

CULTURAL WALKING ADVENTURE

Cuba

Havana, Cienfuegos & Trinidad

CLASSIC JOURNEYS
THE WORLD'S FINEST WALKING TOURS



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*Classic Journeys
provides unbeatable
access to experiences
around the globe.”*

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TRAVEL + LEISURE

The Ultimate Cuba

For all you've heard about life in post-revolution Cuba, one of the country's great surprises is how much of its pre-Castro history has been preserved. This fascinating expedition includes the colorful colonial cities of Trinidad and Cienfuegos, where you explore cobblestoned streets, walk in lush mountains and snorkel on the tropical coral reef in the Bay of Pigs. In Havana, wander the 500-year-old city and out to Hemingway's home. Throughout, you'll interact closely with coffee-growers, artists, dancers, historians, and everyday Cubans. If you join us on the Havana Jazz Festival date, you'll enjoy all of the experiences in this itinerary against the backdrop of music throughout your time in Havana. You'll also enjoy three 'only with Classic Journeys' experiences: sit down for a meal with the director of the Jazz Festival (a personal friend of our guide), a private jazz-making session with a group of musicians, and in-demand tickets for concerts each evening in Havana so you get access to the best performances.

The Classic Journeys Difference

- ACTIVE HIKING & WALKING
- LOCAL WELL-CONNECTED GUIDES
- PREMIERE HOTELS
- FOODIE FOCUSED
- HANDCRAFTED TRIP DESIGN
- MORE IS INCLUDED

What's Included

- 6 breakfasts, 6 lunches, and 4 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to tastings, historic sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

→ INVISIBLE CHECK-IN

When your group arrives, we whisk you and your bags to your room immediately. No waiting – no tipping.

→ PRIVILEGED ACCESS EVENTS

One-of-a-kind access to remarkable people, places and activities arranged just for you.

Terrain

Easy-going walks on cobbled streets and countryside paths.

DAY 1 »

Havana / La Muraleando

After thinking about it for so long, you're finally in Havana! And all of your thoughts, ideas, and images will begin to crystallize to give you a true sense of this fascinating city and country. Starting immediately, you get an inside look at the lives of everyday Cubans as you visit a market where you can chat with the locals and the farmers tending their stalls. You also stop at one of the rations stores where families buy rice, beans, sugar and other staples.

La Murleando is a neighborhood covered in bright murals, wall paintings, and art installations. (The shrine surrounded by banana-yellow hubcaps is always a favorite.) We'll meet our friends Manuel and Victor, and hang out with local artists and musicians. And when those musicians start playing, remember this: Cubans love to dance...and nothing makes them happier than when you join in. They don't care if you have the moves; they just want you to let the beat take over!

Later, you'll go for a stroll in Habana Vieja (Old Havana) with a local historian for their personal take on Cuban history. This 500-year-old UNESCO World Heritage Site is the original heart of Havana, built by the Spanish, burned to the ground by pirates, and still a fine district of baroque and neoclassic buildings. While many of the buildings are well preserved or restored, you also get a sense of the challenges that lie ahead as you see a number of buildings that fell into ruin over the past half-century and await restoration.

Not long ago, the government of Cuba finally allowed entrepreneurs to start their own privately owned and operated restaurants known as paladares. Your evening begins with dinner at one of our favorites. Afterward, you can retire for the evening, or you can join your guide to retrace Hemingway's footsteps on a nighttime walk that ends up at El Floridita, a small bar Hemingway loved, where you can catch some live music and sip a daiquiri.

MEALS: L, D

OVERNIGHT: HAVANA

DAY 2 »

Havana

This morning, you have one of those experiences you can only get in Havana, as you visit a traditional, working, cigar-making factory. As you'll see, there's nothing automated about the process. Our aficionado-friend Augustine walks you through the rows of small stations where workers listen to the 'reader' recap the day's events from the pages of the local newspaper, while they select leaves and roll each cigar by hand. It's a fascinating process and you'll have a chance to light up a cigar if you're so inclined.

Then a former Cuban diplomat and professor of political science leads you on an exploration of the island's history. On visits that include the U.S.S. Maine, the Museum of Revolution and Hotel Nacional, you'll have a chance to ask your questions and get candid insights on the once-close and always complicated history of our two countries.

After lunch, you get a terrific inside look into Cuba's car culture at a privately-owned business where artisans restore the classic cars (and paint them in just about every color you can imagine). You'll have time to talk with our friends, husband and wife Julio and Nidialys, about the cars they treasure and the challenges of being small-business owners. They've hosted famous visitors from Michelle Obama to Mark Zuckerberg. Today it's your turn, as the craftsmen who work on the cars take you for a tail-finned cruise to the Malécon, 5th Avenue and Revolution Square.

This evening, strike out on your own to discover another of the city's fine paladares. Tonight is also a great chance to take in a performance at the Tropicana or the Buena Vista Social Club.

MEALS: B, L OVERNIGHT: HAVANA

DAY 3 »

Havana

Did you ever meet Castro in person? No? Well, the good news for you is that the photojournalist you meet this morning had virtually unfettered access to him. So, you'll have the chance to hear stories of the last half-century as well as to learn the backstories behind some iconic photos. Next, a local chef invites you into the kitchen to help prepare some popular Cuban dishes in a cooking instruction. Then you sit down to lunch on the very tasty results.

No American was ever more identified with Cuba than Ernest Hemingway. This afternoon, with a local friend you'll visit Finca Vigia, the author's Cuban home. On the grounds, you'll get a fascinating look into rooms that are furnished as they were from 1939 to 1960, the period when the author lived here and wrote works including "For Whom the Bell Tolls."

Your dinner this evening is at Havana's most elegant paladar, famous for its role in the Cuban movie "Fresa y Chocolate".

MEALS: B, L, D OVERNIGHT: HAVANA

DAY 4 »

Bay Of Pigs / Trinidad

This morning, you head for the Caribbean coast. A local naturalist will introduce you to the rich habitat of the Zapata peninsula, a rich and biodiverse ecosystem that is one of the best-preserved anywhere on the island. The peninsula's most famous spot is the Bay of Pigs, the otherwise quiet bay that was fixed in our collective memories by the failed 1961 attempt to invade Cuba. Linguists say that the name "Bay of Pigs" is actually a mistranslation of a word that means "triggerfish." When you look down into the bay's coral reef through a snorkel mask, you'll agree that the real name makes more sense. In the company of a private Cuban guide, you might spot striped goatfish, peacock flounder, or Creole wrasse among countless others.

The day comes to a climax as you arrive in the World Heritage City of Trinidad. After settling into your accommodations, enjoy dinner on your own. Your guide will be happy to help organize dinner on-site or recommend one of the city's excellent paladares to you and help arrange transportation if necessary.

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: TRINIDAD

DAY 5 »

Sugar History / Trinidad

As you walk through El Valle de los Ingenios – the Valley of the Sugar Mills – this morning, the scenic vistas are spectacular. But this historic area is also the best place to look into the history of sugar. In the first half of the 19th century, this was the world's most important source of sugar. San Isidro de los Destiladeros was once typical of the local plantations. With your expert local guide, you'll learn about the tremendous scale of the enterprise, the dependence on slavery, and why the ruins of the hacienda, bell tower and slave quarters are an archeological site today. At another of the old plantations, Manaca Iznaga, a soaring tower offers sweeping views and you have a chance to sip guarapo, the classic sugarcane juice drink.

The city of Trinidad has a vibe all its own as you'll instantly realize while you explore with a local who is your insider guide. It can feel like time has stood still since the mid-19th century when Trinidad was the unofficial capital of the sugar industry. The sense is made even stronger as you move through the streets and learn about the forces of business, colonialism and politics that gave birth to this city. Along the way, you'll meet talented husband-and-wife artists at work in their home. Lázaro is a master of woodcarving, Lianis specializes in crochet, and the shared passion is wonderful to behold.

After dinner tonight in Trinidad, your evening ends with a tasting of rum and cigars, two of Cuba's most important exports.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: TRINIDAD

DAY 6 »

Coffee Plantation / Trinidad

In the nearby Escambray Mountains, a longtime Cuban tradition continues at a family-run coffee plantation where you are welcomed this morning. With the next generation of coffee-growers, you learn about the agricultural heritage of the industry – and even have a chance to help with harvesting, sun-drying, roasting, or grinding the beans. Of course, you also get to taste the ultimate cup of home-grown, homemade coffee.

Back in Trinidad, your day ends in a wonderful burst of music. The afternoon includes a salsa dance class. After a festive farewell dinner, retire for the evening, or our guide can point you toward Casa de la Música, an alfresco music and dance party on the sweeping staircase in the city's main square.

MEALS: B, L, D OVERNIGHT: TRINIDAD

DAY 7 »

Cienfuegos / Havana

A brief morning drive takes you to Cienfuegos, a seaside UNESCO World Heritage Site known as the “Pearl of the South.” Its story is unique, as you’ll discover on a walk led by a local historian. Founded in 1819, the city was settled by immigrants from France and Louisiana. Even now, you see clear hints of Paris and New Orleans in the architecture. It’s also very well preserved thanks to its role as a prosperous center of shrimping and industry.

You'll transfer back to Havana, with lunch along the way, and arrive at the airport for flights home.

Special thanks to the Cuban people.

Thanks to the personal hospitality and generous spirit of the individual Cubans who have become our friends over many years and repeated visits to the island, all of the interactions and activities you enjoy during your time in Cuba are fully compliant with the U.S. government’s “Support for the Cuban People” general license guidelines. Count on Classic Journeys to make sure your trip is 100% legal and to do all of the record-keeping for the Office of Foreign Assets Control (‘OFAC’) on your behalf.

MEALS: B, L

Tour Hotels



[La Reserva](#)

In the heart of the vibrant El Vedado, this exquisitely renovated colonial mansion has luxury rooms, a tropical garden with bar, and an in-house art gallery featuring contemporary Cuban artists.

NIGHTS: 3 nights



[La Casona](#)

A colonial ranch on the edge of Santa Rosa Valley, La Casona's terraced rooms are decorated with local art. The large garden and yard look out on the ruins of a colonial fort.

NIGHTS: 3 nights

Arrival & Departure

→ ARRIVAL DETAILS

START LOCATION: **Lobby of first night's accommodation**
START CITY: **Havana**
START TIME: **10:00 AM**

→ DEPARTURE DETAILS

END LOCATION: **José Martí Airport**
END CITY: **Havana**
END TIME: **4:00 PM**