

ITINERARY

14 DAY/13 NIGHT PRIVATE CUBA TOUR
SEDUCTIVE CUBA



**LOCALLY
SOURCED
CUBA TOURS**

Your Cuba tour specialists

TOUR INTRODUCTION



14 days is a wonderful amount of time to take in the best of what the Caribbean's largest island has to offer! We've carefully planned our 14 day private Cuba tour to give you enough time to experience the real and authentic Cuba without rushing, while including visits to many of the country's most important and interesting destinations.

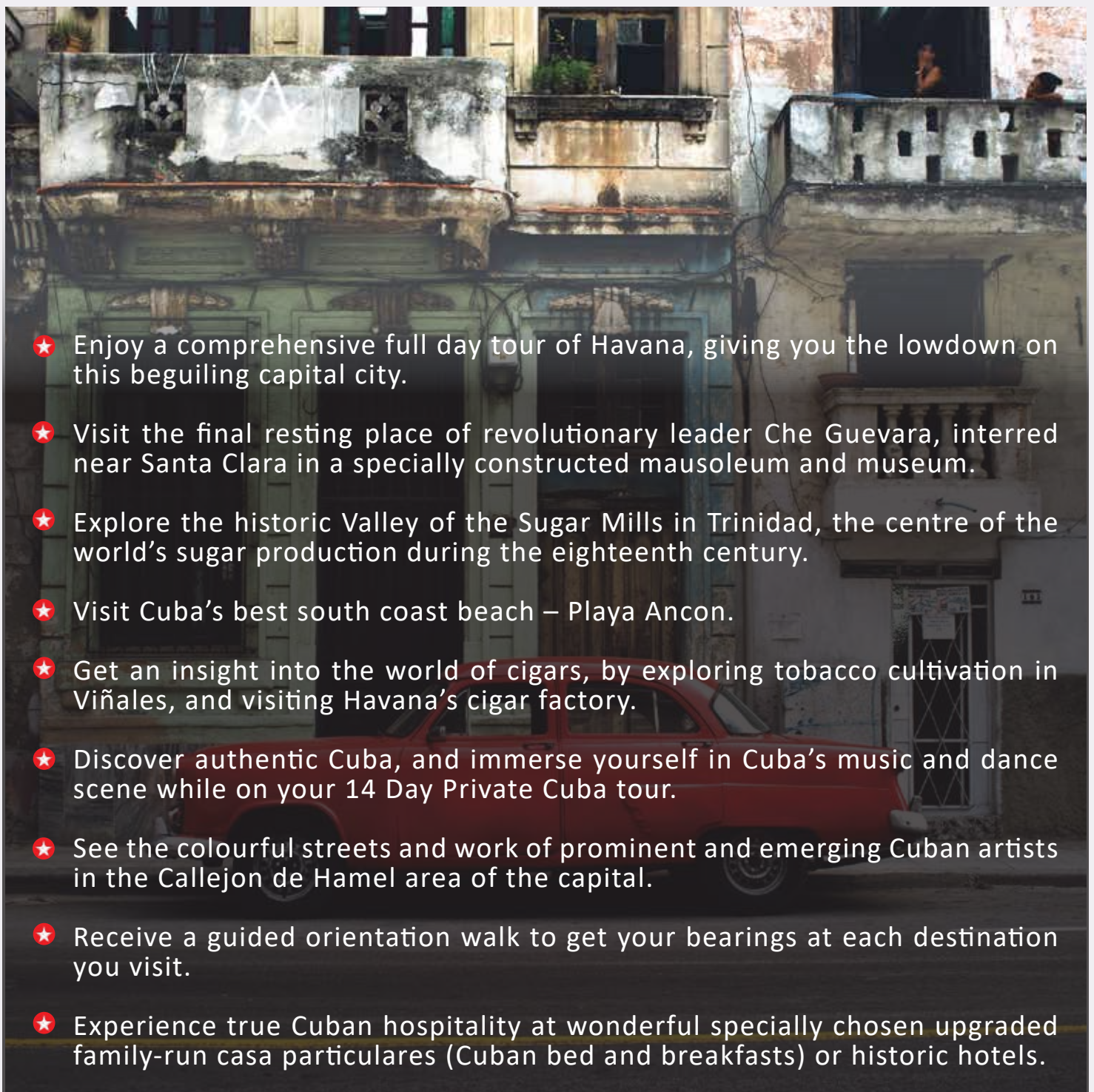
INCLUDED ACTIVITIES

- ★ Guided orientation walk (dependent on arrival time) in Havana.
- ★ 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.
- ★ Rum and Cigar Experience OR Market Visit and Cooking Class
- ★ Museum of the Revolution OR Museum of Fine Arts OR Finca Vigia.
- ★ Callejon de Hamel.
- ★ Fusterlandia
- ★ Explore the Las Terrazas Township
- ★ Visit Cafetal Buenavista
- ★ Visit the Soroa Waterfall and Orchid garden
- ★ Los Jasmines Look-out Point
- ★ Vinales Township and Farmland guided walk or cycle
- ★ Mural de la Prehistoria
- ★ Organic Farm Lunch
- ★ Tobacco Farm and drying house
- ★ 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.
- ★ Playa Anco
- ★ Valley of the Sugar Mill
- ★ Sierra del Escambray Excursion.
- ★ Palenque de los Congos Reales.
- ★ Cienfuegos Guided City Walk.
- ★ Bay of Pigs Museum.
- ★ Swim/ Snorkel at the Bay of Pigs.

IS THIS TRIP RIGHT FOR YOU?

We believe our 14 day private Cuba tour gives the right balance of informative guided cultural experiences and time to relax and enjoy your surroundings, giving you the freedom to explore on your own without missing out any important sights of interest. What's more, being a private tour means you'll never feel lost in a crowd. Your local Cuban guide will be with you for the whole tour, and will enact the tour at a pace suitable to your fitness level.

WHY WE LOVE THIS TRIP



- ★ Enjoy a comprehensive full day tour of Havana, giving you the lowdown on this beguiling capital city.
- ★ Visit the final resting place of revolutionary leader Che Guevara, interred near Santa Clara in a specially constructed mausoleum and museum.
- ★ Explore the historic Valley of the Sugar Mills in Trinidad, the centre of the world's sugar production during the eighteenth century.
- ★ Visit Cuba's best south coast beach – Playa Ancon.
- ★ Get an insight into the world of cigars, by exploring tobacco cultivation in Viñales, and visiting Havana's cigar factory.
- ★ Discover authentic Cuba, and immerse yourself in Cuba's music and dance scene while on your 14 Day Private Cuba tour.
- ★ See the colourful streets and work of prominent and emerging Cuban artists in the Callejon de Hamel area of the capital.
- ★ Receive a guided orientation walk to get your bearings at each destination you visit.
- ★ Experience true Cuban hospitality at wonderful specially chosen upgraded family-run casa particulares (Cuban bed and breakfasts) or historic hotels.



TRANSPORTATION

On our 14 day private Cuba tour we only ever use private air-conditioned vehicles between tour destinations, as well as for activities and excursions in your itinerary that require transportation. Any extra transport requirements can be organised through your guide and paid for locally when in Cuba.

SPENDING MONEY ON TOUR

The majority of your major holiday expenses such as accommodation, transport between destinations, airport transfers, your guide and two lunches are already included as part of your 14 day private Cuba tour. You'll want to bring enough money to cover the rest of your meals, drinks, tips, souvenirs, and the possibility you'll book onto an optional extra excursion. Though everyone spends different amounts while travelling, we recommend bringing between 50 to 60 CUC per person per day. The CUC (Cuban Convertible Peso) is valued 1:1 with the US\$ (not taking into consideration exchange fees and penalties).

ITINERARY OVERVIEW



ESTIMATED TRAVEL TIMES

Cuba is the Caribbean's largest nation, and our 14 day private Cuba tour aims to show you as much of the island as possible. However, we will never rush you, and longer journeys between destinations will include stops for a bit to eat or to stretch your legs and take in your beautiful surroundings. The sorts of travel times you can expect on the 14 day private Cuba tour are:

From Havana to Viñales: 3 hours

From Havana to Trinidad (via Santa Clara): 5 hours

From Trinidad to Cienfuegos: 1 hour

Cienfuegos to Havana (via Bay of Pigs): 4 hours

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY ONE

Bienvenido! Welcome to Cuba!

Cuba has welcomed everyone from Christopher Columbus to Ernest Hemingway to its sunny shores for good reason, and we're sure you'll find your time on the island just as alluring. The capital boasts layer upon layer of history stretching back 500 years, dominated by the influence of Spanish colonization, and (more recently) the Castro revolution of the late 1950s. As a result, Cuba is one of the finest places in the Americas with which to explore the region's colonial history, but also its more modern history of revolt and decolonisation. It's fair to say that in Havana you'll never be far from reminders of this period!

Even so, much of Havana's charm stems from its time-warp feel. Gently crumbling baroque and neoclassical masterpieces dot much of Habana Vieja – Havana's ancient UNESCO-listed Old Town – alongside the city's iconic vintage taxi fleet, cigar-smoking grandma's, and a way of life little changed since the revolution. Things are slowly but surely changing in the Cuban capital, but while relations between the US and the Caribbean nation remain strained, it looks as though Havana will remain a world away from its near neighbour for some time to come.

You'll want plenty of time to explore Havana during your 14 day private Cuba tour, which starts as it means to go on. From your very first evening in Cuba you'll start to get acquainted with the city, with an orientation tour around the area immediately around your accommodation. Here you'll find a very different Cuba than you might imagine from the news headlines, with live music a way of life, bright clothing the norm rather than the exception, and photographic opportunities on every street corner.

Your 14 day private Cuba tour begins, however, with your arrival at Havana's José Martí International Airport. Here you'll be met by our representatives for your airport transfer to your accommodation in the city. During these first hours of your Cuba tour, you will have the chance to meet your guide and have them answer any questions you have about your upcoming itinerary, before they escort you on the orientation walk of the area around your accommodation (dependent on your arrival time).

If you arrive early enough, there will also be time for a classic convertible car journey to the fort of El Morro and El Cristo de La Habana (which will otherwise be incorporated into day two). This tour provides the perfect introduction to the Cuban capital, and offers ample opportunity to capture those first social media-bound photographs, particularly as the sun sets over the long seaside promenade known as the Malecon.

DAY TWO

Day Two of your 14 day private Cuba tour provides an entire day in which to take in many of Havana's most important sights. At the very heart of the capital for centuries is the walled citadel of Old Havana (Habana Vieja), a stunning UNESCO World Heritage Site which you'll explore on foot during your guided Old Havana Walking Tour – the best way to see this area of the capital.

There's an abundance of cultural riches to marvel at as part of this tour, and as you tackle the cobbles in this part of town, your guide will reveal the many secrets of structures including the El Capitolio building, the Museo de la Revolución, and the Gran Teatro Habana. You'll also take in some of the most stunning squares in the Americas – thriving public spaces such as the Plaza de Armas, Plaza de la Catedral, and Plaza Vieja.

Rest assured, there will be plenty of time to do just that – put your feet up and rest. The first opportunity comes during lunch at an authentic Cuban paladar, one of the growing number of small privately-run restaurants which offer fantastic Cuban hospitality and tasty authentic island cuisine in homely surrounds.

You then get the chance to explore slightly further afield in the Cuban capital on a Convertible Classic Car Tour. An iconic part of the Havana landscape, these vehicles date back to pre-revolutionary days and are kept running out of practically as much as the style they bring to the streets. Working taxis, your classic car will transport you to the newer district of Havana Vedado, and then the faded grandeur of Miramar. The tour will also include passing by the impressive mausoleums of the Colon Cemetery, Revolution Square, and the Malecon.

The day's activities come to an end with the choice of one of three options:

- ★ Stop off at the Hotel Nacional in Havana Vedado for a drink and a wonderful view of the Malecon in time for sunset.
- ★ Take to the dance floor for a Salsa Lesson. Suitable for all levels and led by an experienced dance teacher, you'll learn some of the key moves in Cuba's traditional dances – danzon, son, cha cha cha, and rumba among them.
- ★ Learn how to make the iconic rum cocktail – the mojito – while taking in the unbeatable view from a rooftop bar in Havana's Old Town.

The evening is left as free time, allowing you the freedom to do as much or as little as you like. If you fancy making the most of Havana's lively nightlife, you can do so this independently. Alternatively, your guide will be happy to escort you. They will also be able to recommend a range of different possibilities and organise any tickets or transfers (paid for locally) that you may require.

DAY THREE

You remain in Havana for day three of your 14 day private Cuba tour. In the morning you can choose between a rum and cigar experience or a cooking class.

RUM AND CIGAR EXPERIENCE

The Havana Rum Museum gives you the chance to learn about the rum making process from start to finish, and even enjoy tasting some of the final product, all within the stately surrounds of a converted old palace.

The tour continues at the Partagas Cigar Factory, where you'll uncover the mystique behind cigar making. You'll gain a true understanding of the significance of these little objects to the country's culture and heritage. You will also witness first hand the amount of effort, care and tradition that goes into making these Cuban treasures, and come away with a new appreciation for Cuban cigars even as a non-smoker!

COOKING CLASS

Your second option for the morning is an authentic Cooking Class hosted in a local casa particular bed and breakfast. Not only will you get to make and taste some wonderful traditional cuisine, but also interact with ordinary Cubans with a fine backdrop over the rooftops of the city that might make focusing on what you're doing a difficulty!

Your cooking class includes:

- ★ An initial visit to a local market to source ingredients
- ★ Demonstration and involvement in preparing the dishes
- ★ Instruction on preparation of the Cuban mojito at the bar, followed by making your own version of this, one of Cuba's three signature cocktails

In the afternoon you have the option to choose one of three impressive museum collections:

1.) It's not difficult to be enraptured by the exhibits in Havana's Museum of the Revolution, housed within a grand building which, as the former Presidential Palace, was the country's equivalent of the White House. This all changed after the dictatorial government of Batista was overthrown by Fidel Castro in 1959. It became the home of the Government and the Council of Ministers until 1965, and then the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba. In 1974, it was converted into the museum you see today, and was awarded national monument status in 2010.

2.) Equally enthralling is the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (Arte Cubano). Dedicated exclusively to displaying Cuban artworks, this gallery is where the cr me de la cr me of Cuban art is to be found. The works are displayed in chronological order starting on the third floor, making it superbly easy to observe the development of Cuban art throughout the centuries. Amongst the artists featured are works by Guillermo Collazo, considered to be the first truly great Cuban artist. There are also works by Rafael Blanco, with his cartoon-like paintings and sketches; and Ra l Mart nez, a master of 1960s Cuban pop art.

3.) Alternatively, you can take the short drive to La Finca Vig a on the outskirts of Havana. This sprawling estate was the Cuban home of heavyweight American author Ernest Hemingway, where he wrote some of his most important novels. This tour also takes in Cojimar (14 kilometres from Havana), where Hemingway was inspired to write *The Old Man and the Sea*, and where you can see a statue of Hemingway funded by local Cubans themselves. You'll also visit the restaurant Las Terrazas, Hemingway's preferred Cojimar hangout.

Back on central Havana, you will end the day in the small psychedelic alleyway of Callejon de Hamel, where the Capital's artist fraternity congregate. It's a wonderful place to experience day-to-day Cuban life, albeit with an artistic twist, since the art quite literally spills out of the studios and onto the street.

DAY FOUR

After a couple of activity packed days, today is scheduled as a free day to relax, explore independently, or visit more of what Havana has to offer with the support of your local guide. They will be available to recommend and organise a range of optional activities for you that can be paid for locally.

Some optional activities you might be interested in include:

- ★ Almacenes de San José Arts and Crafts Market (1 – 2 hours)
- ★ Visit Hemingway's former residence, Finca Vigia and Cojimar (Weekdays and Saturdays only) (2-3 hours)
- ★ Visit Hemingway Sites in Old Havana (Ambos Mundos, Floridita and Bodeguita del Medio)
- ★ Salsa Lesson (1 hour)
- ★ Museum of Fine Arts (2-3 hours, closed on Mondays)
- ★ Visit Playas del Este, Havana's local beach (2+ hours)
- ★ Cooking Lesson (3+ hours)
- ★ Cigar Rolling Demonstration (30 minutes, Monday to Friday)
- ★ El Capitolio/ National Capitol Building Tour (1 hour, Closed on Mondays)
- ★ Gran Teatro de la Habana Tour (1 hour, Closed on Mondays)
- ★ Visit an organic garden/ urban farm (2 hours)
- ★ Visit Havana Boxing Gym (weekdays only, not always guaranteed)

DAY FIVE

Leaving Havana for the first time, day five sees you reach Las Terrazas and Soroa, located in the beautiful surrounds of Pinar del Rio province. Almost unbelievably as you look at it today, this region was once the hub of the island's logging industry. It was brought back to its original natural lushness as the result of a project spearheaded by Fidel Castro himself, in the 1960s. The restoration worked so well it's now a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

However, the day starts not in Las Terrazas or Soroa but in the fishing village of Jaimanitas, on the outskirts of Havana. This unassuming part of the capital has been utterly transformed by one man, and not in this instance Fidel Castro, but resident artist Jose Fuster. Fuster has made his home in Jaimanitas, and a great deal of the surrounding neighbourhood, into one giant artwork using tiles in mosaic form. This public art installation is lovingly known as Fusterlandia and has now spread to encompass more than 80 homes, all decorated with ornate murals and domes to reflect the personality of each of Fuster's neighbours. Fuster has also contributed a chess park with giant boards and tables, a theatre, and public swimming pools, so there's plenty to enjoy in the area.

Continuing on to Las Terrazas Township, your guide will lead you on an orientation walk. As you walk, you'll be able to meet the friendly locals and to admire the pretty San Juan mountain stream. You'll have time to stop at the township's many artist's studios too – the perfect places to find a unique souvenir to take back home amid the painting, wood work, and pottery.

Cafetal Buenavista is Cuba's oldest (now partially restored) coffee plantation, built in 1801 by refugees from Haiti. Much of the property (such as the dormitories that housed the slaves who worked the plantation) is now in ruin, which we think you'll agree adds to the haunting quality of the location. The Cafetal Buenavista can be seen on the Sendero las Delicias hike, which also takes in lush, green landscapes and bright, coloured houses before arriving at the small village of Soroa. Often referred to as The Gate to The Garden of Eden, this picturesque village is the starting point for many hikes to the soaring Sierra del Rosario.

In an effort to accentuate the natural beauty of the Soroa village even further, the Spanish landowner Tomás Felipe Camacho established the Orchid Botanical Garden, which today houses more than 700 different species from around the world. It's a wonderful landscape in which to spend an hour or so, although you'll certainly want to save some time for the views around the Salto Arco Iris waterfall as well. This magnificent cascade forms part of the Rio Manantiales, and plunges 22 metres into an enclosed pool which is the perfect spot for jumping in and cooling off.

For those feeling adventurous, there's also the Zip-line Canopy Tour in Las Terrazas to consider. The Canopy Tour is a nearly 2km long aerial tour using steel cables to whiz above Las Terrazas' fascinating scenery. Here, you will find highly trained personnel and professional equipment, although this activity is weather dependent, and can be paid for locally.

A private transfer to Vinales will bring the day to an end, but not before you've been taken to the Los Jazmines look-out point to admire Vinales and the Pinar del Rio province in all its splendour.

DAY SIX AND SEVEN

The landscape around Vinales is unique in Cuba due to its magotes - steep rounded hills that contrast the flat plains around them. A rich, fertile valley in Pinar del Rio province, this compact and authentic Cuban village is one of the most breathtaking spots in all of Cuba for many. In the heart of Cuba's prime tobacco growing region, Viñales is deceptively industrious, and many of Cuba's trademark cigars are made from tobacco that is grown here because of its high quality and flavour. Upon arrival you will have the chance to have a look around the township and experience the lively music and dance scene that Viñales excels in.

In case you were wondering if the town was a type of rural fantasy-fulfilment, allow us to set you straight. That farmer using an oxen and cart to transport his crops would be doing it with this method regardless of whether you were watching or not. Life simply moves at a slower pace here, and is unbothered and not particularly influenced by the modernity of the rest of the world... or the rest of Cuba, for that matter. The perfect opportunity to experience an authentic slice of Cuban rural life.

Walking is definitely one of the best ways in which to discover compact little Vinales, although a cycling tour of the Vinales township and surrounding farmlands is also an option should you prefer a little change of pace. As you spend time in the Viñales Valley you will visit the many different plantations of the region, growing manioc, arrowroot, sweet potato, tobacco, tomato, banana, mango and pineapple. Crossing small private farms, you can see the farmers working with their oxen and their traditional methods of cultivation. You'll also have the opportunity to taste delicious sugar cane juice mixed with grapefruit juice, known as guaratón. You will, of course, visit a tobacco plantation, where the process of harvesting and drying the leaves in a secadero (drying house) will be explained.

For lunch you'll stop at the El Paraiso organic farm. Offering sublime natural foods and stunning views of your surroundings, El Paraiso is a slice of paradise in the Valley of Silence, owned and run by Wilfredo and his daughters.

But that's not the end of your 14 day private Cuba tour for the day, which continues four kilometres west of Viñales, to the Mural de la Prehistoria. This 120 metre long outdoor artwork was designed in 1961 by Leovigildo González Morillo, a follower of Mexican artist Diego Rivera. On a cliff at the foot of the 617 metre high Sierra de Viñales, the highest portion of the Sierra de los Órganos, this massive mural took 18 people and incredible four years to complete. Incorporating huge, brightly-painted snails, dinosaurs, sea monsters and humans, the mural symbolizes the theory of evolution. Depending on your point of view, its either an impressively psychedelic artwork, or a travesty for the beautiful landscape!

DAY EIGHT

You're 14 day private Cuba tour today takes you to Cienfuegos, and the Bay of Pigs. Cienfuegos is a beautiful French built city unique in Cuba, while the second is probably already known to you for the infamous failed CIA-backed counter-revolution that took place here with the aim of forcing Fidel Castro from power. However, it's also a magical water world for swimming and snorkelling.

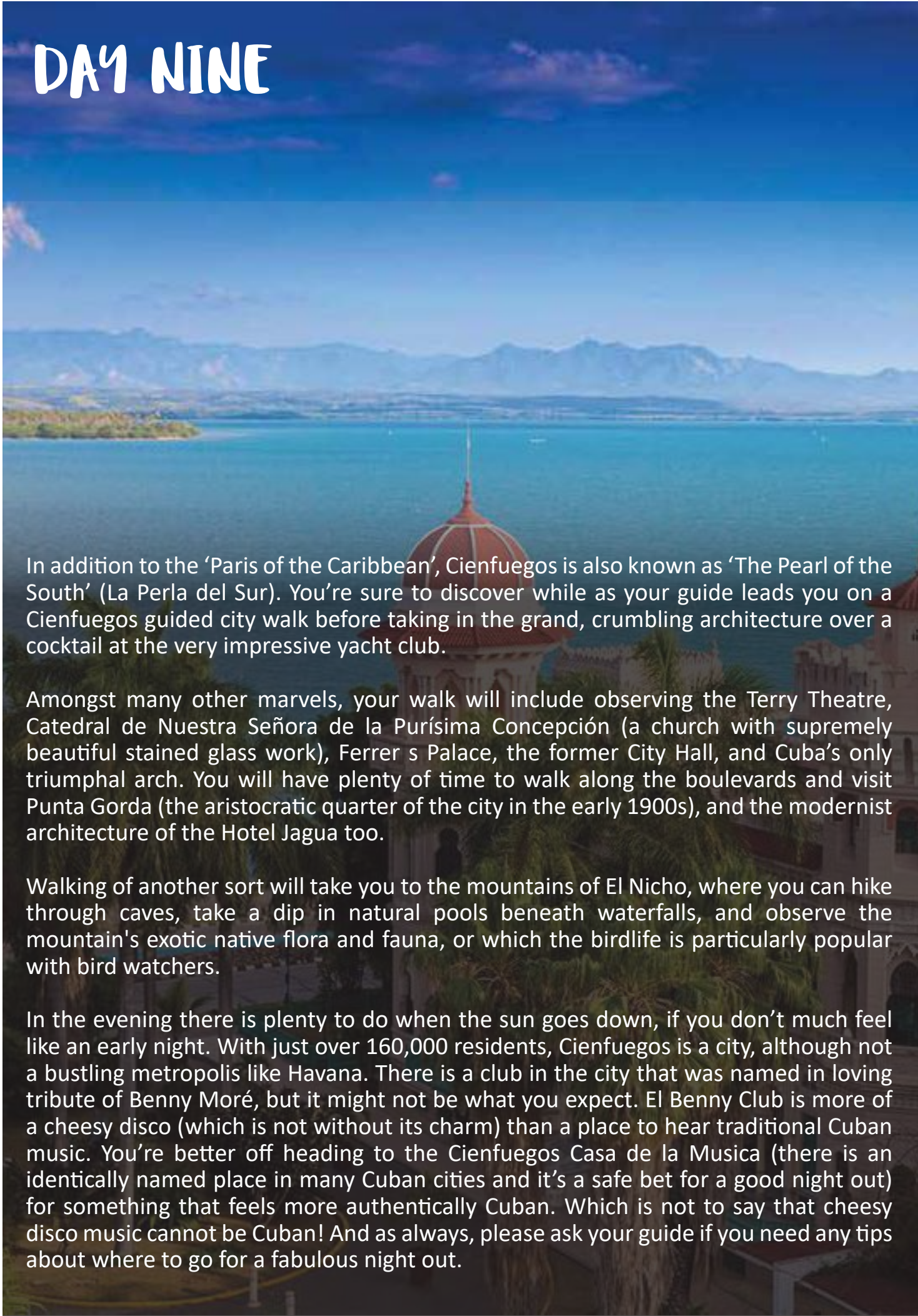
The sandy arc of Playa Girón and Playa Larga nestle peacefully on the eastern side of the infamous Bahía de Cochinos (Bay of Pigs), backed by one of those gloriously old-fashioned Cuban villages where everyone knows everyone else. Notorious as the place where the Cold War almost got hot, the beach is actually named for a French pirate, Gilbert Girón, who met his end here by decapitation in the early 1600s at the hands of embittered locals. The local museum focusses on the more recent invasion however, with propaganda detailing how Cuban forces managed to defeat the might of the US, America's first ever defeat in Latin America.

These days Girón, with its clear Caribbean waters, precipitous offshore drop-off and multitude of private home-stays, is one of the best places in Cuba to go snorkelling and diving – so today is not the day to forget your swim suit!

It will then be time to make your way to Cienfuegos. While Cuba is largely considered a colonial territory of the Spanish crown, its less well known that the island also saw colonisation by other European powers, including France. Cienfuegos is the result of this French colonisation, with French subjects escaping the harsh conditions of other French territories including Louisiana to a new life on the island. Noticeable different to Cuba's other major city's as a result, Cienfuegos exudes a definite Parisian air, in its wide boulevards, parkland, and architectural style. Its little wonder the city is also called 'the Paris of the Caribbean'.

You'll experience this with your guide as you explore the wide streets and promenades, visit Parque Jose Marti, and enjoy a walk along the city's own version of the Malecón. It is in fact the longest promenade on the island, and not to be confused with the Malecón which snakes along the waterfront in Havana. You also won't want to miss the ostentatious structure of the Palacio de Valle, built in 1917. Used for varying purposes throughout its more than 100 years of existence, the Palacio de Valle is now an (aspiring) upscale restaurant with a very enticing terrace bar where you'll be able to enjoy a drink.

DAY NINE



In addition to the 'Paris of the Caribbean', Cienfuegos is also known as 'The Pearl of the South' (La Perla del Sur). You're sure to discover while as your guide leads you on a Cienfuegos guided city walk before taking in the grand, crumbling architecture over a cocktail at the very impressive yacht club.

Amongst many other marvels, your walk will include observing the Terry Theatre, Catedral de Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción (a church with supremely beautiful stained glass work), Ferrer s Palace, the former City Hall, and Cuba's only triumphal arch. You will have plenty of time to walk along the boulevards and visit Punta Gorda (the aristocratic quarter of the city in the early 1900s), and the modernist architecture of the Hotel Jagua too.

Walking of another sort will take you to the mountains of El Nicho, where you can hike through caves, take a dip in natural pools beneath waterfalls, and observe the mountain's exotic native flora and fauna, or which the birdlife is particularly popular with bird watchers.

In the evening there is plenty to do when the sun goes down, if you don't much feel like an early night. With just over 160,000 residents, Cienfuegos is a city, although not a bustling metropolis like Havana. There is a club in the city that was named in loving tribute of Benny Moré, but it might not be what you expect. El Benny Club is more of a cheesy disco (which is not without its charm) than a place to hear traditional Cuban music. You're better off heading to the Cienfuegos Casa de la Musica (there is an identically named place in many Cuban cities and it's a safe bet for a good night out) for something that feels more authentically Cuban. Which is not to say that cheesy disco music cannot be Cuban! And as always, please ask your guide if you need any tips about where to go for a fabulous night out.

DAY TEN



Next on your 14 day private Cuba tour you will travel to Trinidad, the favourite destination for many a traveller to Cuba.

Trinidad was founded in 1514 by Diego Velázquez and is considered one of Cuba's jewels largely as a result of its colonial architecture. The town is sublimely beautiful and (much like Havana's Old Town) the area has been feted to such a degree it enjoys designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

On your guided walk of the Trinidad Township you will get to discover just what makes Trinidad so special, including Palacio Cantero, Canchanchara, Palacio Brunet, Plaza Mayor, Museo Romantico, and a pottery workshop among other sights. You will then undoubtedly come to understand why the term "living museum" is so often used to describe Trinidad. It really is like time has stood still here.

The city's heyday was during the 1800s, when it was a popular place to live for the rich merchants who ran the nearby sugar plantations. Unfortunately, the labour used in these plantations was slave labour, and once slavery was abolished on the island the production of sugar was no longer a viable economic concern, and the sugar mills of the Valle de los Ingenios fell into ruins.

Your time in Trinidad could never be said to be complete without at least one evening sitting on the steps outside the open air Casa de la Musica. Every night the area beside the Cathedral in Plaza Mayor comes to life with a live salsa band. There is no cost (although tipping is generally encouraged), the drinks flow freely and inexpensively, and this all takes place under a beautiful, balmy, starry sky.

DAY ELEVEN AND TWELVE

Over the next couple of days you will have the opportunity to explore the area around Trinidad further.

First you will get to explore the Valle de los Ingenios sugar plantations, in particular the plantation called Manaca Iznaga. Valle de los Ingenios translates as the 'Valley of the Sugar Mills'. It was here that the bulk of Cuba's sugar production took place until the abolition of slavery on the island. There are dozens of old sugar mills from the 19th century, along with slave quarters and manor houses, all dotted throughout the valley, which gives you an idea of the scope of the sugar production that once took place in the valley. One of the most enchanting is Manaca Iznaga, an estate purchased in 1795 by Pedro Iznaga, who became rich by trafficking slaves. It's both deeply interesting and somewhat unsettling.

We will then proceed to the Sierra del Escambray Mountain Range, where you will venture into the rugged, impressive peaks of Topes de Collantes. They are part of the Sierra del Escambray mountain range, which run for some 90 kilometres, and are located just 20 kilometres from the centre of Trinidad. But you definitely don't need to be an expert mountain climber to enjoy the area. Whatever your levels of fitness and mobility, there is a way to explore the Topes de Collantes:

- ★ The easy to complete, 3km La Batata Trail to Casa de Café, taking in caves, underground rivers and a small waterfall with natural swimming pool.
- ★ Alfombra Mágico Trail to Finca Codina, a former coffee estate and orchid garden, which is also not very physically demanding.
- ★ The 3km Centinelas del Río Melodioso Trail, incorporating a coffee plantation, Río Melodioso (Melodic River), and El Rocío waterfall as part of this undemanding path.
- ★ The 5km Salto Caburní trail, leading to a 200-foot (62-m) waterfall with swimming hole. More physically demanding than the other options listed, it has a medium level of difficulty.

You then travel from the mountains to the sea to visit Playa Ancón, and feel that magical white sand beneath your feet. One of the most beloved beaches in Cuba, and considered to be the best on the southern coast, Playa Ancon can be reached in less than 15 minutes in a car, although if you can muster the energy, you might want to cycle from Trinidad instead. The journey by bike will take roughly 40 minutes, depending on your pedal power. Less developed than some of Cuba's beach resorts, it has the feel of an authentic beachside village, which is even stronger at the nearby sleepy fishing village of Casilda.

Come evening, you will sample the delights of Palenque de los Congos Reales. A must for rumba fans, this open patio on Trinidad's music alley has an eclectic menu incorporating salsa, son (Cuban popular music) and trova (traditional poetic singing). Make sure you hang around to experience the nightly highlight – the rumba drums of soulful African rhythms accompanying energetic fire-eating dancers which begins about 10pm. Alternatively, you might be content to simply sit in Trinidad's main plaza and watch the city life unfold around you.

DAY THIRTEEN



Today you will make your way back to Havana, via Santa Clara as your 14 day private Cuba tour nears its end.

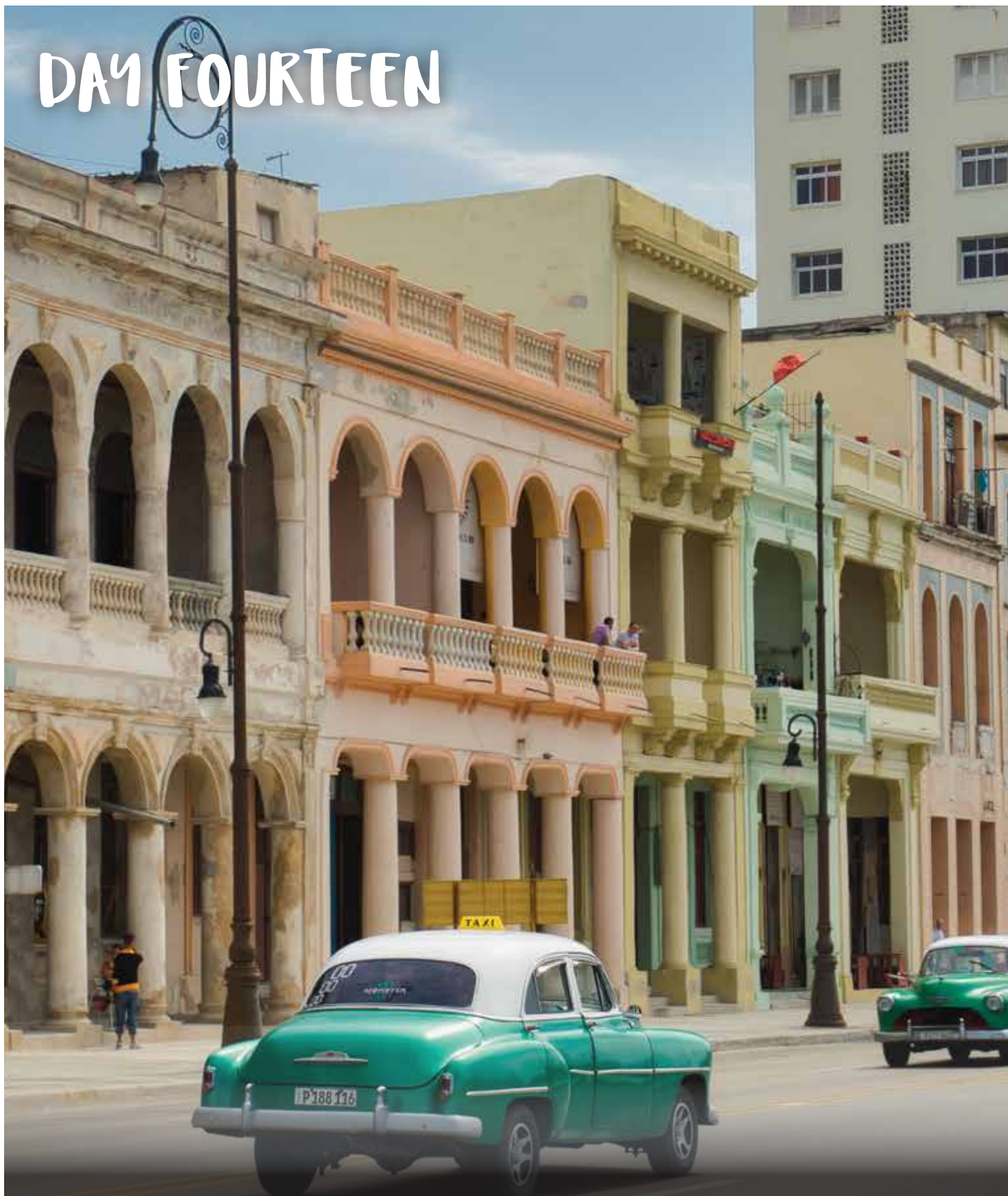
Santa Clara is steeped in revolutionary history, and an important place to take in the story as a result. Events here – the derailing of a military train and take over of the city – cemented the success of the revolution and led the country to where it is today. Sometimes referred to as The City of the Heroic Guerrilla as a result, it may not be as visited as Havana or many better-known spots in the city, but its place in modern Cuban history cannot be denied.

Although contemporary Santa Clara is an important commercial hub and home to one of Cuba's largest universities (giving the whole town a youthful and energetic vibe), the city is probably still best known as the final resting place of Che Guevara. It was Che Guevara who led the revolutionary forces in that final victorious Battle of Santa Clara which led to the then President Batista fleeing the country after all.

Your first port of call will take you to the Che Guevara Mausoleum and Memorial, a structure built to honour and tell the story of perhaps Cuba's most iconic adopted son (Guevara was born in Argentina). The Che Guevara Mausoleum and Memorial was originally intended as a memorial alone, since El Che's final resting place was a mystery at the time. Though famed throughout the world for his actions in Cuba and elsewhere, when he was executed in Bolivia in 1967 (for instigating revolutionary zeal there) his body was dumped in an unmarked grave. It remained there for 30 years until it's rediscovery. It was only then that Guevara was returned to Cuba under the orders of Fidel Castro, and interred with great ceremony in the memorial that already bore his name. The memorial also includes an interesting museum, where you can learn about the vital role played by Guevara in the ultimate demise of dictator Batista and the rise of Fidel Castro, a turning point in the Cuban revolution.

While in Santa Clara you will also visit the Tren Blindado, the train full of arms that was attacked in the decisive moments of the Cuban Revolution by Guevara's men. You'll next travel to the centre of Santa Clara itself for a panoramic walk of the city before completing the journey back to Havana.

DAY FOURTEEN



Today is your final day on tour, and no activities are planned. If you have time before your flight you might like to consider an additional extra activity or excursion.

Either way, when the time comes we will organise your private airport transfer to ensure you get to the airport in plenty of time for your flight home.



YOUR EVENING ENTERTAINMENT

Evenings are generally free time, allowing you to explore at your latest Cuban destination at leisure. If you want some ideas of what you can do in the evenings, your guide will have plenty of ideas, and will be more than happy to organise tickets or reservations, or even accompany you out should you prefer.

You can learn more about the evening options available to you by downloading our 'Things To Do in Havana Brochure [here](#).

A NOTE ABOUT OUR RESTAURANT CHOICES FOR YOUR TOUR

We like to include a range of different restaurants (paladares) that showcase the best of Havana's burgeoning private restaurant scene. Your guide will also help select the best restaurants for the tour based on consultation about your tastes and dietary requirements. Some of our favourite restaurants include Mercaderes, Café Laurent, O'Reilly 304, Alta Habana, Vista Mar, El Cocinero and El Atelier.

Not quite what you looking for?

Please note that it is possible to modify many of the activities and excursions included as part of this 14 day private Cuba tour. For more ideas about what you might like to do in Havana during the day and in your evenings, please download our 'Things To do in Havana' brochure [here](#).

Airport transfers

Your 14 Day Private Cuba Tour includes being picked up at Havana's José Martí International Airport and taken to your accommodation in the city on day one of the tour. Your transfer back to the airport on your departure is also included.

Accommodation on tour

The stated 14 day private Cuba tour price is based on nightly stays in upgraded casa particulares bed and breakfast style establishments. Until very recently it wasn't possible for visitors to the island to stay anywhere but the large government-run hotels, however we believe that the bespoke range of casas now available offer visitors a much more authentic experience. Owned and run by ordinary families, they are more welcoming than the big hotels, while still offering the privacy you'll want. A highlight of the trip for many, you might well forget you're a paying guest as you become one of the family!

The upgraded casas we frequent are hand selected. 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.

Not sold on staying at a casa?

If you're not sold on staying at a casa despite all the positives, that's not a problem! We'll look into shifting your accommodation to 4* or 5* properties, depending on how much you'd like to spend.

Please also note that much of Cuba's accommodation are 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.

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CUBA TOURS**

Your Cuba tour specialists