

ITINERARY

6 DAY / 5 NIGHT PRIVATE CUBA TOUR
CLASSIC CUBA



 **LOCALLY
SOURCED
CUBA TOURS**
Your Cuba tour specialists

INTRODUCTION



Come and see for yourself why this Caribbean gem is a hot and happening travel trend! You'll get a taste of its lively Latin culture and learn about the island's turbulent history. Be transported back in time as you stroll through the cobbled streets of Trinidad and the Old Town in Havana, while the sounds and rhythms of Cuba creep into your soul and captivate you. Our Private 6 day Cuba tour is designed to give those with limited time a great overview of the places and cultures that make Cuba so unique.

INCLUDED ACTIVITIES

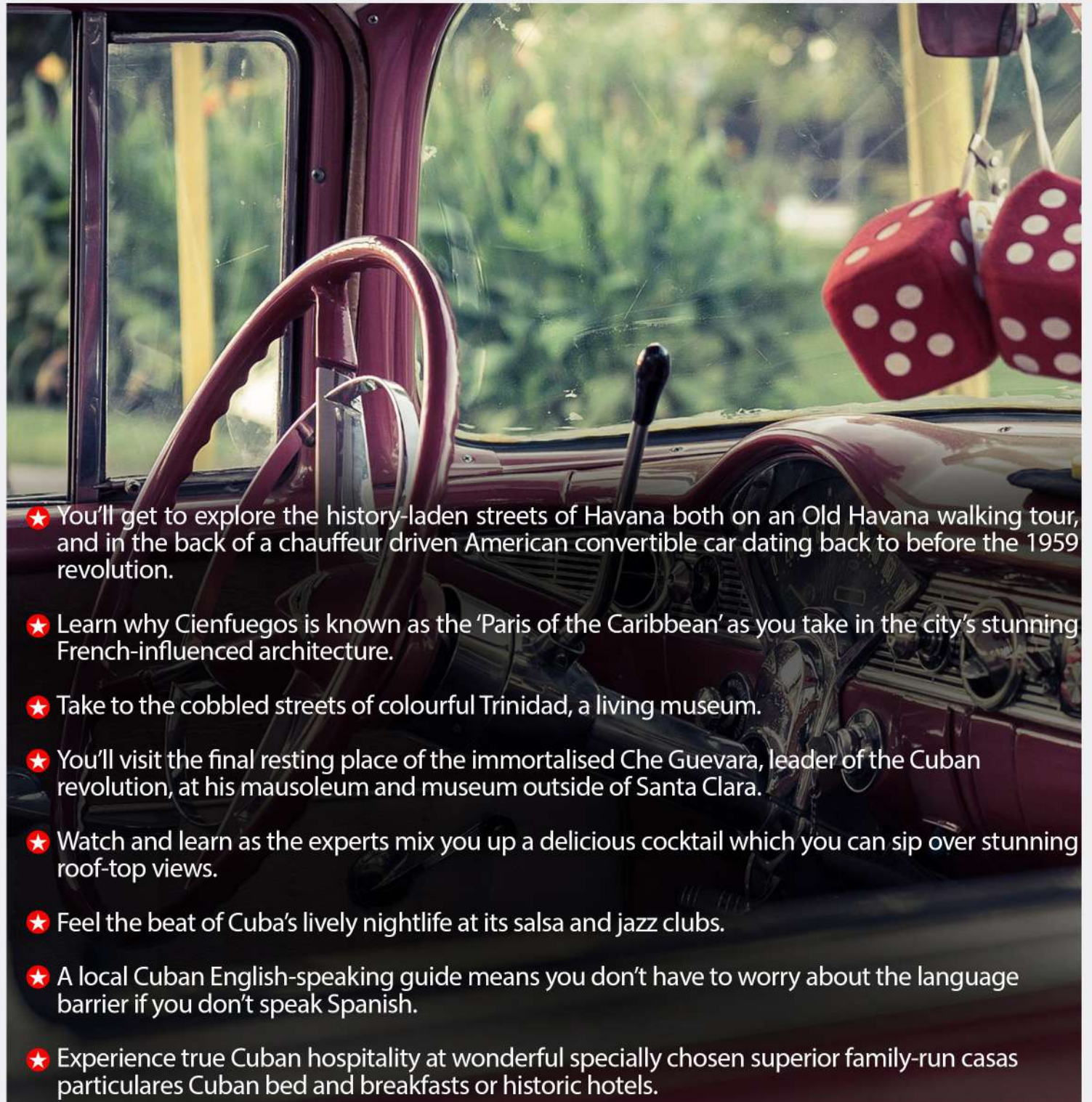
- 
- ★ Guided orientation walk on arrival (dependent on arrival time).
 - ★ Convertible Classic Car Trip to El Morro Fort and El Cristo de La Habana
 - ★ Old Havana Walking Tour.
 - ★ Classic Car Havana Tour.
 - ★ 1 x drink at Hotel Nacional over-looking Malecon OR Salsa Lesson OR Mojito making lesson.
 - ★ Che Guevara Memorial (closed on Mondays).
 - ★ Trinidad township guided walk including Palacio Cantero, Canchanchara, Palacio Brunet, Plaza Mayor, Museo Romantico, Pottery workshop.
 - ★ Casa de la Musica.
 - ★ Two options from Playa Ancon, Valley of the Sugar Mills, Salto del Caburní waterfall trek.
 - ★ Palenque de los Congos Reales.
 - ★ Guided Cienfuegos City Walk.
 - ★ Bay of Pigs Museum.
 - ★ Swim/ Snorkel at the Bay of Pigs.

IS THIS TRIP RIGHT FOR YOU?

As this is a private Cuba tour, we can tailor the tour to suit your mobility and fitness levels. You will also have the guide 100% to yourselves, so you can focus on the activities and excursions of most interest to you.

Our Private 6 Day Cuba Tour is the perfect way to experience the highlights of Cuba's rich history and culture if you're limited in time. Our local English-speaking guides are not only knowledgeable but also love their country, and will be eager to share their wonderful country with you.

WHY WE LOVE THIS TRIP



- ★ You'll get to explore the history-laden streets of Havana both on an Old Havana walking tour, and in the back of a chauffeur driven American convertible car dating back to before the 1959 revolution.
- ★ Learn why Cienfuegos is known as the 'Paris of the Caribbean' as you take in the city's stunning French-influenced architecture.
- ★ Take to the cobbled streets of colourful Trinidad, a living museum.
- ★ You'll visit the final resting place of the immortalised Che Guevara, leader of the Cuban revolution, at his mausoleum and museum outside of Santa Clara.
- ★ Watch and learn as the experts mix you up a delicious cocktail which you can sip over stunning roof-top views.
- ★ Feel the beat of Cuba's lively nightlife at its salsa and jazz clubs.
- ★ A local Cuban English-speaking guide means you don't have to worry about the language barrier if you don't speak Spanish.
- ★ Experience true Cuban hospitality at wonderful specially chosen superior family-run casas particulares Cuban bed and breakfasts or historic hotels.



**B,L,D denotes breakfasts, lunches and dinners included.*

**Please note that the map is for illustration purposes only and does not indicate the path you will follow across Cuba or the type of transportation included.*

TRANSPORTATION

All private transportation is included between destinations and for any activities/ excursions included in your itinerary that require transportation to and from the activity. Any extra transportation requirements can be organised through your local Cuban guide and paid for locally in Cuba.

You will be driven from destination to destination in comfort, using private air conditioned transportation, vastly reducing the amount of time the same journeys would take by Cuba's somewhat chaotic public transport system.

SPENDING MONEY ON TOUR

With airport transfers, accommodation, your guide, transportation between destinations as well as breakfasts and one lunch all included as part of your tour, your main daily expense will be limited to meals that are not included. You should also bring enough money to cover tips for guides and drivers, souvenirs, and other personal expenses such as laundry fees. You might also want to bring a little extra in case you decide to go on an optional excursion or activity. We would recommend bringing between 50.00 and 60.00 CUC (Cuban convertible pesos) per person per day.

ITINERARY OVERVIEW



ESTIMATED TRAVEL TIMES

Your travelling times between destinations will be kept to a minimum through the use of private air-conditioned transport. The longer journeys will be broken up with refreshment breaks or stops at points of interest along the way, giving you time to stretch your legs and see even more of this wondrous country. Below we outline the sort of travel times you can expect on this tour:

Havana to Santa Clara: 3 hours

Santa Clara to Trinidad: 2 hours

Trinidad to Cienfuegos: 1-2 hours

Cienfuegos to Havana (via Bay of Pigs): 5 hours

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1: HAVANA

The heart of this scintillating city is Havana's Old Town (La Habana Vieja), an area you will come to know well during your stay. The UNESCO World Heritage Site is a sublime assault on the senses, with the beauty of the colonial-era combining with the spirit of modern life to form an experience that feels like it could be one large immersive theatre production.

This complex, culturally-rich, and fascinatingly contradictory city is certainly hectic at times, but our expert local guides will ensure that your time in Havana will never be overwhelming. As a result, your 6 day Private Cuba tour begins with your pick-up and transfer from Havana's José Martí International Airport to your accommodation in the city. During this first part of the 6 day private Cuba tour, you will have the chance to meet your guide and discuss the finer details of your tour itinerary before they escort you on an orientation tour of the local area (dependent on your arrival time). If you have arrived early enough, your guide will also arrange a classic convertible car to take you to El Morro Fort and El Cristo de La Habana. This is the perfect opportunity to learn a little more about Havana's turbulent history and to take some impressive photos of the city and iconic Malecon as the sun sets. If you arrive too late to do this activity on Day One, it can easily be incorporated into Day Two's schedule.

In the evening you have the additional option of accompanying your guide to a local paladar, which is a family-run restaurant, for your evening meal of freshly-prepared local food. If you are not too tired from your journey, there is also the opportunity to sample some of Havana's lively nightspots such as one of the city's famous jazz clubs - a great way to start your Private 6 day Cuba tour and get to grips with what Cuba has to offer!



DAY 2: HAVANA FULL DAY TOUR (B,L)

Ready for your first full day of your 6 day Cuba tour? We hope so, as your guide will be keen to meet you and begin an exploration of Old Havana on foot, one of the best ways to see this area of the capital. You will visit La Catedral San Cristobal de la Habana, described by the novelist Alejo Carpentier as 'music set in stone'. You will be shown famous landmarks such as Palacio de los Marqueses de Aguas Claras (now a restaurant), Gran Teatro Habana and the Capitolio building. You will also be able to admire the exteriors of two of Havana's best museums – the Museo de la Revolucion and the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes.

If all this sounds rather hectic for day two, don't worry. There will be plenty of opportunity to take a break in the shade and enjoy a cool drink. The focal point of the Old Havana Walking Tour will be exploring Old Havana's most beautiful squares - the Plaza San Francisco de Asis, Plaza de la Catedral, Plaza de Armas, before finishing at Plaza Vieja.

Your lunch today is included today. Our 6 day private Cuba tour we only use and recommend private authentic family run restaurants (Paladar) offering traditional cuisine. It's then time to hit the road as you are chauffeur driven around greater Havana in one of the city's iconic classic convertible cars. There are thousands of these cars on Cuba's streets and they're a necessity as well as a novelty. Once the US had put a stop to imports after the revolution, it was financially difficult for Cuba to import vehicles from other parts of the world, and so the cars that were already in the country had to stay maintained and road ready. Sit back and relax as you're driven through Havana Vedado, the Malecon, Revolution Square and the stunning neighbourhood of Miramar.

As the day draws to an end, you will now have the option of visiting the iconic Hotel Nacional for a cocktail and a wonderful view of the Malecón as the sun goes down. Or you might choose to take a salsa lesson or make your way to a mojito-making class on a Havana roof-top.

Your guide will have plenty of recommendations for the evening, from pointing out their favourite paladares to the city's jazz clubs, such as the delightfully named Vixen and the Crow, which you enter through a British red telephone box. The freestyle jazz here is second to none, and in the past the club has hosted such big names as George Benson.

DAY 3: TRINIDAD VIA SANTA CLARA (B)

Another packed day of activities awaits as your 6 Day Private Cuba tour continues. After breakfast you'll head to Santa Clara. Given its modern day serenity you might be surprised to learn that it was the site of the vicious last battle of the Cuban Revolution. The town has recovered since 1958 and is now a place of profound beauty. The fact that the city was extensively damaged has meant that buildings were replaced in an eclectic style, making for a truly unique cityscape.

Given the city's importance in the revolution, it was decided that it should be home to the final resting place of Che Guevara when his remains were discovered in Bolivia in 1997. His memorial is a fitting tribute to the hero of the revolution and has an austere loveliness. Naturally, your guide will be able to tell you just why 'El Che' became such an iconic figure – and so much more than a face on tee-shirts.

From Santa Clara, your 6 day private Cuba tour will continue on to the sun-drenched and colourful streets of Trinidad. A living museum, the city is stuck in the time of Cuba's first War of Independence, when local sugar plantations were devastated by fire. Modern intrusions are a rare sight and it's possible to imagine yourself transported back in time. You have almost two full days to explore Trinidad and its surroundings. After your township walk around the town, including the Palacio Cantero, Canchanchara, Palacio Brunet, Plaza Mayor, Museo Romantico and a pottery workshop, your guide will make a number of suggestions regarding the best optional activities to do at the time of your visit.

We would recommend spending your first afternoon simply strolling about the cobbled streets and admiring the colonial architecture with your local Cuban guide. Make sure you remember the way to the Plaza Mayor (Central Square), since you'll want to come back here when the sun goes down. The square is home to the Casa de la Musica, with salsa dancing until your feet hurt. But if you're too shy to give salsa a try at first, then you'll probably enjoy a reasonably priced mojito (or two) to give you some much needed courage.

DAY 4: TRINIDAD (B)

Your time in and around Trinidad is all about creating memories that will linger far beyond the end of your 6 Day Private Cuba tour.

Today you will have the option of choosing two wonderful options from three great choices

Visit the Valley of the Sugar Mills

Take a Waterfall hike through the Parque Natural Topes de Collantes

Visit the beautiful Playa Ancon beach

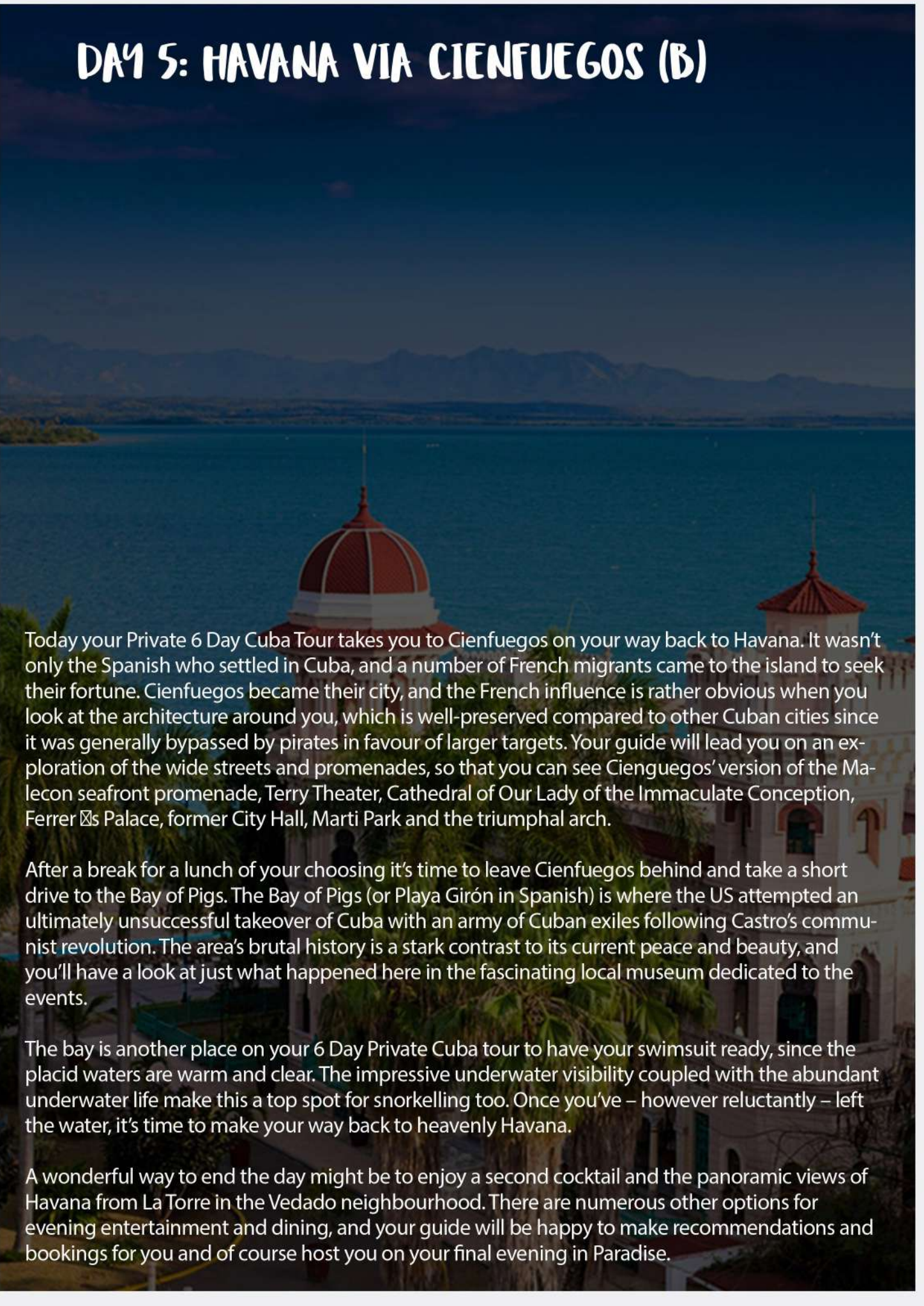
You'll certainly never forget taking in the panoramic views of the Valle de Los Ingenios (also known as the Valley of the Sugar Mills), a valley near Trinidad that was once the focal point of Cuba's sugar production should you choose this to be one of your two included activities for the day. There are dozens of disused sugar mills, slave quarters and manor houses, and it's wonderfully eerie to walk among them and imagine what life here was once like. After the end of slavery, many of the once captive men and women spread out around Cuba, giving the country its distinctive Afro-Caribbean culture which has been mixed with the country's Spanish heritage to create Cuba as we know and love it.

Other options include a Salto del Caburni waterfall trek and hitting the warm sands at Playa Ancon. The waterfall trek to Salto del Caburni is one of Cuba's most popular outdoor excursions. At a relatively easy 7 km round trip, it will get you up close and personal with the amazing scenery of Parque Natural Topes de Collantes. It winds its way downhill through lush tropical forest, rock outcrops and canyon-like cliff faces for 3.5 km. There you'll come across the fantastic meandering path of the 70m high waterfall complete with a natural swimming pool at its base where you can relax and cool off before the return trip. There are also other waterfall excursions we can include in the area, depending on your fitness levels.

If you'd prefer some time on Playa Ancon, by bike or taxi, we can completely understand. A precious ribbon of white beach on Sancti Spiritus' iridescent Caribbean shoreline it is usually touted – with good reason – to be the finest arc of sand on Cuba's southern coast. You'll definitely want to remember to bring your swimsuit so you can enjoy the inviting azure sea here.

Back in Trinidad your guide will take you for an evening of fantastic Cuban entertainment to make sure your time in Trinidad ends with a bang and not a whimper. The Palenque de los Congos Reales is a performance space, bar and nightclub that is a must for rumba fans. Formed from an open patio on the town's 'music alley', it has a lively blackboard of arts that includes salsa, son (Cuban pop music), and trova (a traditional form of poetical singing) to keep you entertained until the main event. At 10pm the rumba drumming begins...

DAY 5: HAVANA VIA CIENFUEGOS (B)



Today your Private 6 Day Cuba Tour takes you to Cienfuegos on your way back to Havana. It wasn't only the Spanish who settled in Cuba, and a number of French migrants came to the island to seek their fortune. Cienfuegos became their city, and the French influence is rather obvious when you look at the architecture around you, which is well-preserved compared to other Cuban cities since it was generally bypassed by pirates in favour of larger targets. Your guide will lead you on an exploration of the wide streets and promenades, so that you can see Cienfuegos' version of the Malecon seafront promenade, Terry Theater, Cathedral of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Ferrer's Palace, former City Hall, Marti Park and the triumphal arch.

After a break for a lunch of your choosing it's time to leave Cienfuegos behind and take a short drive to the Bay of Pigs. The Bay of Pigs (or Playa Girón in Spanish) is where the US attempted an ultimately unsuccessful takeover of Cuba with an army of Cuban exiles following Castro's communist revolution. The area's brutal history is a stark contrast to its current peace and beauty, and you'll have a look at just what happened here in the fascinating local museum dedicated to the events.

The bay is another place on your 6 Day Private Cuba tour to have your swimsuit ready, since the placid waters are warm and clear. The impressive underwater visibility coupled with the abundant underwater life make this a top spot for snorkelling too. Once you've – however reluctantly – left the water, it's time to make your way back to heavenly Havana.

A wonderful way to end the day might be to enjoy a second cocktail and the panoramic views of Havana from La Torre in the Vedado neighbourhood. There are numerous other options for evening entertainment and dining, and your guide will be happy to make recommendations and bookings for you and of course host you on your final evening in Paradise.

DAY 6: HAVANA (B)



For the duration of your 6 Day Private Cuba tour your guide will have been telling you all about their favourite places in the capital, and now is your opportunity to visit some of these places, free of scheduled activities. You can spend the last of your time exploring any area of the city you might want, before bidding Havana and Cuba a fond farewell. You can do much worse than simply perching yourself in one of Havana's sublime plazas and watching the world go by, but if you want to be more hands on, the capital is home to some fantastic museums, including the Museo de la Revolucion and the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, that you saw from the outside earlier on in the tour.

Alternatively, you might like to visit the home of novelist and Nobel Prize laureate Ernest Hemingway at Finca Vigia. Just 25 kilometres from Havana, it was here that Hemingway wrote both *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *The Old Man and the Sea*, about a man fishing off the Havana coastline. Reopened to tourists in 2007 after an extensive restoration, visitors can explore rooms complete with much of their original contents. Please download our 'To do in Havana' brochure for more information about the options available to you.

When it's time to depart, we'll of course have arranged transport back to the airport to catch your departing flight.

* Please note that some activities are not available on certain days of the week or times of the year. Where this occurs, your guide will offer a selection of alternatives for your consideration.



YOUR EVENING ENTERTAINMENT

For your evenings, we leave the itinerary flexible. Your guide will be able to organise your transfers and tickets to some of Havana's best nightlife including Tropicana Cabaret, Buena Vista Social Club at La Taberna, Parisien Cabaret at Hotel Nacional, Cannon Shooting Ceremony, Gran Teatro Habana, and the Vixen and Crow Jazz Café.

A NOTE ABOUT OUR RESTAURANT CHOICES FOR YOUR TOUR

We like to include and recommend a range of different local restaurants (paladares) that showcase the best of Havana's burgeoning private restaurant scene, burgeoning because until recently only central government could run such establishments. Your guide will help select the best restaurants for your tour based on a consultation about your tastes and dietary requirements, however some of our favourite restaurants include Mercaderes, Cafe Laurent, O'Reilly 304, Alta Habana, Vista Mar, El Cocinero and El Atelier.

NOT QUITE WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR?

Please note that it is possible to modify the activities and excursions included as part of this tour. For more ideas about what you might like to do in Havana during the day and in your evenings.

AIRPORT TRANSFERS:

Transfers between the airport and your accommodation is included for both your arrival and departure from Havana's José Martí International airport.

ACCOMMODATION ON TOUR

This tour is priced to stay in superior Casa's (also commonly referred to as B&B's or guest-houses). The superior Casa's we have hand selected are more expensive than the standard Casa's you will find in Cuba. They are run more like your traditional B&B's but still offer a unique cultural experience. While they shouldn't be compared to modern Western hotels, the rooms will have air-conditioning, private en suite facilities, hot and cold water and have generally been recently renovated to a beautiful standard.

However, should you choose, we can also arrange for you to stay in some of Cuba's excellent 4* and 5* hotels.

A number of accommodation options are in older buildings without an elevator. If you have issues with mobility and will be unable to comfortably climb several flights of stairs, please let us know. We can happily find you a wonderful alternative to suit your needs. We've also got you covered if you want to spend a few extra days in Havana before or after your 6 Day Private Cuba Tour begins or ends. Just use our easy online form when you make your booking.

You can learn more about staying in upgraded boutique Casa's/ B&B's/ Guesthouses [here](#).

Not sold on staying at a Casa?

That's OK, we can certainly look to upgrade your accommodation to a 4* or 5* property, depending on your budget.

It is worth noting some accommodation providers are to be found in older buildings without elevators. If you believe that your physical capabilities will make it difficult to climb stairs, simply let us know. We will be able to find you a suitable alternative

VIVA CUBA



**LOCALLY
SOURCED
CUBA TOURS**

Your Cuba tour specialists