



# A Taste of Colonial Cuba

Sancti Spiritus | Trinidad | El Nicho National Park | Cienfuegos | Santa Clara

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## 3 Night Organised Tour

Sancti Spiritus | Trinidad | El Nicho National Park | Cienfuegos | Santa Clara



### Tour Highlights

- Spend 2 nights enjoying the amazing UNESCO preserved museum city of Trinidad with an abundance of authentic bars, restaurants and live music venues
- Visit spectacular El Nicho National Park with waterfalls and pools large enough for a cooling swim
- Overnight in the charming French influenced Colonial city of Cienfuegos, situated on a large bay
- Visit Santa Clara, the final resting place of the revolutionary hero Ernesto 'Che' Guevara

### The Highlights Collection from Captivating Cuba

A collection of organised short tours covering the most popular areas of Cuba, with guaranteed departures on at least a weekly basis. Developed specifically to compliment a stay in Havana or enhance a beach holiday in Cuba or even neighbouring countries, our Highlights Tours are an excellent way to experience this fascinating and unique island.

With numerous UNESCO World Heritage sites, historic towns and cities and spectacular landscapes, the best way to make the most from so many experiences is through one of our organised tours. These hand-crafted, carefully designed itineraries are drawn from our 25 years-experience arranging tailored travel to Cuba.

The Highlights Collection perfectly tie in with flights from the UK, as well as other convenient flight connections from Canada and neighbouring countries.

Our organised tours are led by experienced and professional English-speaking guides, who will not only show you the most important sights but will also immerse you into the fascinating life of Cubans, the political and social environment and what life is really like in Cuba.

We operate all of our tours using small groups to maintain quality and intimacy, and to allow more flexibility for our guide to add some extra elements to the day-to-day itinerary according to guest interests.

Our organised tours include quality, well-located accommodation with breakfast included, as well as lunch, air-conditioned transportation, services of a dedicated English-speaking guide during travel days, a range of activities, and entrances to the places we visit. Best of all, our tours are guaranteed to operate, so we will never cancel a tour due to lack of interest. For those seeking a private experience, we can also organise our tours on an exclusive basis, on any day of the week just for you.



## Introduction

A three-night tour visiting some of Cuba's most famous colonial and historical cities and spectacular countryside, along with a variety of carefully chosen visits en-route. This tour offers you the chance to enjoy all the major sights of this vibrant and diverse area of Cuba, and also allow some independence to explore on your own or relax and choose your own activities and dining options at times.





## Itinerary | A Taste of Colonial Cuba

### Day 1

After a warm Cuban welcome at Cayo Coco Airport the tour will start with a short stop at the picturesque colonial town of **Sancti Spiritus**, one of the only towns in Cuba with a river running through it.

Enjoy a short, guided tour of this typical Cuban town before continuing on to the amazing UNESCO World Heritage city of **Trinidad** which many say resembles a living museum and one of the highlights of any visit to Cuba. Upon arrival at your accommodation, the remainder of the evening will be spent at leisure to relax after the flight.

*Overnight in Trinidad.*

#### Destination Information | **Sancti Spiritus**

*Sancti Spíritus was one of the original seven Cuban cities founded by the Spanish in 1514, and its colonial origins are evident in the buildings and layout. In any other country, this attractive colonial city would be a real highlight, however being so close to iconic Trinidad, visitors barely give it a glance. However, here lies the attraction, Sancti Spíritus is Trinidad without the crowds, and you can explore, dine, listen to boleros on the plaza and absorb the history and friendliness of the city with only a few other visitors.*

*There are a few interesting and iconic features of Sancti Spiritus, it's the birthplace of the dapper 'guayabera', Latin America's favourite men's shirt, also a major grower of the 'guayaba' (guava) fruit and lastly, one of very few settlements in Cuba which has a river running through and crossed in the centre by a quaint humpbacked bridge, reminiscent of the Yorkshire Dales.*

*Easily reached from Trinidad along a picturesque and undulating road that passes the old sugar mills at Sugar Mill Valley and the foothills of the Escambray mountains, Sancti Spiritus is worthy of a one-night stay and there are a number of pleasant and comfortable boutique hotels here.*

#### Destination Information | **Trinidad**

*Located close to the Caribbean Sea on the south coast of Cuba, lies the fascinating small city of Trinidad. Similar in size to a typical UK market town and sitting proudly between the coastline and the impressive Escambray Mountains, lies Cuba's most beautiful and cultured city.*

*Trinidad was founded in 1514 by the Spanish conquistador Diego Velasquez and became a major centre for trading sugar and slaves for almost 200 years. The wealth generated by the landowners during this region's dark past, is reflected in the treasures found in Trinidad's museums, as well as the ornate colonial architecture found in the centre.*

*Declared an UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988, Trinidad is regularly described as a living museum. Cobble streets are lined with pastel-coloured houses, while the beautiful plazas are overlooked by striking 18th and 19th Century buildings. The centre is home to a number of lovely squares, churches, museums and mansions and can easily be explored on foot. There is also a growing market scene with a range of local artworks and handicrafts on sale, and Trinidad is particularly known for its lace and pottery. In the evening, Trinidad offers a vibrant and growing selection of lively venues to sample Cuban food, music and dancing. The Casa de la Trova and Casa de la Musica are also both really lively with locals and visitors alike, and feature live music, dancing and typical Cuban fare.*

*Also, very close to Trinidad lie sugar-white Caribbean beaches and the warm clear ocean, perfect to spend some relaxing time away from the heat of the city. Many enjoy sunrise or sunset on the beaches, and they are easy to reach by taxi.*

## Day 2

### *Breakfast at accommodation.*

After breakfast you can enjoy a comprehensive tour of the centre of [Trinidad](#) including a visit to the History Museum focusing on a family's life in Cuba in the 1800s, and you can sample the unique Trinidad rum and sugar cane cocktail at La Canchanchara, an old house dating back to the 18th Century, beware it is delicious, but very strong.

After lunch in a local restaurant, the remainder of the afternoon and evening will be free to relax in the city, or perhaps take a taxi to the nearby Caribbean beach of Playa Ancon and enjoy the beach and even the sunset there.

There is a good selection of excellent local good restaurants for you to choose from for tonight's dinner, ask to see our restaurant guide and we can reserve a table for you before travel. It is the final evening in Trinidad, and dancing to local live music is a must so feel free to visit one of Trinidad's growing number of bars and listen to some excellent live music!

### *Overnight in Trinidad.*

## Day 3

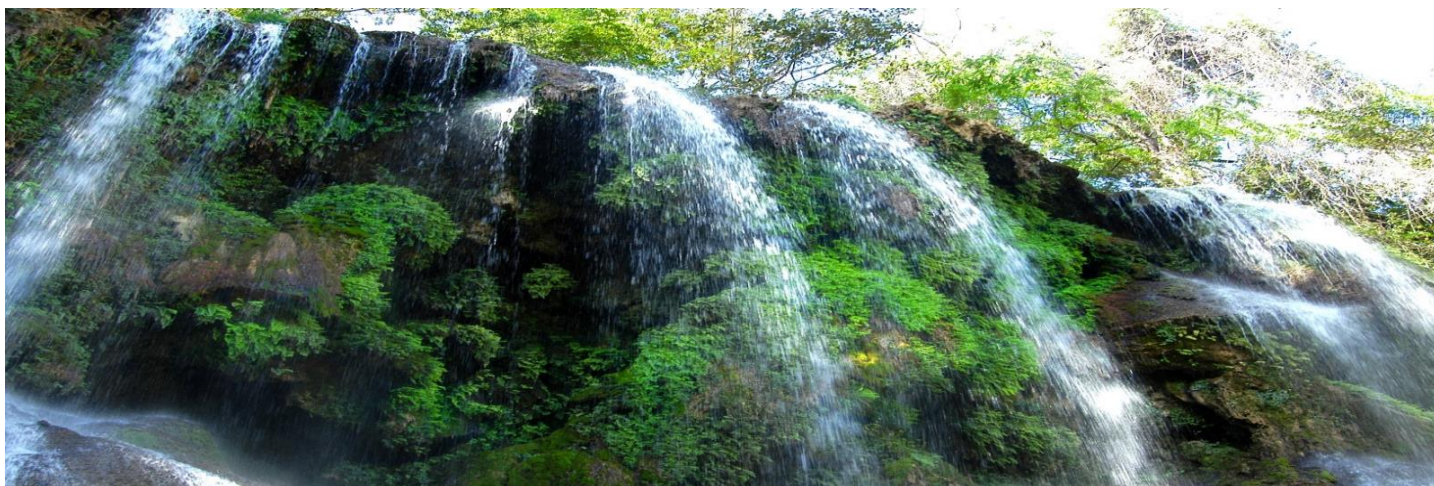
### *Breakfast at accommodation.*

Today you will visit El Nicho National Park, a marvel of nature with dozens of waterfalls and natural pools in an area virtually untouched, hidden among the mountains and one of the most beautiful spots in Cuba. A paradise which combines the green of the vegetation, rivers, the Black Creek waterfalls, where water plunges more than 30 meters. There will be opportunities to swim in the cool natural pools before a rustic lunch is served in a restaurant in the national park. During the tour, you can walk up through numerous walking paths with a gentle hiking trail of 2 km (1.2 miles).

Continuing after El Nicho to the French influenced small colonial city of [Cienfuegos](#), which sits overlooking a picturesque bay. En route there will be a tour of the famous Botanical Gardens, one of the largest in the Americas with an abundance of species of plant from tropical regions.

The evening is free to enjoy at your leisure, dine and explore Cienfuegos independently.

### *Overnight in Cienfuegos.*





### Destination Information - Cienfuegos

Known as 'The Pearl of the South', Cienfuegos is a small city overlooking a large Caribbean bay which served as a refuge against storms for explorers and pirates long ago. In 1745 the 'Castillo de Jagua' was built at the entrance to the bay for protection against Caribbean pirates and the colonial town was later founded in 1819.

Initially settled by French immigrants, Cienfuegos became one of the chief seaports of the Cuban sugar, coffee and tobacco trades. This rich and culturally diverse heritage has left an eclectic legacy of French influenced colonial and neo-classical style buildings in the UNESCO listed historic centre. The beautiful bay, historic buildings and harbour front Malecón make it a wonderful city to explore.

In the busy centre is Parque Jose Marti, here you will find locals relaxing and chatting under the shade of a tree. Surrounding the park are a variety of buildings of interest including the ornate Teatro Tomas Terry and the Paseo del Prado. The longest boulevard in Cuba is close by, also lined by many beautiful buildings.

Along the bay, just outside of the town centre is a beautiful old Moorish style palace called Palacio de Valle. This building is well worth a visit to see the stunning architecture, or you may want to enjoy a meal in the restaurant or have sunset drinks at the rooftop bar.

The Palace is located in the Punta Gorda area of Cienfuegos, a narrow headland in the bay. Here you can find many excellent Casas Particulares and private restaurants, and visitors and locals enjoy spending time in this area.

In the evening there is a good choice of venues to listen to traditional Cuban music throughout this small city, and Cienfuegos has a strong link to Cuban music as it was the home to the world-famous musician Beny More.

Within a short drive of Cienfuegos, you can find a number of unspoilt beaches, ideal for a peaceful walk, swim or relaxation and the foothills of the Escambray Mountains are also not too far away. Cienfuegos also boasts one of the largest botanical gardens in the Americas on the outskirts of the city, and another off the beaten track location is the small bay popular with hundreds of flamingos.



## Day 4

### *Breakfast at accommodation.*

After breakfast there will be a stroll through the picturesque colonial centre and along the seafont 'malecon' promenade to Punta Gorda, with amazing views across the bay.

After the tour you will continue to [Santa Clara](#), a city of major historical significance and the final resting place of Che Guevara where on arrival there will be a panoramic tour of [Santa Clara](#). This revolutionary and vibrant city offers a unique insight into life in Cuba. You will visit 'Tren Blindado\*\*' the train that was attacked by Che Guevara and the turning point in the Cuban Revolution, as well as the final resting place of Che Guevara at the very symbolic \*\*Che Mausoleum. Lunch will be served in the city on a rooftop at the fabulous Autentica Pergola.

The tour will continue to the beaches at Cayo Coco / Cayo Guillermo where you can enjoy the remainder of your holiday or for customers wishing to continue their journey to other parts of Cuba, please talk to us for ideas.

### *Tour concludes.*

#### **\*\*Important information**

*'Tren Blindado' carriage interiors are closed on Sundays (but the location/exterior of the carriages can still be visited) and the 'Che Museum & Mausoleum' is closed on Mondays.*

#### **Destination Information | [Santa Clara](#)**

*A likeable colonial city and provincial capital, Santa Clara is most famous for its pivotal role in the Cuban revolution. On December 31, 1958, the combined forces of Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos, attacked the city by de-railing a train carrying military supplies for the dictator Fulgencio Batista's troops.*

*Once Che and Camilo had captured the city, Cuba was effectively split in half, cutting off all communication between the west and east of the island. This was the decisive moment in the revolution and Batista fled the country a few hours later.*

*Then on 1 January 1959 the victorious revolutionaries, including Fidel Castro, arrived in Havana seizing power and starting a new era in Cuban history. Part of the train is still on display in the city and there is a huge memorial where Che Guevara and other revolutionaries are buried in the city's Plaza de la Revolución, both locations offer a fascinating insight into Santa Clara's history.*

## General Information

- This itinerary is a small group tour which departs from Cayo Coco / Cayo Guillermo
- Guests who wish to make the tour private can do so for a supplement, please ask our team
- The tour has been designed carefully for clients to see a great variety of sights and visits, but also have the chance for independent time away from other guests if preferred
- All meals have not been included on the tour, with the purpose to allow for some independence during the 3 nights, however we are able to pre-book tables for you in the most highly recommended restaurants in Trinidad and Cienfuegos before you depart for your holiday should you wish
- Rather than returning to Cayo Coco / Cayo Guillermo it is possible to arrange for you to continue your journey to other parts of Cuba in either the east or west

- We are pleased to advise that the tour will operate on a guaranteed basis (based on a minimum of 2 clients booked on the tour)
- Tour prices are based on a minimum of 2 clients. Please ask us for a solo traveller price

### Accommodation Included

- Trinidad 2 nights at a recommended superior authentic [casa particular](#) on B&B basis
- Cienfuegos 1 night at the [Hotel Jagua by Melia](#) on HB Basis

Highly recommended and extremely popular, [Casas Particulares](#) (often referred to as 'Casas') are fully licensed private bed and breakfast accommodation, with many offering a more boutique hotel-style stay. The recommended properties in our portfolio consistently attract excellent feedback from guests and for many are a highlight of their holiday in Cuba. Please visit our [website](#) for more information.

### Optional Alternative Accommodation / Upgraded Rooms (Upon Request)

Prices given are additional supplements per person per night

Location	Accommodation	Room Type	Double/Twin	Single	Peak Supplement 22 Dec-4 Jan Inclusive
Trinidad	Deluxe Casa (excludes La Casona)	Standard	£25 pppn	£50 pppn	N/A
Trinidad	La Casona	Standard	£45 pppn	£70 pppn	N/A
Trinidad	Iberostar Grand Hotel	Standard	£120 pppn	£145 pppn	£55pppn-double £80pppn-single
Trinidad (Playa Ancon)	Memories Trinidad del Mar Hotel(all-Inclusive)		£30	£30	£20pppn-double £20pppn-single
Cienfuegos	Melia La Union or Melia San Carlos Hotel (B&B)	Standard	£15 double/twin	£15 single occupancy	N/A

Further room upgrades are available upon request, please ask for more information.

*If you would prefer alternative accommodation, please contact us.*

### Transportation and Guide Included

- All transportation as required in the itinerary using fully air-conditioned transportation
- The services of English-speaking guide specialising in central Cuba during the sightseeing transfers and activities described on days 1, 2, 3, 4

### Restaurant Lunches Included

- Day 2 - Lunch at a local restaurant, Trinidad
- Day 3 - Rustic lunch, El Nicho National Park
- Day 4 – Lunch at Autentica Pergola, Santa Clara

Evening restaurant reservations can be pre-booked before departure for a fee of £5 per reservation (cost of meal payable locally). Please ask us for more information and recommendations.



## Entrances Included

- Day 3 – El Nicho Park
- Day 4 - Tren Blindado (carriage interiors excluded Sundays), Che Guevara Museum and Mausoleum in Santa Clara (excluded Mondays)

## Tour Extensions

On the last day, it is possible for us to transfer customers to the beaches of Cayo Santa Maria, Cayo Coco, Cayo Guillermo, Varadero, Jibacoa or further afield a for a few days relaxing on the beach, or alternatively back to Havana or elsewhere for more exploration time.

## Journey Times

Approximate journey times by road without breaking to give an indication of travel required. Road closures and other local conditions may mean changes, so please treat as a rough guide rather than definitive times.

	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Hours</b>
Day 1	Cayo Coco	Sancti Spiritus	3
Day 1	Sancti Spiritus	Trinidad	1.5
Day 2	Trinidad	Playa Ancon Beach	15 minutes
Day 3	Trinidad	El Nicho Park	1
Day 3	El Nicho Park	Cienfuegos	1.5
Day 4	Cienfuegos	Santa Clara	2
Day 4	Santa Clara	Cayo Coco	3

## Tour on a Private Basis

We are able to organise this tour on a private basis, enabling guests to travel alone with the guide departing on any date that suits. On a private tour, it can also be possible to tailor the tour further if you require. Visits can be added, as can duration, or indeed a specialist interest can be catered for. We would be delighted to assist, please ask us if you would like a quotation.

## Not Included

- Meals on day 1, dinner on day 2, 3, 4
- Tips (discretionary)
- Drinks (soft drinks/alcohol)
- Services of a porter / assistance carrying baggage
- Laundry
- Telephone calls, WIFI / internet
- Local camera / filming fees
- Costs when on 'free time' e.g. taxis arranged locally or optional extras
- Travel insurance / medical insurance

## Important Information

- Any timings and order of activities provided are for guidance only, and may vary considerably due to local availability, constraints and demand
- As our tours are set up many months in advance, changes can occur to accommodation, restaurants, and places to be visited as a result of changes in the local provision of services in Cuba. This is especially apparent in the winter season as Cuba continues to cope and change as a result of unprecedented global demand for the island, as well as a rapidly emerging USA visitor market that is both politically and commercially important to the Cuban Government and Tourism Authorities
- Drivers, local staff at accommodation, attractions/places visited, restaurants/bars and local/specialist guides that you may encounter may not speak English (or languages other than Spanish).
- Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements resulting from previous client feedback, guide/local staff comments and our own findings and research. Ultimately, we are trying to provide you with the best possible experience, which may not always be immediately apparent as factors unknown to you such as bureaucracy and local availability can affect an itinerary running smoothly.
- Our tours are also marketed and sold by travel agents and other tour operators who have their own target markets. Age, nationality, likes/dislikes, lifestyle, and background of our escorted tour guests do vary.
- All guests on our escorted tours are required to comply with Cuban law and refrain from any illegal activities, bearing in mind your behaviour may impact on others on the tour. Anyone found to be participating in illegal activities will have their place on the tour cancelled immediately, and no refund or compensation provided.
- Mobility, Access, and Fitness  
Our tour itineraries are generally fast paced and will keep you busy, and a considerable amount of walking is involved (including stairs) so an average/decent level of fitness and mobility is required, and you should be physically fit and also able to carry your own luggage. Comfortable and supportive walking footwear is required for all of our tours.
- Where tour accommodation is located in a narrow side street where a larger vehicle/bus cannot access easily, or road rules (which may be sudden/unexpected for reasons such as roadworks or underground infrastructure work) imposed restrict the driver from pulling up outside, you may be required to walk with your own luggage to the closest access point.
- Some casa particular bedrooms and their facilities are accessed by narrow stairways, and lifts/elevators may not be available. If you do struggle with stairs it is important that you let us know at the time of booking, so we can make sure we understand your requirements, and can advise and assist accordingly.
- Havana, Trinidad and other cities visited on our tours typically have uneven/high/low kerbs and steps and cobbled streets.
- When visiting Vinales, Las Terrazas, and El Nicho, you may be required to climb stairs, walk up-hill and navigate countryside terrain (which may be wet or slippery after rain) so an average/decent level on fitness is required in these locations if you wish to fully participate.
- The services of an English-speaking guide are included for the transfers between locations and the tours included
- Some experiences, excursions and transfers on this tour (if doing the shared/group tour) may at times be shared with our other customers who are on a different tour/route but have the same services occurring at the same time. This is not applicable if you have booked a private tour.

**Please ensure you read our booking conditions and Cuba destination advice before confirming your booking.**





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