plaza de la Revolución. This is the most politically important square in Cuba and one of the largest city squares in the world. The square has stood witness to many rallies and revolutions that have altered the course of Cuban history. Presiding over the square is an almost 60 foot statue of José Martí.

Hotel Parque Central

Check in to the Hotel Parque Central.

Meet in the Antilles meeting room for a power point presentation on Cuba's Economy

Enjoy a private cocktail reception and hors d'oeuvres, followed by dinner, on the hotel rooftop which offers magnificent views of the city.

Friday, January 6: Havana

Cigar Factories

After breakfast, visit one of Havana's wonderful cigar factories. There will be a chance to meet with staff and learn more about the tobacco industry in Cuba.

Walk with Ayleen Robaina

Continue exploring Havana by foot accompanied by architect Ayleen Robaina. As we walk through old Havana we will stop to admire the city's many squares, its cathedral and a scale-model of Old Havana

Plaza de la Catedral

Enjoy lunch at La Moneda Cubana, located on the Plaza de la Catedral.

Presidential Palace

After lunch visit the Presidential Palace, a huge ornate building topped by a dome and now known as the home of the Revolutionary Museum. The history of Cuban political development is illustrated here from the slave uprisings to joint missions with the ex-Soviet Union. A few minutes away by foot is the Granma Memorial which preserves the vessel that brought Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and other revolutionaries from Mexico to Cuba in 1956. The Granma, a surprisingly large launch, embodies the powerful, unstoppable spirit of the revolutionary movement.

Camerata Romeu

Evening private performance by the Camerata Romeu. This is an all women group of musicians who play stringed instruments. The Camerata Romeu was founded in 1993 by director Zenaida Romeu. Her goal is to select music – both from Cuban and from different parts of the world. Composers chosen range from Leo Brouwer and Esteban Salas to Bach and Mozart. The concert will take place in the chapel of Centro Félix Varela (Félix Varela Center) which is located in the former San Carlos and San Ambrosio Seminary.

L'Atelier

Private dinner on the roof-top of L'Atelier restaurant with a local band.

Saturday, January 7: Havana

Hemingway's Home

Morning visit to Hemingway's home. Finca La Vigia was the part-time residence of Ernest Hemingway for 20 years, between 1939 and 1959 - despite all the turmoil in Cuba during that period. Upon Hemingway's death, Finca La Vigia was turned into a museum, the Museo Hemingway. The house remains as Hemingway left it with more than 8,000 books on display, as well as artwork, hunting trophies, the author's typewriter, and other personal belongings.

Classic Car Workshop

Continue on to meet the owner of a classic car workshop. Tour the garage of this entrepreneur who is currently running a private garage which works on restoring vintage cars. Learn more about his work before everyone boards a classic cars to lunch.

Jose Fuster

Riding in your pristine classic cars drive to the home/studio of artist Jose Fuster who has turned his neighborhood into one enormous piece of mosaic art. Fuster is an artist who is dedicated to his creations, a vast array of artwork from ceramics evoking the nation's African roots, as represented in the Santeria religion, to whimsical paintings drawn from ordinary life in Cuba: commuters crowded inside creaky, smoke-belching buses, the ubiquitous dominoes games in backyards and street corners. Drive through his neighborhood known as Jaimanitas before arriving at his studio and home for lunch.

Return

Return to the airport for flight back to Los Angeles and on to Seattle.

Note: Alaska Airlines' itinerary complies with the U.S Department of Treasury Cuban Asset Control Regulations (CACR), which closely regulates travel and transactions of individuals under U.S. jurisdiction in relation to Cuba. Given these strict rules, we encourage our guests to follow this itinerary. If you'd like to plan activities beyond this itinerary, you must obtain an alternate visa from what we are arranging. If you decide to do so, please let us know by Friday, December 9th so that we may put you in touch with our visa agency.



Tips for traveling to Cuba

- » All visitors must hold a valid passport in their name with a corresponding travel visa or travel card. Travel visas must be issued by the Cuban Embassy in the U.S. not from an outside country.
- » The following are exempt from taxes: objects for personal use, personal jewelry, photographic or video cameras, sports items, fishing tackle, 2 bottles of spirits, one carton of cigarettes, and up to 10 kilos of medications.
- » Items that are prohibited in Cuba are narcotics and firearms, except for duly authorized hunting weapons.
- » In order to export works of art or antiques, the corresponding authorization should be sought from the National Register of Cultural Items of the Heritage Department in the Ministry of Culture.
- » It is advisable that visitors bring cotton and similar type fabric clothing. It is recommended that fine woolen and gabardine clothing be brought for use during the winter months and for air-conditioned environments. During the rainy season, a light water proof jacket is recommended. More formal clothing is required for theaters, concert halls, night clubs and formal venues.
- » Photos and video footage maybe freely taken, except in restricted and designated areas that are of a military nature. Museums have their own specific regulations.
- » Wi-Fi is not available in most places; however, larger hotel chains and restaurants may have it for a small fee or complementary.

Who do I contact in case of an emergency?

If you have an emergency and need assistance, and you are a US Citizen or resident, you may contact the US Embassy while there. Otherwise, please contact your corresponding embassy or consulate. If you need to call the police while there, you will want to dial 106 from a local telephone for any emergency. Otherwise, you can also dial 104 for an ambulance and 105 for the fire department. Note that you will not find an English-speaking person that answers.

U.S. Embassy contact information:

Calzada between L & M Streets, Vedado, Havana

Main switchboard (53) (7) 839-4100

Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (closed on U.S. and Cuban Holidays)

Emergencies/After Hours: call main switchboard at (+53 (7)-831-4100, dial 1 to speak with emergency operator

What is the currency in Cuba?

The major legal currency for Cuba is the Cuban Convertible Peso, CUC. It's what you exchange your foreign currency for and make all your purchases with in Cuba. Most tourists will only ever deal with CUC. For international exchange purposes 1.00 Cuban Convertible Peso = \$1.00 USD. Note that there is a 13% penalty charged when exchanging USA dollars cash, so, you will only receive 87 centavos CUC for one USA dollar when changing the money, allowing for the 13% interest.

The second legal currency in Cuba is the Cuban Peso, CUP, which is rarely used by the vast majority of tourists, but it's still something you should know about as it is perfectly legal for tourists to use.

How do I exchange money in Cuba?

You can exchange USD for CUC at the airport, most hotels, exchange bureau in town centers and some banks. The current fee for exchanging is 13%, i.e. for 100 USD you will get 87 CUC. The fee is the same no matter where you exchange your currency. You will need your passport to exchange money. In Cuba, they will not accept bills that are torn or written on when exchanging into CUC.

When exchanging money into CUC, try to get small denominations to make purchases easier, as many places (little stores, bars and restaurants do not always have the possibility to break down larger notes for you).

Where can I exchange money in Cuba?

You can exchange money at the airport, some hotels or banks. We suggest that you do not use Travelers Checks because they are not insured and may not be accepted. Therefore, it is essential to travel with enough cash during your entire stay in Cuba. Note: You may find small locations called Cadecas where you can also exchange money.

Can I use my credit card or traveler's checks?

US-issued credit cards, debit cards, and ATM cards were not previously usable in Cuba; this is changing with new regulations and more and more places will start to accept these for purchases or withdrawals, but not yet! It is advisable to bring cash in order to make any purchases in Cuba or pay for most services. Most places will not take USD, so you must exchange currency upon arriving. Tips however can be given in any currency. Traveler's Checks may also be difficult to cash while in Cuba.

What should I bring?

- » Bug Spray
- » Sunscreen and Sun Hats
- » Comfortable Clothing, Walking Shoes (casual attire)
- » Medications and OTC drugs, band aids, etc.
- » CASH (CC and ATM machines are not yet readily available)
- » Small gifts for kids and locals, depending on itinerary (for example, school supplies, small toys, candies, art supplies, band aids, OTC drugs)
- » Sunglasses
- » Hand sanitizer
- » Wash Cloths (not provided at most hotels)

What should I expect on arrival into Cuba?

Upon arrival to Cuba, you will make your way to immigration with your visa and passport. Make sure to fill out the blue customs form and white health form prior to arrival. Cuban born travelers also require an additional entry form. Be prepared for questions they may ask, and a photo will be taken during the check-in process. You will then turn in your customs and health form to an official.

Official's typical questions:

- » How many days are you planning to stay?
- » Where are you staying?
- » Are you traveling alone?
- » This is your first time visiting the country?
- » What is the purpose of your travel?

Is the water safe to drink in Cuba?

It is best to drink bottled water while in Cuba. You will find that both still and sparkling water are available. Water is purified in the hotels and restaurants, and it is ok to drink beverages with ice wherever we take you on the tour. It is also not necessary to use bottled water to brush your teeth, as the tap water has also been purified. Salads and fruits are also acceptable to eat at all included or recommended restaurants.

How safe is Cuba?

Though Cuba is generally a very safe place to travel (more than other parts of the world), it is always best to watch your belongings and beware of pick-pockets and purse snatchers. Leave expensive jewelry in the safe and only carry what you need for that day. You may see some kids or older adults begging on the streets, sometimes asking for soap, pens, etc. Though a nuisance, this is not considered to be dangerous.

Hotels are equipped with safety deposit boxes and may charge a per day fee. Check with the front desk. It is advisable to leave valuables, including passports in the safe. A copy of the passport should suffice for ID purposes. You will however need your passport for exchanging of currency.

Is there Internet access in Cuba?

Wi-Fi is not available throughout Cuba except at some hotels. Most hotels also have a business center with computer, with limited hours, where internet service is available. Charges can be up to 12 CUC per hour depending on the hotel. Because of the limited technology in Cuba, it is not uncommon to have internet outages. There are now certain Wi-Fi hot spots throughout public areas in Cuban cities where a card can be purchased for access.

Will my cell phone, smart phone or PDA device work in Cuba?

Generally, your U.S. cell phone, texting and smart phone-based Internet will not work in Cuba. Any phone calls may be placed from your guest room in each hotel. Inquire about rates before placing calls, as they are generally very expensive and must be paid for in cash. Also, please note that satellite phones are not allowed in Cuba.

What is the electric capability in Cuba?

Electric Current:

In Cuba we have the same Electric standards as in US: 110V, though it is common to find both 110 and 220 in the more modern hotels in Cuba. It is advisable to bring a converter, if your electronics are not travel-ready (105-240 V).

Outages:

Though many hotels are well equipped, in Cuba it is possible to experience temporary power outages due to limited resources on the island. Though this seems to be happening less frequently in the past few years.

May I purchase items in Cuba and bring them back with me to the U.S.?

You may acquire in Cuba and import as accompanied baggage into the United States merchandise with no monetary value, provided that it is for personal use only.

What is the weather like?

The rainy season in Cuba typically runs from May to November and the dry season is between December and April. Keep in mind that it may however rain at any time, so it is wise to always have rain gear when traveling to Cuba. The temperatures in Cuba can range from the 60's in the winter (though not very common) to the 90's in the summer months. Wear comfortable, cool clothing. It is common to have AC in restaurants, hotels, and other indoor facilities. Keep in mind that not all places have AC in Cuba. Bring insect repellent as the tropical weather also means a lot of mosquitos at dusk and at dawn.