

Cuba: Nature and Adventure for Students

10 days and 9 nights in the safest and most cultured country in the Americas!

VISIT HAVANA, VINALES, PINAR DEL RIO, CAYO LEVISA, CIENFUEGOS, TRINIDAD | WWW.HELLOCUBA.CA

DAY 1 – SATURDAY – HELLO CUBA

- Arrival at Havana's José Martí International Airport.
- Group welcomed by your CubaNatura Guide and Bus Driver.
- Transfer to **Hotel Saint Johns**, located in Havana's cultural center: Vedado near the Malecón seawall.
- Private group check-in with assistance from your guide.
- Take a refreshing swim in one of two hotel pools.

DAY 2 – SUNDAY – DISCOVERING HAVANA

Guided walking tour of Old Havana, an UNESCO **World Heritage Site** to experience four of its five historic plazas.

Cathedral Square, the most beautiful and private 18th century colonial plaza on the island. Named after the masterpiece of Cuban baroque architecture: the **Cathedral of Havana** built by the Jesuit order.

Square of Arms, an ancient military parade ground for Spanish soldiers, surrounded by impressive buildings such as:

- **Palacio de los Capitanes Generales**, former seat of colonial government. Today the building houses the Museum of the City.
- **Palacio del Segundo Cabo**, seat of the second authority of the island. Today it houses important publishing concerns.
- **Museo de Artesanía** at **Castillo de la Real Fuerza**, the second oldest fortress built by the Spaniards in the West Indies. Today it displays treasures of artistic ceramics by the most prestigious Cuban artists

from the middle of the last century to present. The institution is host to the Ceramic Biennial.

We continue onto **San Francisco Square**, one of the oldest in the historical quarter.

And later to **Plaza Vieja**, the only civic square of colonial times. Absent are churches and government buildings. Here we'll visit an important center for the visual arts.

Visit to the **Museum of Natural Sciences**.

We spend time in Rumba performance at **Callejón de Hammel**, an alley in which the façades of all the buildings display murals inspired by AfroCuban religions themes. We'll meet alley artist **Salvador Gonzales** and visit his studio.

Tonight we have a Cuban band playing for us! We learn how to perform and dance to Salsa, Son, Rumba and other popular Cuban rhythms from **Grupo Dulce María**.

DAY 3 – MONDAY – PINAR DEL RIO

In the morning we will meet with students at the **Federico Engels High School** in Pinar del Rio. One of only fourteen of its kind in Cuba, this vocational boarding school recruits Cuba's brightest young minds. The students that attend show great promise in the fields of mathematics and science, but are encouraged to pursue a range of academic studies. Ninety-five percent of the graduates from these high schools go on to attend university.

Lunch in the high school cafeteria or at a local eatery.

After lunch we will participate in a friendly sports game, volunteer experience and cultural activities with our new friends.

After lunch we will continue to [Vinales](#).

Check-in at [Los Jasmynes Resort](#).

DAY 4 – TUESDAY – MOGOTES IN VINALES VALLEY

The morning will begin with a hiking excursion to [Viñales Valley](#), a region famed for containing some of the most spectacular scenery in Cuba as well as the most interesting and varied geological formations on the island. The valley is particularly well-known for its impressive freestanding rock formations called [Mogotes](#).

Visit local agricultural cooperative called [Moncada](#) for a discussion and a chance to work with youth in the area.

After lunch we will visit the [Cueva del Indio](#), used by the [Guanahatabey Amerindians](#) as a burial site in ancient time, and as refuge from the Spaniards for both Indians and Black slaves alike. We'll take a short boat ride on the subterranean river running through the cave.

Visit to [Mural de la Prehistoria](#), a huge painting on the side of a Mogote.

Explore Viñales Village at your leisure: its open-air craft market, Parque Marti, town church, and other interesting sites of this charming colonial hamlet.

Visit Carmen and Caridad Miranda's botanical and herb garden, called the [Viñales Botanical Garden](#). The two widows maintain a garden full of fruits, orchids and medicinal plants.

Free evening to enjoy the amenities of your hotel.

DAY 5 – WEDNESDAY – CIENFUEGOS

Morning departure to [Cienfuegos](#), otherwise known as The Pearl of the South, for its wealth of 19th and early 20th century buildings.

City tour of Cienfuegos: Your guide will explain the origins of this beautiful cosmopolitan city. We'll explore Cienfuegos' Plaza Martí where the ceremony of foundation of the city took place, and where you'll find a reproduction of the Arch of Triumph of Paris.

Visit neoclassical buildings such as [The Cathedral](#), built with the donation of wealthy families like the Lebrancs, the Albis, the Terrys. Inside are reproductions of the 12 Apostles in stained glass imported from Paris. Also the original machinery of the clock tower – still in place and working – was built in France. We also visit [The Tomas Terry Theatre](#), built at the end of the 19th century, which still displays original elements of construction including wood works, iron

works, paintings, etc.

Late afternoon check in at the [Guajimico Resort](#), a beach-front hotel with direct access to the warm waters of the Caribbean sea.

DAY 6 – THURSDAY – CIENFUEGOS

Full day work and cultural exchange with high school students in the Cienfuegos countryside.

Lunch in the high school cafeteria or at a local eatery.

After lunch we will participate in a friendly sports game or a cultural exchange.

In the late afternoon we will visit the [La Virgen Caves](#) and trek to [Sendero Los Corrales](#).

Free evening.

DAY 7 – FRIDAY – CIENFUEGOS/TRINIDAD

Morning departure to [Trinidad](#).

Today we explore on foot one of the oldest cities founded by the Spaniards in the West Indies, Trinidad, declared World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

We will visit a mirador (lookout) over the Sugar Mill Valley, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where the sugar barons had their countryside mansions and mills.

Trinidad is well known for its pottery makers. We meet with a family that has been passing the tradition for generations: the Santanders.

Free time to wander the streets of historical center or enjoy the beach.

Check in at [Costa Sur hotel](#), and take a swim in the warm waters of the Caribbean Sea.

In the evening we will enjoy live Cuban Music on steps of [Casa de la Música](#) – a great opportunity to dance with Cubans!

DAY 8 – SATURDAY – TRINIDAD

Full day work and cultural exchange with high school students in the Trinidad countryside.

Lunch in the high school cafeteria or in a local eatery.

After lunch we will participate in a friendly sports game and cultural activities.

Late afternoon return to our Hotel.

DAY 9 – SUNDAY – TRINIDAD

Free day to enjoy the warm waters of the Caribbean Sea, or explore historic sites of Trinidad. Snorkel equipment rental fee not included in tour price.

DAY 10 – MONDAY – GOODBYE CUBA

Check out of hotel for transfer to Havana's José Martí International Airport.

SERVICES INCLUDED

- All breakfasts included and served from 7:00 am to 10:00 am daily.
- Some lunches and dinners as noted in this program's itinerary.
- Clean comfortable safe hotels. Two double beds, daily maid service. Showers and toilet en suite and many enjoyable amenities.
- Modern luxury air-conditioned coach and professional driver for all activities in the program.
- Group in and out airport transfers in Cuba.
- Expert Cuban multilingual guide and translator throughout the program.
- All activities, services, entrance fees and venues unless noted as "not included" or "optional."
- Custom tour website for your school's student/parent orientation and tour administration. See "Schools to Cuba" at www.HelloCuba.ca for examples.

SERVICES NOT INCLUDED

- Cuban airport departure tax 25.00 CUC.
- Gratuities for guide, bus driver, hotel restaurant staff, chambermaids, porters and taxis.
- Lunches and dinners unless noted in this itinerary as "included." *Your guide will assist you in finding eateries that meet all tastes and budgets.*
- Return air to and from Cuba. Contact us for air costs from your city. *We can help with economical tickets!*
- Substitute teacher costs, if any, to cover teacher tour leaders while in Cuba.
- Overweight luggage charges.
- Optional extended medical coverage for students and teachers. Please note: provincial medical serv-

es cover nearly all medical issues that may arise while in Cuba.

- Optional travel cancellation/interruption insurance. Please see our terms and conditions regarding cancellation at www.HelloCuba.ca

COSTS AND SERVICES FOR THIS CUBA TOUR

All Cuban-side costs must be paid in the Cuban Convertible Peso (CUC). Cuban pricing is guaranteed through October 2007. For precise Canadian dollar prices reflecting today's exchange rate please go to <http://www.HelloCuba.ca/nature>

When you schedule a Cuba tour with us we can ensure Canadian costs. Hotel services are based on double-room occupancy. Triple rooms and private homestays are not possible.

ADDITIONAL AND OPTIONAL COSTS

- Water, beverages, optional entertainment, gifts and gratuities: \$15.00 per day suggested.
- Lunches and dinners: \$20.00 per day suggested.
- Contingency money: Consider taking an additional fund of \$150.00 for unforeseen expenses or needs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Cuba Education Tours
708 - 207 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 1H7 Canada

877-687-3817 Toll Free Canada and USA
604-874-9048 Tel Vancouver
604-874-9041 Facsimile

info@hilocuba.ca Email
www.hilocuba.ca Web