

Cuba Tour Guide



**Hotels, Transfers, Excursions, Car Rental, Tailor-made Tours,
Private Tours, Group Tours, Activity Holidays,
Conference & Incentive events.**

**Captivate the beauty of Cuba and get closer to
the nature, culture and people of Cuba with Cuba Select Travel.**

**We are a premium tour operator and DMC with British and Cuban
management staff based in Havana, approved by the Cuban Ministry of Tourism and
Cuban Chamber of Commerce.**



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About the Guide / About Us & What We Do

About the Guide

This guide is designed as a general guide of Cuba and describes some examples of products and services that are available to travelers. Other product and service examples can be seen on our website www.cubaselecttravel.com. The Guide does not include rates as most itineraries and prices are tailor-made to order and can vary according to contractual arrangements with providers, clients; seasonal differences, exchange rates. However, we have put together some examples of excursions and other services on separate tariff documents which are available on request. Information on hotels can be found on our website www.cubabookhotels.com. Other rates can be requested from us by email at sales@cubaselecttravel.com.

About Us & What We Do – Cuba Select Travel

About us - We are a premium tour operator and DMC with British and Cuban management staff based in Havana, approved by the Cuban Ministry of Tourism and Cuban Chamber of Commerce. Over ten years experience, providing tailor-made products and services to the world leisure and business sectors. Clients have the advantage by dealing direct with our Havana office for local competitive rates, fast turn-around of quotes and our extensive knowledge and experience of the destination. Our office team and tour guides are multi-lingual.

What we do -We take care of all the details to ensure the best possible experience for the discerning independent traveler, leisure groups, or activity holidays for the more adventurous traveler, and the 'wow factor' for conference and incentive events. Travelers have the choice of joining one of our group tours or having us tailor-make a program to suit your requirements. Your requests will be handled personally by one of our British or Cuban staff who will provide you with the best options and prices.

In addition to our wide range of products and services we also offer a special VIP airport arrival service, as well as private tours of Cuba with a driver/guide which allows travelers to see the real Cuba and get closer to the Cuban people.

Travelers have the advantage of a personal 24 hour service from our Havana office with due attention to their needs from the day they arrive until the day they leave to ensure their stay is both enjoyable and interesting. Travelers are provided with an Information Pack together with any necessary vouchers. Additional assistance and services can be obtained from our Havana office. It is important that travelers are made aware that Cuba is still a developing country and they should not expect the same level of service provision as in a developed country.

Our services have been expanded and enhanced over the years providing more opportunities to experience Cuba's growing popularity as a main Caribbean destination. Our aim is to promote the best of Cuba's natural and human resources with the objective of improving quality of life of the body, mind and spirit and strive to provide a high standard of service to clients and travelers.

Bookings and payments – enquires and bookings can be made by email at sales@cubaselecttravel.com. We aim to deal with simple requests within 24 hours and more complex requests around 72 hours. As all bookings in Cuba have to be pre-paid we will send you a pro-forma invoice with details of how to make payments to us which are usually by bank transfer or credit card payments. We only provide ground handling arrangements and domestic flights; travelers need to arrange international flights.

We mainly quote prices in 4 main currencies US Dollars (USD\$), Pounds Sterling (GBP), Euros, Canadian dollars (CAD\$). This will depend on either the currency the providers of services here in Cuba quote, or the country of origin of travelers. Where possible we will try to quote in the most favourable currency depending on the exchange rates at the time.

VIP Airport Arrival Service – this special service is available on request for individuals and small groups. Travelers are met at the end of the aircraft ramp by a VIP staff member with travelers name displayed. The traveler will be escorted with others to the VIP Immigration Channel (this avoids the long queues at the other channels). Once cleared through Immigrations travelers go through an initial security check. The VIP staff member will be present to assist travelers at this point and then escorted passed Customs without collecting checked-in luggage and taken to the VIP Lounge for refreshments and to relax. The VIP staff member will ask the traveler for their passport and for them to describe their luggage so that a valet can collect and clear Customs and bring landside for the traveler to collect. Contact us for the cost of this service at sales@cubaselecttravel.com

How to contact Cuba Select Travel in Havana - Our address, telephone, fax, email and website contacts can be found on the front page of this guide. Our office hours are Monday – Friday 0800 – 1700 and Saturday 0900 -1400. Outside of these times we operate an emergency duty telephone assistance service by mobile phone. There is a recorded message on our main switchboard numbers which gives you our emergency mobile phone number.

Cuba Map & Distances



Pinar del Río												PROVINCIA - Province				
												Distancia en Km / Distance in km				
147	La Habana															
264	98	Matanzas														
421	256	107	Cienfuegos													
435	270	100	85	Santa Clara												
513	348	284	150	85	Sancti Spiritus											
588	423	359	220	160	78	Ciego de Avila										
698	533	469	330	270	186	110	Camaguey									
823	657	594	465	395	310	235	125	Las Tunas								
900	734	671	532	472	387	312	202	77	Holguín							
897	757	670	531	471	386	311	201	76	73	Bayamo						
1025	860	797	658	598	513	438	328	203	134	127	Santiago de Cuba					
1075	910	847	708	648	563	488	378	253	132	177	86	Guantánamo				
110	142	182	248	300	350	418	510	618	691	666	762	820	Isla de la Juventud			

Cuba General Information

Political, economic, social make-up - Cuba is now in its 51st year of its revolutionary socialist system. Fidel Castro relinquished his presidency in 2006 due to ill health and his brother, Raul Castro is now the new President. The U.S. still maintains its embargo on Cuba and this has had a negative impact on Cuba's economy. Education and health care is free for Cubans and they receive free and subsidized food rations. Housing and home energy costs are low. Cuba is a tropical country located in the Tropic of Cancer. It is the largest Island in the Greater Antilles with a population of 11.2 million people. The language is Spanish though English is now taught in schools. The country follows a socialist political system. The economy is now headed by tourism. Nickel, pharmaceutical products, sugar, cigars and citrus fruits are also important exports.

Cuba's main highlights - the main highlights and places of interest of Cuba include Havana, Varadero, Vinales, Cienfuegos, Trinidad, Santiago de Cuba and the many idyllic off -lying cays. Cuba thrives on its Latin passion, historical and architectural marvels, its salsa music, cultural diversity, the natural beauty of the countryside and the pristine beaches, its famous Cohiba cigars and Havana Club rum. It remains unspoilt by mass tourism and commercialism and is a safe destination for travelers. There are many things that travelers can do in Cuba whether it be staying at an all inclusive beach resort hotel, exploring the old colonial cities, staying at a mountain retreat, trekking and walking tours, cycling, diving, sailing, bird watching as well as experiencing some of Cuba's best nightlife. The island also offers a romantic destination for marriages and honeymoons.

Weather - Cuba is a Caribbean tropical island sunny all year and a constant temperature of around 25c. The region can be subject to tropical storms and hurricanes, which can occur anytime between May and October. At the time of writing this guide there have been no hurricanes either last year or this year. In the event of such occurrences Cuba is well organized to move travelers from the area where they are staying to another area to avoid the prevailing conditions. As Cuba is the largest island in the Caribbean, some 1200 Kms in length, such occurrences can be limited to a small part of the island and not affect all areas.

Visas, insurance, money and shopping - The local currency is Cuban Convertible Pesos (CUC's). .87 cents CUC = 1 US\$. Foreign currency can be exchanged at airports, hotels, exchange bureaus and ATM's. Credit cards are accepted at some hotels, shops and restaurants providing the credit cards are not issued by U.S. banks, there is, however a surcharge of around 3%. As products are in limited supply travelers should bring high factor sun screen, any medication they need and personal care products.

Accommodation, food, transport and departure tax - Accommodation is available throughout the island from budget to 5 * hotels and luxury apartments and villas (the star ratings are prescribed by the Cuban Ministry of Tourism and not Cuba Select Travel). Food in Cuba is quite limited in choice but most international chain hotels and some restaurants offer quality cuisine. A simple hamburger can cost around 3 -5 CUC's and a 3 course meal from 15 - 40 CUC's. Beer, sodas, mineral water and juices cost from 1 - 3 CUC's. Travelers have the choice of using tour coaches, taxis, car rentals and domestic flights. Special transport includes classic 50's American cars, Coco taxis and horse drawn carriages. Travelers have to pay Cuba Airport Departure Tax of 25 CUC's in cash after check-in for international outbound flights.

Cuba Country Profile

"It is the most beautiful island that eyes ever beheld" Christopher Columbus.

Situated 90 miles south of the Florida Keys, Cuba is the largest island in the Caribbean, and the most westerly of the Greater Antilles Group. With miles of golden beaches, rich, colourful scenery and a proud cultural heritage this stunningly beautiful and exceptionally diverse country has been enticing visitors since Columbus landed here in 1492. There are few more fascinating destinations in the Caribbean than Cuba – not least because it has been a socialist republic since the 1959 revolution, when Fidel Castro seized power. This last remaining vestige of state socialism was also once the last stronghold of Spanish power in the region. Cuba's rich artistic heritage ranges from pre-Columbian cultures to the splendours of Spanish colonialism and the internationally-acclaimed art of today. It is a place of great natural beauty, with three magnificent mountain ranges and fertile plains where sugar cane and tobacco grow, not to mention some of the best beaches in the world. A quarter of Cuba's 11.2 million people live in and around Havana, which lays claim to being the most beautiful city in the Caribbean. Old Havana, with its square mile of colonial palaces, handsome plazas and charming cobbled alleys was, along with Mexico City and Lima, one of the three richest Spanish cities outside Spain. It has been designated by UNESCO as a city of world heritage. Cuba has an easy-going, multicultural population whose greatest enthusiasm is reserved for music. It is the home of the modern rumba, actually of African origin, the mamba, the cha-cha-cha and the salsa. Cuban jazz is also excellent. Wherever you go on the island, music will go with you.

Havana

Havana City - The capital of Cuba since 1607, Havana (La Habana) is one of the largest and most vibrant cities in the Caribbean, and one of the most enchanting and fascinating cities in the world. With a population of over two million it has been through major upheavals since it was founded in 1519, with revolutions and uprisings leading to a large number of its beautiful buildings being left to decay over the years. Now many of these buildings are being restored and the city is alive with music, dancing and fine museums. Old Havana, the historic centre of the city, preserves a wealth of Spanish Colonial architecture and has become a UNESCO World Heritage Site. American novelist Ernest Hemingway, who lived there for the last 22 years of his life, said in terms of beauty, only Venice and Paris surpassed Havana's charm. During the Prohibition era of the 1920's, Havana became a very popular holiday centre for Americans with nightclubs and gambling rampant up until 1959 and the revolution. **Havana East Beaches** - Playa Santa Maria del Mar, Playa Boca and Playa Guanabo, collectively known as Playas del Este are the beaches closest to Havana, which are most popular for Cuban's from Havana. There are several 3* hotels and villas. *Overland transfer time around ½ hour.*

Varadero

Varadero is famous for its powder white sandy beaches and azure waters. A two hour drive traveling east of Havana will take you through the tropical countryside to this north coast holiday resort. The resort has many excellent all inclusive hotels overlooking the Gulf of Mexico where you can choose to stay at a family hotel, adults only hotel or couples only hotel. Here one can experience some glorious sunsets while enjoying a chilled Mojito or Daiquirí cocktail. Many of the hotels offer water sports, beach games, day and evening entertainment as well as various international a la carte restaurants. Outside of the hotels there are a few good restaurants and local nightclubs. Some of the excursions available in the area include catamaran cruises, jeep and boat safaris, sky diving, dolphin shows and golf. Self-drive car and motor scooter rental is available. If you fly directly into Varadero and want to see Havana there are day excursions to this historic city.

West Cuba

Las Terrazas (West Inland) - Las Terrazas is a small community and nature reserve in Pinar del Río province. Located in the Sierra del Rosario mountain range (designated a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1984), it has a number of hotels and restaurants and a large area of secondary forest. The secondary forest was planted on the deforested hills by building terraces to avoid erosion; hence the name (in Spanish, *Terrazas* means terraces). *No domestic flights. Overland transfer from Havana around 1 ½ hours. The only hotel, La Moka, has 26 rooms and bookings need to be made well in advance.*

Viñales (West Inland) - Viñales Valley (Spanish: *Valle de Viñales*) is a karstic depression in Cuba. The valley has an area of 132 km² and is located in the *Sierra de los Organos*, just north of Viñales in the Pinar del Río Province. Tobacco and other crops are cultivated on the bottom of the valley, mostly by traditional agriculture techniques. Many caves dot the surrounding hill faces (Cueva del Indio, Cueva de José Miguel). The conspicuous cliffs rising like islands from the bottom of the valley are limestone formations called Mogotes. Viñales is a major tourist destination offering mainly hiking and rock climbing. The local climbing scene has started to take off in the last few years with many new routes being discovered resulting in an increase in local tourism. *No domestic flights from Havana. Overland transfer from Havana around 2 ½ hours. Hotels in the area are few and bookings need to be made well in advance.*

Maria la Gorda & Cabo San Antonio (West Coast) - Located in the Guanahacabibes Biosphere Reserve, at the western most end of Cuba is María la Gorda (Mary the Fat) and Cabo San Antonio where divers can enjoy crystal-clear and warm waters at many dive sites. Visitors can admire the largest black coral reserve in the waters surrounding Cuba. Many experts consider that the most special characteristic is the fact that divers can see black corals at a depth of 14 meters, as well as marine species such as barracudas and red snappers. Experts also consider that the seabed is among the top ten places in Latin America, due to its abundant marine life and extraordinarily beautiful corals. *No domestic flights. Overland transfer time Havana María la Gorda 5 hours. / Cabo San Antonio 6 hours.*

Central Cuba

Trinidad (Central South Coast) - The compact colonial centre of Trinidad is one of the most sublime in Latin America, and the city was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988. The cobbled streets, terracotta rooftops and pastel coloured houses are easily explored in a morning when the light is good for photography and the temperature is still comfortable. Much of this city can be seen on a walking tour a private guide. Typically you will take in the *Palacio Cantero*, an impressive neo-classical palace owned by a wealthy doctor who used to treat the sugar barons. The building is now the *Museo Historico Municipal* and has a beautiful courtyard. If you climb the rickety steps to the tower you will be rewarded with beautiful views of the city and the *Escambray* mountain range which provides a stunning backdrop to the city. The city is situated between the mountains and the Caribbean Sea. The *Canchanchara* is an 18th century town house with lively music and a bar serving a traditional drink of the same name which is made from lime, water, honey and a healthy portion of rum. The *Palacio Brunet* overlooks the tranquil main square, the *Plaza Mayor* with its distinctive wrought iron railings, towering royal palms and colourful buildings. The palace now houses the *Museo Romantico* which displays a fine collection of antique furniture from the colonial period. If you pay the 3 convertible pesos to get to the 2nd floor you can take a beautiful picture of terracotta rooftops stretching away to the tower of the church, which is framed by the mountains in the background. *No domestic flights. Overland transfer from Havana 5 hours.*

Camaguey (Central Inland) - Camaguey is a city and municipality in central Cuba and is the nation's third largest city. It is the capital of the Camaguey Province. After almost continuous attacks from pirates the original city (founded as Santa María del Puerto del Príncipe around 1515 on the northern coast) was moved inland in 1528. The new city was built with a confusing lay-out of winding alleys that made it easier to defend it from any raiders and dubbed the labyrinth city. There are many blind alleys and forked streets that lead to squares of different sizes. There is only one exit from the city; should pirates ever return and succeed in entering the city, the hope was that the local inhabitants would be able to entrap and kill them. In July 2008, the old town was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, but in September it suffered damage as colonial columns were toppled and the ornate sculptures on the roofs of centuries-old buildings were smashed by Hurricane Ike. *Domestic flights from Havana. Overland transfer from Havana around 8 hours.*

East Cuba

Bayamo (East Inland) - The capital of Granma Province. The city has a rich tradition of Cuban national pride and is often referred to as "the Birthplace of Cuban Nationality" and "the Cradle of Cuban

Revolution." Additionally, Bayamo has always been a center of philosophy and maintains a rich intellectual and artistic tradition. With a population of 130,000 people, Bayamo has experienced considerable growth since it was founded by the Spanish in 1513 as one of the original seven Spanish cities in Cuba. Today, its major commercial importance is in sugar refining. Bayamo was a valuable hub in the Spanish slave trade, especially as sugarcane crops became the areas predominant economic asset. As a result, there is a strong base of Afro Cuban culture in the area. During the 1800's, the emerging upper-middle class of sugarcane farm owners began to be dissatisfied from their lack of representation and influence in the Spanish colonial government. They resented the governors' tactics of continually ensuring that most power, and therefore economic benefit, remained in the hands of European-born Spaniards. Bayamo was the stronghold of early revolutionary Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, who freed his slaves and declared war against colonialist Spain. During the ensuing battles, Bayamo exchanged hands several times and was once burned to the ground by Cuban rebels as the city was being sacked by the Spanish. *Domestic flights from Havana. Overland transfers from Havana around 12 hours.*

Las Tunas (East Inland) - For a tourist this is a province and a city with not much interest from a historical or cultural point of view. The capital city Las Tunas has 100,000 inhabitants. Sugar is the most important engine of Las Tunas Province. The only need to visit this province for most tourists is while traveling from West to East, but it can be very special because Las Tunas still has beaches without tourists and you will be a witness of the real Cuban life. *Domestic flights from Havana. Overland transfers from Havana around 10 hours.*

Holguin (North East Inland) - Holguin Province is Cuba's fourth largest. The mountains of the region are home to deposits of nickel and cobalt which have been, and still are being, extensively mined. These industries play an important role in the productivity and wealth of the area, the main nickel mines and processing plants are situated around the town of Moa on the north coast, east of the city of Holguin. Sugar plantations and citrus orchards also play a prominent role in the local economy, and the fishing industry, although small, complements the provinces impressive role as a key producer in the Cuban economy. The north coast has been a substantial amount of development over the last 10 to 15 years and the beaches of Playa Guardalavaca are now firmly established with foreign tour operators. *Regular domestic flights from Havana and international charter flights. Overland transfers from Havana around 10 hours.*

Santiago de Cuba (East South East Coast) - Santiago de Cuba is the capital city of Santiago de Cuba Province in the south-eastern area of the island nation of Cuba, some 869 km (540 miles) east south-east of the Cuban capital of Havana. The municipality extends over 1,023.8 square kilometers (395 sq miles), and contains the communities of El Caney, Guilera, Antonio Maceo, Bravo, Castillo Duany, Leyte Vidal and Moncada. Historically Santiago de Cuba has long been the second most important city on the island after Havana, and still remains the second largest. It is on a bay connected to the Caribbean Sea and is an important sea port. In 2004 the city of Santiago de Cuba had a population of about 494,337 people. *Regular domestic flights from Havana and limited international flights. Overland transfers from Havana around 12 hours.*

Baracoa (East Coast) - The remote location at the eastern end of the Cuban island has kept the influence of mass tourism quite low, despite the idyllic location. Baracoa can be reached by bus from Santiago de Cuba (4 hours) or by plane from Havana (2 hours). To the east the Fuerte Matachín (built in 1802) houses a museum (with lots of colourful Polimita snail shells among other things) and further east is a beach at the mouth of the River Miel. To the west the Fuerte La Punta (built in 1803) houses a restaurant, with a smaller beach next to it. And the third fort, El Castillo, on a steep hill with a commanding view of the town and both bays, is now Hotel El Castillo. The other hotels in Baracoa are Hotel Porto Santo, Hotel La Rusa, Hostal La Habanera and Villa Maguana. The Catedral Nuestra Señora de la Asunción houses the earrings of the Cruz de la Parra, a cross that Cali is supposed to have brought from Spain. Although it has been carbon dated to approximately that period, it is made from a local wood type, which means at least part of the story is not correct. There are two music venues near the central Parque Independencia, the touristy Flan de Queso and the more traditional Casa de la Flana. Nearby are the rivers Miel and Toa, the latter of which has many waterfalls, the best known of which is 'el Saltadero', which is 17 m high. The 575 m high table mountain el Yunque (the anvil) is 10 km to the west of Baracoa. It is a remnant of a plateau and because of its isolation it houses several unique species of

ferns and palms. The only official and easiest approach to climb it starts at campismo El Yunque (simple lodgings for Cubans only), where a guide is obligatory (about 15 euro). From Baracoa, it is possible to visit the Parque Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt located about 20 kilometers north. Salto Fino is the highest waterfall in the Caribbean, located in this municipality, is produced by a sudden drop in the Arroyo del Infierno (Hell's stream), a tributary of the Quibijan River. The river, along with 71 others, flows into the Toa River which is the largest in Cuba. The 305-meter-high Salto Fino waterfall is recorded as the 20th highest water chute in the world. *Two flights a week from Havana (Thursdays & Sundays). Overland transfers from Havana around 14 hours.*

Guardalavaca (North East Coast) - One of the main beach resort places in Cuba located in the Eastern province of Holguin, Guardalavaca keeps all the charm and purity of unique places; fine sand, a tranquil and beautiful sea and a small cluster of hotels. An ideal place for diving as the corals and reefs are so close to the beach. Apart from a small number of excursions that can be arranged, Guardalavaca is moderately remote. There is some picturesque countryside that can be explored; however it would appear that the antidote for the day would be to relax on the beach. *Regular flights to Holguin from Havana and then overland transfer around 40 minutes. Also direct international charter flights into Holguin. Overland transfers from Havana around 10 hours.*

Islands & Cays

Isle of Youth (South Coast) - The Isle of Youth (Isla de la Juventud) at 2200 sq. km. is Cuba's second largest island, next to only the main island. With only 75,000 people, it is Cuba's least populated area. Once a haven for pirates such as Francis Drake and Henry Morgan, it was then called Parrot Island and became the basis for Robert Lewis Stevenson's "Treasure Island". In a 1902 unilateral move, the U.S. Platt Amendment mandated the Isle of Pines, as it was then known, as outside Cuban boundaries and led to an infusion of over 300 U.S. colonists moving to the island. Only in 1925 did the U.S. recognize the isle as Cuban territory. In 1955 Batista declared the island a "free zone" which facilitated the construction of many hotels and casinos. However, the Revolution brought an end to the high rollers and returned the island to its inhabitants. During the 1960's, Castro launched a settlement campaign and began planting citrus trees, now amounting to 25,000 hectares, while thousands of young Cubans took shifts working the fields as a duty to their country. In the early 1970s, schools were set up for foreign students with the hope of helping to educate underdeveloped countries. At the height of this program, 150,000 foreign students resided on the island. The government footed the bill for the foreign students while the foreign students joined the Cuban youth harvesting the citrus crop between September and December each year. In honor of this very successful and worthwhile endeavor, Cuba renamed the island the "Isle of Youth" in 1978. *Regular domestic flights from Havana, as well as daily catamaran sailings from Batabanó from mainland south coast (sailing time 2 ½ hrs) (Havana to Batabanó 1 hour).*

Cayo Largo (South Coast) - If sun, sand and sea are what you want from an all-inclusive tropical; island Cuban vacation, Cayo Largo has them all. The boomerang-shaped cay is the second largest and easternmost island in the Archipelago de los Canarreos. Just 38 square kilometers in size, it's a delightful sliver of coral and sugar-white beaches, surrounded by calm turquoise seas and completely divorced from the real world and every-day Cuban life. The hotels may be just 5 to 10 minutes from the airport but they're light years from the hassles of modern living. The only people you'll meet are hotel employees and vacationers enjoying all-inclusive packages at the island's resorts and beaches. Playa Sirena, the westernmost beach, is the most spectacular and the best swimming beach, with white sand that always remains cool to the feet. Playa Paraiso is so secluded that it has become the only nude beach in Cuba. And Playa Tortuga, at the eastern end of the island, is home to a seasonal colony of sea turtles. The sun, the sea and nature are everything here. The calm shallow waters make it terrific for kids. Tiny nearby isles provide wonderful nature excursions. Cayo Iguana, home to those harmless creatures, can seem like a miniature Jurassic Park. Cayo Pajaros is a birders paradise. Cayo Cantilles has monkeys, along with other wildlife. There are 32 scuba sites to fascinate divers with coral formations, tunnels, steep walls and lots of colourful marine life. There are more than 200 sunken ships dating from the 16th to 18th centuries and some say Sir Henry Morgan's treasure is still buried in the area. Maybe, maybe not, but nature provides the real treasure: A tropical escape from everyday life. Because of Cayo Largo's seclusion, things like dining and nightlife are limited to the resorts, although the airport does have a popular disco, so visitors should choose one of the newer four-or five-star resorts. *Daily domestic flights from*

Havana, 1 ½ hour flight.

Cayo Levisa (North West Coast) - Three kilometers of excellent beaches and 23 diving sites turn Cayo Levisa into an excellent destination for diving enthusiasts, who can enjoy crystal-clear waters and one of the world's largest coral reefs. The coral reef is inhabited by 500 species of fish, 200 species of sponges and large populations of mollusks, crustaceans and other marine animals. Many kinds of corals, gorgonias, sea fans, and several species of fish, including stone bass and red snapper, as well as crustaceans like lobsters, also live in the region. A particular attraction in the area is the existence of trigonias, which are considered the oldest living fossils in Cuba. Diving is the main option among vacationers who stay on Cayo Levisa, where expert divers bearing international certificates on Reef Monitoring guarantee the safety of diving enthusiasts. In addition, the islet hosts several international courses for expert divers from all over the world, thus contributing to promoting the regions attractions for the tourism industry. For those who want to spend their leisure time surrounded by quietness and silence, Cayo Levisa offers 40 air-conditioned cabins equipped with private bathroom and satellite TV, as well as a restaurant, bar, barbeque and a commercial center, in addition to the possibility of taking a refreshing swim at the beach. Cayo Levisa, with its comfortable cabins, coconut trees and white-sand beaches keeps a natural treasure in its surrounding sea, including the Mégano de Casiguas key. There is just one hotel on the cay located on the north facing beach. Accommodation is in cabanas. *No domestic flights. Overland transfer from Havana around 2 ½ hours. Twice daily boat to the cay, sailing time 40 minutes, to Cay 1000 hrs and 1800 hrs. From Cay 0900 hrs and 1700 hrs.*

Cayo Santa Maria (North East Coast) - Cayo Santa Maria lies at the western end of the Archipiélago de Sabana-Camaguey, 25 km west of Cayo Guillermo. Between 1989 and 1996, a massive 48km causeway called "El Pedraplen" was constructed across the Bahía Buena Vista from the port of Caibarien at a cost of 100 million pesos. Included in the design were 45 bridges to allow an exchange of tidal waters, an improvement over the earlier Cayo Coco causeway. Paving was completed in 1999, just as Las Brujas Airport was being built on Cayo Las Brujas, 45km northwest of Caibarien. The massive development is part of a plan to build 28 beach hotels with a total of 10.000 rooms in this previously inaccessible realm of low coral cays. Enjoy Cayo Santa Maria 14km of sandy white beaches. *Regular domestic flights from Havana and international charter flights. Overland transfer from Havana around 5 hours.*

Cayo Coco (North East Coast) - Cayo Coco is the forth island in term of size forming the Cuban archipelago. It is linked to the main land by a stone road, 17 km long. Today, Cayo Coco is a paradisiacal place relevant for the balance and degree of preservation of the ecosystem it has attained, by protecting its virgin atmosphere isolated from modern world. Its beach is 10 Km long, of fine sand and warm and crystal-clear waters. A privileged reserve for flora and fauna, this key hosts species such as the wading birds, particularly the coconut the island was named after, the gray heron, and the pink flamingo which total over 30 000 and is among the biggest herds in the world. It is also favorite habitat for other bird species such as the cormorant, woodpecker, mockingbird, pelicans and many duck species. A 10-30 Mt. coral reef, over 10 Km long, adds more attraction to the place; the diversity and abundance of marine species make divers feel in a real aquarium. Very few places in the world can compete with such beauty; one may find the Mega lops Atlantica, the Trachinotus, as well as big snappers, meros, sharks and barracudas, adding more attractive to diving at the places "Coco Diving Center" may offer. *Regular domestic flights from Havana and international charter flights. Overland transfer from Havana around 6 hours.*

Transfers/Transportation/Car Rentals/Domestic Flights

As there are a multitude of rates which are constantly updated it is not possible to add them all here in the Guide. We will be happy to send you current rates on request by contacting us at sales@cubaselecttravel.com

Taxis - A good service of taxis exists at airports, all tourist destinations and main cities. The taxis vary in

price. Rates for transfers and day hire are available on request.

Air Conditioned Micro & Mini Buses - Toyota Istana and Toyota Hiace for 10 passengers without luggage and 6 passengers with luggage. Toyota Coaster or Busscar Senior for 15 passengers with luggage or 20 passengers without luggage. We always recommend having less passengers rather than using the full capacity to allow for more comfort and more spacious. Cuba has added to its fleet more new brands and models.

Air Conditioned Coaches - There are coaches with 'Busscar' bodywork (Brazilian) and Mercedes Benz engines. They are air-conditioned with aircraft type reclining seats. More recently Cuba has imported new Chinese Yutong coaches. 20 places with luggage compartment, equipped with toilets, video and sound. 30 places with luggage compartment, equipped with toilets, video and sound. 40 places with luggage compartment, equipped with toilets, video and sound. 46 - 52 places with luggage compartment, equipped with toilets, video and sound. For incentive and VIP operations, we have some luxury coaches for 20 to 30 passengers, with seats made of leather.

Special Transport

These exceptional and exclusive means of transport will leave a long lasting impression with travelers. They will enter another dimension.

American Cars - All the magic and the symbol of Cuba. These are the classical American cars of the 50's (the youngest dating from 1959). They are only available with driver. For individuals or groups. A fleet of around 25 -30 of these cars can be booked for a group (3-4 passengers per car depending on the size of the car). These cars are also a great favorite for bride and groom after the wedding to ride in to show everyone in town.

Transfers by American Cars from Havana Airport to Hotels - Excellent option to do the first transfer arriving at Havana airport. Very original beginning to start with. The travelers will sense the 1950's era. Reasons related to timing; do not allow us to do any transfers for departure with American cars to the airport.

Transfers by American Cars to other destinations - Considering the age of these vehicles, we recommend a maximum distance of 150 Km between two points. The transfer to Varadero lasts for about 2 ½ hrs. We suggest you stop at the Bacunayagua Mirador to taste a Piña Colada, and admire the superb landscape from the highest bridge of Cuba.

Special 'Collection Havana' Cars - A 100% Cuban creation. These are non compliant copies of old cars. Their originality resides in that they are driven exclusively by women. Only available with driver. For all kinds of transfers in Havana. At present, there are only 10 'Collection Havana' cars for 4 passengers per car. Let's hope that the future brings more of these. A group transfer or tour is possible with these vehicles.

Coco Taxis - These are tricycle like motor driven vehicles in the shape of yellow coconuts with 2 seats. Another invention 100% Cuban. They are only available with driver. Small transfers in Havana, for example to go from the hotel toward the colonial center. Ideal also for those who would like a less expensive transfer at their disposal to go to their hotel after a visit of the artisan's market in Colonial Havana. We can charter a fleet of Coco Taxis for group transfers and tours in Havana.

Horse Drawn Carriages - A romantic way to see the sights of Havana in these traditional horse drawn carriages. They take 4 passengers and will take travelers to the main sights or wherever travelers wish to go. We also use these carriages for group transfers in Old Havana and short tours.

Domestic Air Services

Scheduled Flights – The regular scheduled domestic airlines 'Cubana de Aviacion', 'Aero-Caribbean' and 'AeroGaviota' serve most main destinations and cays in Cuba. Some flights leave very early in the morning.

Check-in time at least 2 hours.

Private Air Charters - Various aircraft are available for charter giving exclusivity and flexibility to groups and different ways to discover Cuba in a short time, considering the extension of the island and the big distances.

Car Rentals

There are 1200 Kms of mountains, coastal roads and cities to explore in Cuba and we offer a wide range of cars for self-drive for you to experience Cuba independently, or with one of our driver/guides. All vehicles are all international brands and models, air-conditioned, manual drive or automatic. There are car rental offices throughout Cuba. You can choose to collect at one point and drop off at another point on your trip. More than one driver is allowed. Gasoline, security deposit, insurance and any different drop off point is additional to the rental price. An emergency roadside service is also provided.

Choose an economic car - The Skoda Fabia Hatchback 1.4 is a popular rental car for up to 4 persons

Maybe a car to be seen in - The Audi A4 Cabriolet 2.4 for 4 persons.

Something sportier perhaps - The Suzuki Jeep is a fun car, good for general driving or off-roading

A family microbus - VW Sharan 1.8T Guide has lots of space for 7 persons

Or a little more exclusive - Audi A6 Stretched Limousine. This vehicle is only provided with a chauffeur.

This year Cuba imported a large fleet of Chinese 'Gelly's' of different models.

The vehicles mentioned here is only a small example of what can be provided. More details of these examples and other vehicles as well as prices are available on request at sales@cubaselecttravel.com.

Hotels

Our special hotel website www.cubabookhotels.com has most of the hotels in Cuba with full details of each hotel and images. Additional data about the hotel facilities and rooms are also given. Hotels are graded by the Cuban Ministry of Tourism. 5* hotels are only in Havana, Trinidad, Santiago de Cuba, Cayo Largo, Cayo Santa Maria, Cayo Coco and Guardalavaca. At these places and outside of these places there are hotels ranging from 2* to 4*. All-inclusive hotels are located at beach resorts and not in cities.

Luxury Apartments & Villas

These exclusive properties are for the more discerning premium traveler who is looking for a high standard of accommodation, quality service and privacy.

Havana Luxury Apartments - We are pleased to offer exclusive luxury self-catering apartments located in the heart of Havana overlooking the Gulf of Mexico and a panoramic view of Havana with easy access to all the main attractions of the city. Apartments have one or two bedrooms with bathroom, sitting room, dining room, and fully equipped kitchen, all very tastefully furnished and with access to a rooftop swimming pool.

- Butler and Chef Service available during day hours – on request.
- Daily room service, cleaning of the apartments and laundry service.
- Cable TV and telephone.
- 24 hours security.
- Secure car parking.

As these properties are unique and in high demand it is advisable to reserve well in advance. Minimum rental period is one week.

Villa Nautica - This is just one example of a beach resort villa, details of other villas available on request. This well appointed two bedroom villa has its own private swimming pool, Jacuzzi, sauna and garden overlooking Varadero Bay with some of the most beautiful tropical sunsets. The villa is part of the Premium Club facilities located on a small islet. You will be pampered in the most regal manner with the personalized service of a Butler and gourmet cuisine prepared exclusively by your personal Chef at the villa.

Whilst enjoying the privacy of this villa and the exclusive services the all inclusive pricing also covers all the other facilities at the Premium Club with its a la carte restaurant and separate infinity pool with swim-up bar, as well as the facilities at the main hotel complex such as the specialty restaurants, water sports, 1.5 km beach, nightclub and cabaret, SPA, children's club, shops, bars and business centre. Exclusive internal transfers to all facilities are provided for you.

Your sojourn begins with a private check-in, cava and canapés upon arrival. Enjoy a relaxing massage before planning your activities for the following days. A round of golf, beauty treatments, deep sea game fishing, an ultra-light flight, aperitifs and fine Cuban cigars at the Cigar Bar or some local interesting excursions such as a sunset catamaran cruise with dinner.

The villa's deluxe amenities include bathrooms with double sized Jacuzzi baths, separate showers and twin hand basins, hairdryer and toiletries. Fully equipped kitchen. Widescreen plasma TV, DVD and audio system. Daily chambermaid and turn down service. Babysitter included if required. Premium imported and national beverages, fine wines and cocktails. Candlelit romantic poolside dinners.

Varadero hosts an International 18 hole golf course and driving range. The green fee is included as part of the all inclusive pricing. All golf equipment, golf carts and golf instructors can be rented at the Golf Club.

A deep sea game fishing yacht can be arranged on request to collect you from the villa's private jetty. Marlin, Wahoo, Billfish, Sailfish, and Barracuda are some of the fish in the area. The yachts are fully provided with fishing gear, baits, snack, beverages, technical and sport preparation and professional crew to take you to the best fishing grounds. You can ask your Butler to pack a special lunch hamper for the trip.

Ultra-light flights from your private landing point can be arranged on request for an aerial view of the cays, pristine white beaches and azure waters of the Varadero Peninsula.

For more details see our website www.cubaholidayoffers.com.

Excursions

The following are only a sample of the more popular excursions. We will be happy to provide you with other excursion possibilities and tailor-make to order on request.

Havana Highlights

Guided Walking Tour of Old Havana - In the morning your tour guide will meet travelers at their hotel to start the tour. The tour will be a guided walking tour through the lanes and over the squares of colonial Old Havana, with the most important sightseeing points: Plaza de Armas, Temple, Palace of the Captain General, Plaza Vieja, Plaza de Armas, Cathedral Square, the Havana Club Rum Museum, and Hemingway's „Bodeguita “among others. (Duration 2 – 2 ½ hours).

Panoramic Excursion of Havana - This tour can either be taken in the afternoon by private taxi or private coach through the Havana of the 19th and early 20th century. The tour will include the passing the Capitol Building, the Gran Teatro and the Bacardi Building and go via the Prado Boulevard to the famous Malecon, passing the legendary Hotel Nacional and via the Avenida de los Presidentes to the Revolution Square with the portrait of Che Guevara and the monument of national hero José Martí. The tour will include 1950s former

upper class residential and diplomatic quarter of Miramar with its former American clubs and beautiful mansions along the Quinta Avenida. (*Duration 2 – 2 ½ hours*).

Cigar Factory & Rum Factory Excursion -Havana - A guided tour to see the processes involved with hand rolled Havana cigars at one of the famous cigar factories in Havana with a visit of one of the brand name cigar factories, such as H. Upmann, La Corona, Romeo & Julieta or Partagas. You will see the whole production from the preparation of the tobacco leaves and sorting according to the different leaves required to make up a cigar right through to the final labeling and packing in the cigar boxes. Later go onto visit a rum factory, which is close to the La Corona cigar factory, to see how the brand 'Legendary' rum is made plus the opportunity to do some rum tasting. Cuban's call it 'Bocoy' rum factory. The factory and the warehouse is where the distillation process takes place. They show you the production line where the bottles are filled up and the label stamped on them. There they give a small explanation of the work in the factory and the production levels. Then, you go where the distillation process takes place and are shown the barrels filled up with silica sand and activated carbon to filter the rum and purify it and the tonal where the rum is mixed with white wine and aged later in the barrels inside the warehouse. There is also a store specialized in selling cigars, a small bar where they make coffee and sell drinks, a souvenir shop and toilets.

Note: Cigar factories and rum factories are closed on Saturdays, Sundays, national holidays and also during the workers vacations and the Cigar Festival. They can also be closed on other days without prior notification. Therefore it cannot be guaranteed that the factories are always open. In case they are closed we will try to offer an alternative program.

The Hemingway Trail – Havana - Ernest Hemingway is one of the icons of Cuba having lived here for some 20 years and where it got the inspiration to write some of his famous novels. The trail will take you to the room in a hotel where he wrote his novels, his popular drinking haunts and the house where he lived.

Art, History & Architectural Excursion -Havana -This specialist guided tour visits the main art and history museums and some of the colonial architectural marvels.

Note: should a museum be closed, we will try to include another museum on another day during the journey. In case the Palacio de los Capitanes Generales is closed (which can happen during the end of High Season or in Low Season) it will be advised.

Cuban National Ballet - This world famous ballet company headed by Alicia Alonso performs in Havana and other cities in Cuba as well in other countries around the world. The company produces some of the world's finest ballet dancers who are hotly sought by international ballet companies. Tickets are usually sold out fast for performances. *Contact us for your tickets.*

Hershey 'Chocolate' Train Excursion - Travel back to another era of the 20's on the electric train that the Hershey chocolate company used to transport cocoa, sugar and their workers in Cuba for the now famous Hershey chocolate. An exclusive trip on the nostalgic 1920's electric Hershey 'Chocolate' Train travelling in time to the origins of Hershey chocolate in Cuba. Included on board the train there is an open bar with National drinks, live music and dancing with cabaret gals and guys. The train stops on route at a sugar plantation. The excursion includes seeing the Hershey Village and the Hershey Park. It is the oldest working electric locomotive of the American continent. Available for a half day excursion with or without lunch. The train can also be used for a group as part train transfer and part coach transfer to or from Havana & Varadero. *Available as a collective or chartered for private groups.*

Fun at the Finca – Havana - An exclusive event for a group at a typical Cuban farm with horseback riding, Afro Cuban show, dancing and traditional country Creole food. We bring you closer to life in the Cuban country side for an interesting and fun event within reach of Havana at the Finca, a working farm that raises horses, cows, goats, pigs and ducks. When travelers arrive in the area they disembark from the private coach and enter into the ambiance. Greeted by the farm workers with a refreshing local drink to get you in the mood. Those who wish to go horseback riding can take to the saddle and canter around the farm. Later

savour some good farm cooking and local drinks followed by an Afro Cuban show and dancing. Other activities at the Finca can be provided according to the particular requirements of the group such as a theme costume party or team competition. Just let us know and we will try to make it a 'wow' event for you.

Havana to Varadero -Catamaran Day Cruise - Early morning departure from your hotel in Havana by private transfer to Varadero 'Gaviota' Mariana to board catamaran. See **Catamaran Day Cruise** below.

Varadero Highlights

Catamaran Cruise -Varadero - Varadero's most exiting tour, full-day, half-day or sunset sail cruises from Mariana Gaviota located at the end of the peninsula. The one day trip on a modern catamaran goes to the magnificent Cayo Blanco with its beautiful beach, a truly magnificent unspoiled Caribbean wilderness, enjoy coral reef snorkeling, interacting with dolphins and dancing. On board open bar with traditional Cuban cocktails, cold beer and delicious lobster, shrimp or chicken lunch served on all full-day cruises at Cayo Blanco. In addition to the day cruise there are Sunset Cruises and Night Cruises with dinner. *Available as a collective or chartered for private groups.*

Varadero to Havana – Day Excursion - Early morning departure from your hotel in Varadero by private transfer to Havana. Met by tour guide in Havana on arrival. The tour will include a summarized version of the Guided Walking Tour of Old Havana and the Panoramic Tour of Havana. Lunch will be included in Havana. Return transfer to Varadero.

Jeep 4 x 4 Safari' & 'Discovery Challenge – Varadero – Day Excursion - The excursion departs from Varadero to experience the beauty of a journey through the Cuban countryside. The tour includes self-drive jeeps and speed boats on the Canimar River and later Creole lunch and activities in a forest reserve. For individuals or groups. Collective coach transfers from hotels in Varadero around 0830 hrs to collect jeeps. Return collective transfer in coach to hotels at around 1700 hrs.

West Cuba Highlights

Viñales Valley & Las Terrazas -Day Excursion - An excellent day excursion with tour guide to see some of the Cuba's beautiful nature. In the early morning a drive West of Havana to Las Terrazas, a unique biosphere mountain community. Lunch at a farmer's house which specializes in charcoal grilled chicken and pork. Continue on the 'Ruta del Tabaco' in the province of Pinar del Rio and onto experience the panoramic views from the Mirador Los Jazmines overlooking the Viñales Valley with its spectacular limestone Mogotes rock formations. Later visit the Prehistoric Wall and enjoy a boat tour on a river through the cave Cueva del Indio before you return to Havana.

Central Cuba Highlights

Guama & The Bay of Pigs - A nature reserve of Zapata located near the central south coast. Here you visit a crocodile farm and take a boat ride through a river surrounded by mangroves with water lilies and cross a lake to an old Taino Indian village. The excursion continues onto Playa Giron (The Bay of Pigs) where the Cuba American and U.S. backed invasion took place.

Steam Train – between Trinidad & Iznaga - A beautiful experience that gives a new connotation to your travel. It is a small original journey to discover the Valley of Los Ingenious (The sugar plantations and mills). The train has 3 wagons and one of them is a bar. *Capacity for 80 pax maximum.*

Nightlife -Havana

Cuba excels in its music where one can still be entertained by live bands, dance troupes and fashion shows at its many nightclubs, restaurants, street cafes and bars. The following are only a sample of the more popular nightlife activities. We will be happy to provide you with other nightlife possibilities and tailor-make to order on request.

Buena Vista Social Club Dinner & Show – Havana & Varadero - The famous group performs at different venues in Havana, Saturdays at the Nacional Hotel and Sunday nights at the Santa Angel Restaurant in Plaza Vieja. They can also be seen at the Convention Centre in Varadero. (Note: The group also travels abroad to perform and will not be available on certain dates). Dining and show.

Tropicana Cabaret – Havana - Enjoy a nostalgic journey of music and dancing over the years with this spectacular show under the stars from Cha-Cha-Cha to Mambo from Son to Salsa and Afro-Cuban to opera. More than 200 artists, dancers and musicians, including a big 1950s style live orchestra that will entertain you in a beautiful garden ambience with a big open air stage (includes ¼ bottle of rum, 1 Cola, 1 glass of Cava, 1 mini snack). Transfers by private taxi, minibus or coach. Show starts at 2200 hrs and ends at 2345 hrs. (Note: during the period from 23 Dec to 01 Jan Tropicana has higher prices, especially on New Year's Eve (reservations only on request and confirmation only valid if the supplement has been communicated to the agent). In the case of inclement weather condition the venue has an indoor auditorium where you can see the show. You will find yourself humming Guantanamo on the ride home from this famous open-air nightclub. Dinner available prior to start of show at extra cost.

Havana Café -Havana - A popular nightclub at the Melia Cohiba Hotel with dining, music, cabaret and dancing. The place is decorated with real classic cars, motorbikes and an aeroplane. Is considered to be the most expensive place in Havana together with Tropicana. Usually many of the best Salsa groups play here. Usually very crowded, full with tourists. Open: From Wednesday to Sunday 21h00 -02h30.

Jazz Café -Havana - For lovers of Latin jazz this is the place to be. Located opposite the Melia Cohiba Hotel. Mellow, sophisticated and freezing due to extreme air conditioning, the Jazz Café is not only an excellent place to hear some of Cuba's top jazz musicians including Chucho Valdés but the open plan design also provides for a good bar atmosphere if you want to chat. Food and drinks available. Bands normally start performing from 2300 hrs.

El Mesón de la Flota - Although it might not seem so at first glance, flamenco is very popular in Cuba. This place has a tablao flamenco (wooden stage), where dancers and musicians, such as the Havana Flamenco Company and Ecos, perform daily. Food and drinks available. Open noon to midnight.

Nightclubbing

In all the main towns and cities there are dance venues where both Cuban's and tourist dance to live salsa, reggaeton and house music. Some of the favorite venues include Casa del la Musica in Havana and Trinidad, Casa del La Trova in Trinidad, Salon Roja in Havana, and Mambo Club in Varadero. Havana nightlife offers many opportunities for a great night out: lots of bars with live music, and clubs for music listening and dancing. Best places to experience the Havana nightlife and live music:

The Casa de la Musica - Night-clubs - Be on time, there's always a crowd particularly when a famous music band like the VAN VAN is announced. Be aware at night the Casa de la Musica can be expensive, but the ambience is great, a highly recommended experience with nonstop dancing and music from midnight till 3 o'clock in the morning. The cover charge is between 10 -25 CUC per person, and a bottle of Havana Club rum sells for 25 -50 CUC. Like some other dance venues, the Casa de la Musica has matinees late afternoon to early evening which cost 5 CUC per person.

Casa de la Musica – Central Havana - Calle Galliano (Galliano Street) between Neptuno and Concordia Street. Open: 17h00 -21h00 / 23h00 – 03h00.

Casa de la Musica -Miramar - Calle 20 esq. 35 playa Miramar. Open: 17h00 -21h00 / 23h00 – 03h00.

Café Cantante - A favorite nightclub featuring many top Cuban bands. Teatro Nacional de Cuba, Paseo esquina 39 Plaza de la Revolución, Vedado. Open: 17h00 -21h00 / 22h00 – 03h00

Chan Chan - Open air night venue with live bands, small cabaret and DJ. Residencial Marina Hemingway Marina. Playa. Open: 22h00 – 03h00

El Gato Tuerto - A more intimate smaller bar & nightclub near the Nacional Hotel. O Street, between 17 & 19 Street, Vedado. Open: 23h30 -04h00

Macumba - The nightclub is located in the suburbs of Havana. It can be worth the trip when they have some big bands appearing there. 222nd Street between 37th street & Autopista, La Coronela neighbor. La Lisa. Check with us for updated information on bands and times.

Salon Turquino [Habana Libre hotel] - One of Havana top classy nightclubs literally at the top of the Havana Libre Hotel 25th floor. The roof of the nightclub opens to expose the night sky. 23rd Street and L Street. Vedado.

La Zorra y el Cuervo Jazz Club - Havana's best jazz hangout at the La Rampa area. 23 Street between N & O Street, Vedado. Open: 22h00 – 02h00.

Salon Rojo [Capri hotel] - One of the biggest nightclubs especially full with Cubans when the popular PMM Sound performs on Wed & Sun nights. 21st Street # 8. Vedado. Open: Daily from 22h00 to 03h00.

Restaurants – Havana & Varadero

There are many eating places in Havana, anything from fast food street snacks to haute cuisine restaurants. In general cuisine in Cuba is limited in variety; however there are some exceptions and we list a number here. Also, many of the 5* hotels in Havana, Varadero, Guardalavaca and the Cays have good international a la carte restaurants which normally require reservations by hotel guests.

Havana Restaurants

El Pulpo - Probably one of the best State run restaurants in Old Havana overlooking Havana Harbour with outdoor and indoor dining areas. Offers international and Cuban cuisine with a special touch of traditional Spanish dishes such as 'el pulpo a la gallega' and 'bacalao a la vizcaina'. Other specialties include oyster and tomato cocktail, shrimps in garlic and beef Carpaccio perfectly accompanied by bread with virgin olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Popular main courses include whole grilled lobster, chateaubriand and grilled red snapper. Crème brulee or chocolate brownies are a nice ending to the meal. The per capita price range is from 30 – 50 CUC depending if you include wine. The resident Chef is Arkaitz Etxarte. Capacity for 158 covers. Open from 12 midday until 12 midnight. Address: Avenida del Puerto, esquina a Narciso López La Habana Vieja.

Café del Oriente -this elegant little restaurant sits just off the Plaza San Francisco and, when the weather permits, features a few outdoor tables. Inside you'll find a cool, large room, with a beautiful patterned marble floor, high ceilings, and dark wainscoting on the walls. In the center of the restaurant is a large U-shaped bar. The menu here is one of the more extravagant in Havana, with entrees that include Cesar Salad prepared at your table. For the main course, try the lamb loin with a chocolate sauce. Desserts include Baked Alaska and Crepe Suzette. Even if you don't take a full meal here, this is a great place to stop for a drink or cup of coffee while touring Old Havana. Address: Oficios Street, No. 112 Corner to Amargura Street, San Francisco Plaza. Cuisine: International.

Floridita Restaurant – Another of Hemingway’s drinking haunts where he spent many hours drinking his favorite Daiquiri cocktail. There is a statue of him sitting at the end of the bar. The restaurant specializes in seafood.

La Torre Restaurant – located on the top floor of the Focsa Building, the second – tallest building in Havana with mesmerizing views. Excellent French cuisine at this stylish restaurant. Dine on foie gras, filet of beef with rosemary; shrimps caramelized in honey, and profiteroles.

Club Habana Restaurant – This gourmet restaurant is within the exclusive private members Club Habana which used to be the Biltmore Yacht & Country Club. It overlooks the Club’s beach and Havana Bay. Club Habana represents a new concept designed for diplomats, executives, business people and travelers for their social and business contacts. Cuba Select Travel can arrange access to the Club for individuals and groups.

Sierra Maestra Restaurant – Known to be one of the most expensive restaurants in Havana at the top of the Havana Libre Hotel with amazing panoramic views.

El Patio Restaurant - Romantic setting in at Plaza Cathedral with live music. International and Creole cuisine. Plaza Cathedral, Old Havana.

La Mina Restaurant - A popular tourist restaurant at Plaza Armas. Creole cuisine. Arms Square, Old Havana.

La Dominica Restaurant - Italian cuisine. O’Reilly Street corner to Mercaderes Street.

Santo Angel Restaurant - Nice setting located in one of Old Havana’s colonial plazas. The Buena Vista Social Club performs weekly on Sunday nights. International and Creole cuisine. Teniente Rey Street corner to San Ignacio Street, Plaza Vieja.

La Paella Restaurant - Specialty in Paellas. Oficios Street corner to Obrapia.

Mesón de la Flota Restaurant - Spanish cuisine. Mercaderes Street between Rey and Amargura Street.

Prado y Neptuno Restaurant - Best restaurant for pastas and pizzas. Opposite the NH Park Central Hotel. Italian cuisine. Prado Street corner to Neptuno Street.

La Torre de Marfil Restaurant - Asiatic cuisine. Mercaderes Street between Obispo and Obrapia.

Café El Mercurio - International cuisine. Lonja del Comercio Building, Plaza San Francisco, Old Havana.

Café Taberna Restaurant - International and Creole cuisine. Mercaderes Street corner to Teniente Rey Street.

Europa Restaurant - Cuban Cuisine. Obispo Street corner to Aguiar Street.

Varadero Restaurants

There are a number of restaurants in Varadero; the following would be two of our favorite restaurants. Also, many of the all inclusive 5* hotels have some excellent a la carte restaurants.

Gaviota Marina Restaurant – Located at the end of the peninsula. This recently opened restaurant,

overlooking the sea, is where you can select your own fresh lobster and enjoy some other excellent cuisine such as scallops and steaks. The artistic décor was designed by a famous Cuban artist.

Xanadu Mansion (DuPont Villa) Restaurant – Located next to the Golf Course in Varadero, this lovely building was built in 1929 by the DuPont de Nemour family. Following the Cuban revolution, it is now used as a restaurant, as well as housing very few rooms as a hotel. It makes for a stunning setting to have a drink or organize a meal for your group overlooking the ocean view and the sweeping garden.

Museums, Cigar Factories & Rum Museum

Havana houses many of the fine museums and cigar factories and can be included in itineraries according to traveler's interests. A fee is required to gain entrance to these establishments.

Museum of the City - [History and art of the colony and of the first years of the Republic] Tacón Street between Obispo Street and O'Reilly Street, Arms Square. Old Havana. Open: Daily from 09h30 to 18h30.

Museum of Colonial Art - [An important representation of decoration and furniture of the biggest colonial mansions of Havana from the 17th to the 19th centuries]. San Ignacio Street #61 between Empedrado & O'Reilly, Plaza de la Catedral, Old Havana. Open: From Tuesday to Sunday 09h30 -17h00.

National Museum of Fine Arts - (Collections of Cuban and European paintings). Trocadero Street between Zulueta & Moserrate. Open: Tuesday to Saturday 10h00 18h00 Universal Art Building. 10h00 – 16h00 Cuban Art Building.

Jose Marti Memorial Museum - [Permanent and transitory expositions of Jose Marti prolific life]. Street Paseo y Ave & Independence Avenue. Open: Monday to Saturday.

Museum of Cigar - Street Mercaderes No. 120 between Obispo y Obrapía. Open: Tuesday to Saturday from 09h30 -17h00 Sunday from 09h30 to 13h00.

Maqueta de la Habana - [Model details of monuments, streets, buildings and parks of Havana]. 28th Street between 1ª Street and 3ª Street, Miramar district. Open: Tuesday to Saturday from 10h00 to 17h30.

Museum of the Revolution - [A detailed panorama of the struggles of the Cuban people]. Street Refugio No. 1 between Monserrate y Zulueta. Havana City. Open: Daily from 10h00 to 18h00.

Parque Histórico Militar Morro-Cabaña - (Historical and military park). La Cabaña Road, Eastern Havana. Open: Daily from 10h00 to 22h00.

Havana Club Rum Museum - (History of rum in Cuba and the processes involved in making rum). Port Avenue corner to Sol Street. Old Havana. Open: Monday to Saturday from 09h00 to 17h30Sundays from 10h00 to 16h00.

Cigar Factories -Havana - Travelers can visit these famous factories with a tour guide where they can see all the processes involved in producing hand-rolled cigars. They include the Partagas Cigar Factory, Romeo & Julieta Cigar Factory and La Corona Cigar Factory.

There are many other places of interest that are not included here and new developments such as the Planetarium in Plaza Vieja, the new location of the Arts & Crafts Market, as well as renovations of colonial buildings and the seafront *Malecon* wall known to Cubans as the *Sala*.

Tours

The magic of the largest island of the Antilles is the combination of nature, climate and its people. Beautiful landscapes as well as seascapes make Cuba the ideal setting for tropical holidays throughout the year where nautical adventures and activities are at their best, with the local charismatic and hospitable multi-cultural population welcoming the visitor to the country.

We provide some of the best tours of Cuba with a choice of travelling with others on our special group tours, or having a tailor-made tour to suit your particular interests, places to visit and standard of hotels.

Tours can be anything from several days to many weeks covering parts of the island or the whole island.

For more information see our website www.cubaholidayoffers.com

Activity Holidays

The following are only samples of the more popular activity holidays which can be adapted for individuals and groups. We will be happy to provide you with other activity holiday possibilities and tailor-make to order request.

Walking/Trekking Holidays - Breathtaking mountain and coastal walks -Independent and Self-Guided Walking. You get a very different view of things with Cuba Select Travel on a walking, hiking or trekking tour. Discovering the countryside at your own pace, on foot, you'll get to know the place you've chosen intimately and absorb the sights, the scents and the atmosphere in a way you never could behind the wheel of an automobile.

For more information see our website www.cubaholidayoffers.com

Cycling in Cuba - We provide cycling tours for individuals and groups. You have the choice of cycling with others on our special group tours, or we can tailor-make a tour to suit your requirements and budget. Cycles can either be rented from us or you can bring your own cycles.

For further information please see our website www.gocyclingcuba.com

Diving in Cuba - Hemingway did not just make Cuba famous for its mojito's and daiquiris, he placed Cuba on the map as one of the world's best water sport locations where the myth does not surpass reality and where one can still relive aspects of his novel *The Old Man and the Sea*, where you can experience some of the most excellent scuba diving, deep sea fishing, sailing in the tranquil turquoise waters

There are some 200 bays and 289 natural beaches with crystal clear navigable waters all year round and an annual average temperature of 25° C as well as the varied marine flora and fauna that Cuba has to offer, visitors come to enjoy Cuba's unique Caribbean appeal that makes this island the ideal destination.

. Cuba offers hundreds of different sites with a variety of features whether it is wall and cave diving, wreck diving or leisurely diving on coral reefs and observing the multitude marine life. Many areas still remain unexplored with little evidence of commercialized tourism.

Cuba Select Travel's aim is to organize a holiday for you full of adventure, fun and leisure with an assured and personal service from our team based in Cuba. We tailor-make dive programmes for you according to your particular requirements. All you need to do is drop us an email and one of our team will provide you

with all the information and prices for your proposed dive holiday.

For further information see our website www.godivecuba.com

<°)))> *Fishing in Cuba* - Cuba offers some of the finest fly fishing and in the world where you can catch and release fine specimens of bone, tarpon, permit and other fish. Equally, offshore game fishing for marlin, billfish, sailfish and other fish in Cuba offers a true fishing experience. Cuba Select Travel can offer some exclusive fishing packages and best prices including accommodation and transfers.

For updated information see our website www.gofishcuba.com

Sailing in Cuba - We charter yachts that are maintained to international standards, fully equipped and with quality accommodation.

Cuba offers the sailor idyllic tropical weather, where the trade winds fill the sails and take you to uninhabited cays, pristine white beaches and coral reefs.....pure escapism. Cuba goes beyond all sailors' dreams -a favorable, warm climate year-round, steady winds, unique natural beauty and open-minded hospitable people contribute to this as well as the reliable nautical infrastructure.

To the sailor, most of the coast and off-lying islands are fully accessible within Cuban national waters. About twenty marinas and nautical centers all around Cuba gladly welcome yachts under all flags and offer all conceivable services. For those who have enough time it is possible to circumnavigate the island of Cuba – which would amount to someone and a half thousand nautical miles.

For a sailing holiday it is possible to charter a yacht on the island either bare boat charter or a crewed charter using the best international standard yachts such as a Bavaria mono hull or an Athena catamaran. If you are an experienced skipper you can sail the yachts yourself, or have a qualified and experienced Cuban skipper to sail the yacht for you and a deckhand/cook who will provide you with special Cuban cuisine including freshly caught delicious seafood.

There are two excellent Cruising Guides in English language, which complement each other very well by the information contained, so that both can be recommended alike. Both originate in circumnavigations of Cuba by their authors and have an according structure. Simon Charles: The Cruising Guide to Cuba, and Nigel Calder: Cuba – A Cruising Guide.

See our website www.gosailcuba.com for further

Marriages & Honeymoons in Cuba

See our website page for more information on [Marriages & Honeymoons](#)

Conference & Incentive Events

A totally exciting and interesting experience to be considered seriously by your clients. Cuba is an increasingly popular unique Caribbean destination of choice for conference and incentive events.

Cuba Select Travel is a premium British DMC based in Cuba, approved by the Cuban Authorities with many years of providing successful events for many multi-national companies. All ground arrangements are supervised by our resident onsite British management and a specialist team of Cuban tour managers, sales and operations staff who have extensive knowledge of the local travel industry and experience of C & I events.

For further information on C & I Events please see our website www.cubaincentiveevents.com

How to Make a Booking

Preparing the Booking Request

- 1 State all the arrangements that you require i.e. hotels, transfers, car rental, domestic flights, guide service, excursions, sailing, salsa classes, fishing, diving, VIP airport service, trekking, restaurants, bird watching, nightclubs etc.
- 2 State types of rooms required i.e. double, single, triple.
- 3 State the number and names of persons (or group lead name) with nationalities and passport numbers (passport numbers can follow).
- 4 State total days and nights and dates required.
- 5 Add any other details or special requirements.

Sending the Booking Request

All you need to do is send you're booking request to us directly by email at sales@cubaselecttravel.com

A representative of our staff will contact you by email who may ask you to give some further details if necessary. A dialogue will be established between you and our representative, until you are entirely satisfied with your booking request.

After confirmation of the different services you requested, we will send you by email a *Confirmation Invoice* and any other information that you will need to know.

Payment Procedures

Deposits and Final Payment

For 14 travelers or less the full payment is required 4 weeks prior to arrival together with Rooming List. For groups of over 15 travelers 30% deposit is required on confirmation with the balance payable 6 weeks together with the Rooming List. In the case of Yacht Charters 30% deposit has to be made on confirmation of booking with the balance payable 6 weeks prior to arrival together with Crew List, and Provisioning List (where appropriate). On receipt of the *Confirmation Invoice* and any accompanying emails there will be instructions on how to pay, into what bank to pay, the amount to pay and when payment due and any other necessary information. There are three ways to make payment:

- 1 - Paying us is a simple transaction by bank to bank transfer. We will ask you to send by FAX (or scanned and emailed) a copy of the bank transfer document to confirm that payment has been sent to us. You will need to pay the bank transfer fees and indicate this on the instructions you give your bank. When the payment reaches our bank we will acknowledge receipt of your payment.
- 2 - or, by VISA, MASTERCARD or AMERICAN EXPRESS credit or debit card payment. This will require us to send you the link to the secure online payment website only when you have confirmed your booking with us and we have sent you our Confirmation Invoice.
- 3 - or, by cash at our Havana office.

Responsible Tourism

At Cuba Select Travel, we recognize that we have social, cultural and environmental responsibilities to respect the destination and the people who live here. We believe that our holidays should benefit the local people and their environments, and we strive to ensure that the local culture and communities form an integral part of our trips. We wish to maximize the benefits of tourism, whilst minimizing the environmental impact. We advocate to

- 1) Protect the environment – flora, fauna and landscape
- 2) Respect local cultures – traditions, religions and built heritage
- 3) Benefit local communities – economically and socially conserve natural resources
- 4) Minimize pollution – noise, waste and congestion.