

YOUR GUIDE TO ACTIVITIES AND EXCURSIONS IN HAVANA



**LOCALLY
SOURCED
CUBA TOURS**

Your Cuba tour specialists

INTRODUCTION

Locally Sourced Havana Tours is dedicated to providing superior quality tours of Havana in Cuba. Our tours aim to showcase the capital city's evocative history and enchanting beauty alongside its colonial core and enticing street theatre. Our years of specialist Cuba expertise means you're in good hands.

We are committed to offering tours to the Cuban capital (and surrounding regions) that encapsulates its history and beauty. Our local know-how and carefully chosen bilingual guides let you experience the sights, sounds and smells of the Havana behind the headlines.

The team here at Locally Sourced Havana Tours are passionate about the city we live and work in, something we aim to pass on to all those that visit. This energy, enthusiasm and pride for Havana is what make our tours so unique and well received.

We will take your inside this inspiring city and highlight its rich history, stunning colonial backdrops, and colourful, vibrant people.

Our tours are safe, reliable, and most importantly, a whole lot of fun.

One of our strengths as an organisation is creating tailor-made day and evening tour experiences that focus on the activities and excursions that are of most interest to you.

Our tours are committed to supporting the Cuban people through:

- Patronizing privately owned small businesses in Havana
- Exposing you to the local Cuban people and steering funds toward its citizens.
- Eating at a Paladares (privately run restaurants) where meals are included
- Staying in Casa Particulares (Cuban B&B's) where accommodation is included
- Offer the opportunity to interact with Cuban's from all walks of life, having a chance to hear their stories, and share your own
- Being educational and people focused

DURING THE DAY

CONVERTIBLE CLASSIC CAR TOUR OPTIONS (1, 2, 3, AND 4 HOUR OPTIONS DAILY)

You are no doubt itching to take a ride in one of those classic cars that parade through the streets of the city. This iconic method of transportation is synonymous with Cuba, and it sure gives your legs a rest!

We have a number of different Classic Car Tour options that take in different parts of the city.

You might like to see the contrast between Old Havana and the newer parts of Havana Centro and the faded grandeur of Miramar. You could also choose to pass by the impressive Colon Cemetery, and Revolution square or witness the hustle and bustle of Havana Vedado. Visiting El Morro Fort and El Cristo de La Habana offers 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. There is also the option to visit Havana's local beach, Playas del Este or the community art installation of Fusterlandia.

OPTION ONE

Convertible Classic Car Tour covering Malecon, Vedado, Miramar, Colon Cemetery, Revolution Square (1 hour)

OPTION TWO

Convertible Classic Car Tour covering Malecon, El Cristo Statue and El Morro Fort (1 hour)

OPTION THREE

Convertible Classic Car Havana Tour covering Vedado, Miramar, Colon Cemetery, Revolution Square, Malecon, El Cristo Statue and El Morro Fort (2 hours)

OPTION THREE

Convertible Classic Car Havana Tour covering Vedado, Miramar, Colon Cemetery, Revolution Square, Malecon, El Cristo Statue and El Morro Fort (2 hours)

OPTION FOUR

Convertible Classic Car Havana Tour covering Cojimar and Finca Vigia i.e. Hemingway's former residence (2 hours)

OPTION FIVE

Convertible Classic Car Havana Tour covering Vedado, Miramar, Colon Cemetery, Revolution Square, Malecon, El Cristo Statue, El Morro Fort and Fusterlandia (3 hours)

OPTION SIX

Convertible Classic Car Havana Tour covering Vedado, Miramar, Colon Cemetery, Revolution Square, Malecon, El Cristo Statue, El Morro Fort and Playas del Este (Havana's local beach) (4 hours)

OLD HAVANA WALKING TOUR

(APPROXIMATELY 3 HOURS DAILY)

The best way to see Havana Vieja (The Old Town) is on foot, and we'll spend the morning walking through this sumptuously beautiful district. Your guide will be with you every step of the way, perhaps encouraging you to keep moving when you inadvertently stop and stare at your surroundings every few minutes or so. Like much of the New World, Havana was once a walled fortress, although the growth of the city meant that it would soon need to sprawl beyond these original boundaries.

There's an abundance of cultural riches on offer, and you'll walk past the El Capitolio, the Museo de la Revolución, and the Gran Teatro Habana. This Old Havana Walking Tour also takes in some of the most stunning squares you will ever see – the Plaza de Armas, Plaza de la Catedral, Plaza San Francisco de Asis and Plaza Vieja. There is much to see on the walking tour, and you'll think that the beauty of Havana has been squeezed into a relatively compact area.

There's a great deal of people watching to be done too, as you get to know the people who make up this vibrant city.





MOJITO MAKING LESSON ON ROOF-TOP IN OLD HAVANA (APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR DAILY)

Here you'll get to learn a very handy skill. We'll take you to a rooftop bar in Havana's Old Town that makes a sublime mojito (or a non-alcoholic alternative). You'll be taught how to make a classic Cuban cocktail with an unbeatable view over the rooftops of the city (2 x drinks included)

HAVANA RUM MUSEUM (APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR DAILY)

If you think this museum looks palatial, you are correct since it's housed in a converted old palace. Naturally you will have the chance to learn about the rum making process and even do some tastings.



CIGAR, RUM AND COFFEE TASTING EXCURSION

On a Cigar, Rum and Coffee tasting excursion and learn how to select a good cigar, how to light it, while tasting (and educating yourself) about Cuban coffee and Cuban rum.



VISIT HEMINGWAY'S FORMER RESIDENCE, FINCA VIGIA AND COJIMAR

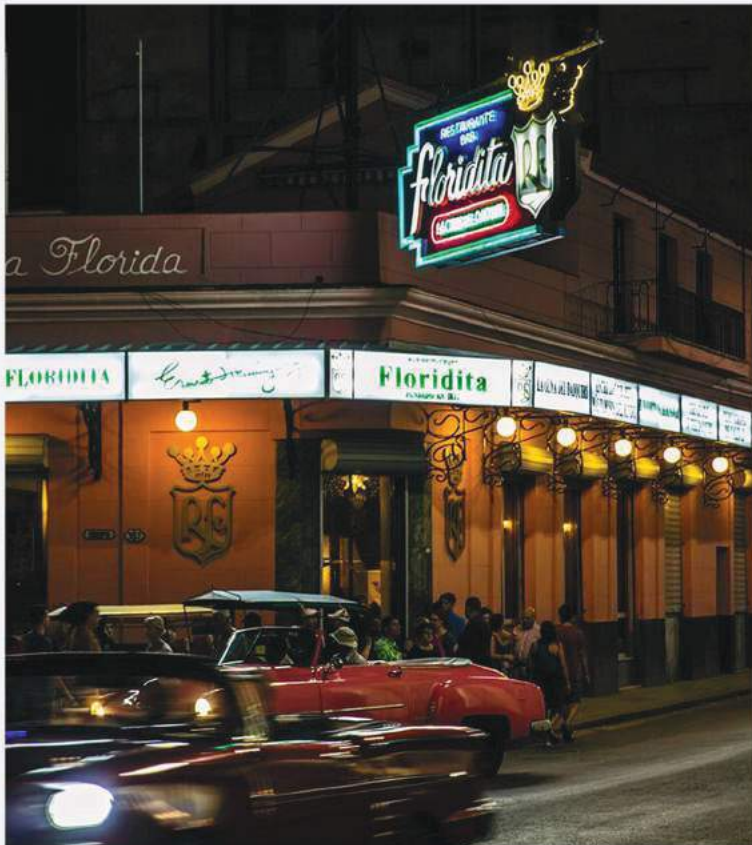
(WEEKDAYS AND SATURDAYS ONLY, APPROXIMATELY 2 HOURS)

La Finca Vigía is found in the outskirts of Havana. This sprawling estate was the Cuban home of Ernest Hemingway, where the great man lived and worked. La Finca Vigía is located in Cojimar (14 kilometres from Havana), where Hemingway was inspired to write *The Old Man and the Sea*. There's another unique statue of Hemingway here, and we'll also show you the restaurant Las Terrazas, the preferred Cojimar hangout of the author and the late Captain of his boat (Pilar); Gregorio Fuentes.



VISIT HEMINGWAY SITES IN OLD HAVANA

(AMBOS MUNDOS, FLORIDITA AND BODEGUITE DEL MEDIO, APPROXIMATELY 2-3 HOURS DAILY)



Visit Hotel Ambos Mundos where Hemingway lived for several years. At the hotel you can visit Hemingway's room, kept in the same condition as when he stayed there. Next you will visit the famous birthplace of the mojito - la Bodeguita del Medio. Hemingway frequented this place on many occasions and his picture still hangs in honour above the bar. Don't forget to sign your name on the wall and join thousands of other signatures that have been collected over the years.

Next you will visit el Floridita where history suggests that Hemingway had an influence over the invention of the Daiquiri. Sample one of these delicious cocktails and see for yourself what kept Hemingway coming back to this iconic restaurant and bar. Finally, stop at Dos Hermanos bar, one of the most beautiful bars in Havana.

VISIT FUSTERLANDIA

(APPROXIMATELY 2 HOURS DAILY)

Take a trip to the fishing village of Jaimanitas, and see how this unassuming part of the city has been utterly transformed by the artist Jose Fuster. Fuster has made his entire home, and much of the surrounding neighbourhood, into a piece of artwork using tiles in mosaic forms. 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. There could be no living space more personalised. In addition to the idiosyncratic homes, Fuster has also contributed a chess park with giant boards and tables, a theatre, and public swimming pools. Fuster's art has become a cherished part of Cuban culture and arguably joins the rank of other public artworks such as that of Gaudi in Barcelona or that of Brâncuși in the Romanian city of Targu Jiu - art that has come to almost define a particular part of a city.





SALSA LESSON (APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR DAILY)

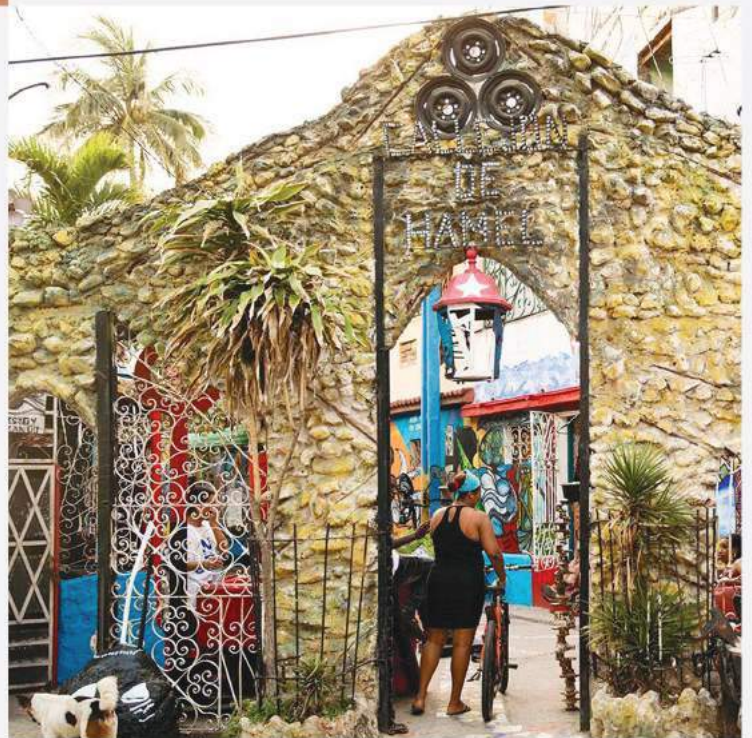
Suitable for all levels, here is your chance to learn, enjoy, and improve your skills in traditional Cuban dances like Salsa, Danzon, Son, Cha Cha Cha, Rumba, Casino Rueda, and Folklore.

Hosted by experienced dance teachers, these lessons are a lot of fun and a great precursor to some fantastic and entertaining nights out in Cuba.

VISIT CALLEJON DE HAMEL (APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR DAILY)

Welcome to the unforgettably psychedelic Callejon de Hamel. This small alleyway in the central city is where the Cuban artist fraternity congregates, and is a wonderful place to experience day-to-day Cuban life, albeit with an artistic twist. The art has quite literally spilled out of the studios and onto the street.

Meet local artists, learn about Afro-Cuban religion and move to the beat of the Rumba drums.



MUSEUM OF THE REVOLUTION (2-3 HOURS DAILY)

This grand building, deliberately impressive in scope, was the Presidential Palace prior to the Cuban Revolution. After the government was overthrown in 1959, the building was home to the Government and the Council of Ministers until 1965, when it hosted the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba. In 1974, it became a museum dedicated to the Cuban Revolution, and two years later, it witnessed the approval of the 1976 Constitution. It was awarded national monument status in 2010.

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

(2-3 HOURS, CLOSED ON MONDAYS)

This is where the *crème de la crème* of Cuban art is proudly displayed (and the museum exclusively displays Cuban art). Works are displayed in chronological order starting on the 3rd floor and are surprisingly varied. This ordering allows you to easily take in the development of Cuban art throughout the centuries. Amongst others, you will see the works of Guillermo Collazo, considered to be the first truly great Cuban artist. There is also Rafael Blanco, with his cartoon-like paintings and sketches; along with Raúl Martínez, a master of 1960s Cuban pop art; and the Picasso-like Wifredo Lam.



VISIT PLAYAS DEL ESTE, HAVANA'S LOCAL BEACH

(2+ HOURS DAILY)



While the beaches of Cuba are a major drawcard for many visitors, the beaches around Havana don't receive a lot of attention. They are sorely underrated, and this is particularly true of Playas del Este, just 18 kilometres east of the capital. There is a small resort town here (Bacuranao) so all your dining and entertainment needs will be served in a manner that is more low-key than the more popular beachside resorts. Playas del Este has mercifully been spared the development and seemingly continuous urban renewal of many of Cuba's other beachside establishments, and it makes for a truly pleasurable day at the beach, all within a stone's throw of the heart of Havana. The white sand and gentle azure waters that you might equate with beaches in the Caribbean can be found here.



EL CAPITOLIO / NATIONAL CAPITAL BUILDING TOUR (CLOSED ON MONDAYS)

The El Capitolio Nacional (National Capitol of Cuba) is one of the most emblematic buildings in Havana. This majestic construction, located in the Centro Habana, is similar to that in Washington D.C, but a meter higher, a meter wider, and a meter longer, as well as much more rich in detail. It was started to be built by Gerardo Machado in 1926 supported by North America.

To finish its construction they needed more than 5000 workers, 3 years, 3 months and 20 days; as well as approximately 17 millions of American dollars.

GRAN TEATRO DE LA HABANA TOUR (CLOSED ON MONDAYS)

First opened in 1915, the theatre is home to Cuba's National Ballet company and hosts many touring companies and festivals. The building itself is embellished with numerous statues and frescoes and the detail is incredible.



VINALES DAY TOUR (FULL DAY, DAILY)

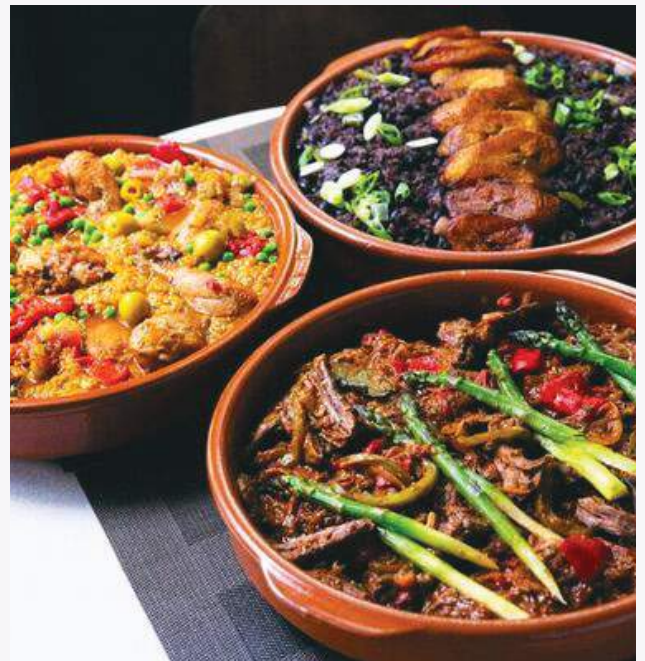
Approximately 2.5 hours from Havana, this day tour allows you to experience the dramatic beauty of the Pinar del Rio province and the rural town of Viñales. The landscape is dotted with mogotes - steep rounded hills that contrast the flat plains around them. A rich, fertile valley of the Pinar del Rio province is where you will find Viñales. This compact and authentic village is one of the most breathtaking spots in all of Cuba. 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. Included on this day tour is the Los Jazmines look-out point, Mural de la Prehistoria, guided farmland walk or cycle, lunch at an organic farm and a visit to a tobacco farm.

MARKET VISIT AND COOKING CLASS AT A CASA PARTICULAR

We will take you to a Casa Particular for an authentic Cooking Class. Here is your opportunity to interact with the locals, while preparing traditional Cuban dishes that can be enjoyed with a roof-top view of the city.

This includes:

- ✳ A visit to a local market to source ingredients
- ✳ Demonstration and involvement in preparing local dishes
- ✳ Instruction on preparation of the Cuban mojito at the bar, followed by making your own version of this, one of Cuba's 3 signature cocktails.



FARM TO TABLE COOKING EXPERIENCE AT AJIACO (5 HOURS FROM 9:30AM DAILY)

You will travel to Cojimar for an authentic Farm to Table Experience

El Ajiaco Cafe is a Cuban specialty restaurant in the fishing village of Cojimar just east of Havan, offers instruction in Cuban cuisine. This includes:

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- ✳ Visit to a local herb grower (and their supplier, just 3 blocks from the restaurant) where you can learn about their production process and hand-select herbs to use in food preparation.
 - ✳ An introduction to Cuban cuisine and its origins, presentation delivered in the El Ajiaco patio (with a restaurant employee providing English translation if required).
 - ✳ Demonstration of how to prepare local dishes including ropa vieja (shredded beef), plus lobster & shrimp enchilado (in tomato sauce).
 - ✳ Instruction on preparation of the Cuban mojito at the bar, followed by making your own version of this, one of Cuba's 3 signature cocktails.
 - ✳ Your lunch includes bread service (accompanied by several of their own sauces), ajiaco (a typical Cuban root vegetable-based soup/stew), rice, salad, beans, yucca, sample the beef/lobster/shrimp dishes that you learned how to prepare in the kitchen, accompanied by a national brand beverage, your choice of several typical Cuban desserts, traditional coffee, and aged rum to finish of the meal.

LAS TERRAZAS/ SOROA DAY TOUR

(FULL DAY, DAILY)

Approximately 1.5 hours from Havana, this is your chance to explore the mountain community of Las Terrazas. This region was once lush, then had its natural resources exploited, before returning to its former pristine state as the result of a project spearheaded by Fidel Castro himself in the 1960s. It's now a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. You will have time today for a walk around the town to meet the friendly locals and for an optional swim in the pretty San Juan mountain stream. In Las Terrazas there are also art, woodwork and pottery studios that are open to the public. The entire town has become known as a type of artist's retreat. As part of the tour you will also explore the nearby community of Soroa, visiting the waterfall there and impressive Orchid garden. On the way back to Havana you will visit the public art installation lovingly known as Fusterlandia

Optional: For those feeling adventurous, the Canopy Tour (zip-line) in Las Terrazas is a unique adventure. The Canopy Tour is a nearly 2km aerial tour using steel cables to whiz above Las Terrazas' fascinating scenery. Here, you will find highly trained personnel and professional equipment. This activity is weather dependent and can be paid for locally.



VARADERO/ MATANZAS DAY TOUR

(FULL DAY, DAILY)



Varadero is Cuba's premier resort location. Located on the sinuous 20km long Hicacos peninsula, the uninterrupted stretch of blonde sand is undoubtedly of the best beaches in the Caribbean.

On the way we stop for a city tour of Matanzas. With an amazing musical and literary heritage, Matanzas was once regularly touted as the 'Athens of Cuba'.

Also called the 'City of Many Bridges', Matanzas has three rivers (Rio Yumari, Rio San Juan and Rio Canimar) that cross over the city. Matanzas was founded in 1693 and became an important centre for sugar production. During the colonial era there was a huge import of African slaves, working on the sugar plantations. Now days, because of its large Afro-Cuban population the city is still a centre of Cuban African traditions and religion.

After a guided city walk around Matanzas you will travel to Varadero.

Spectacular pristine beach bordered by lush tropical vegetation is what you can expect when visiting Varadero. On arrival you will be greeted by kilometres of immaculate beaches with wide stretches of fine white, sparkling turquoise waters, copious vegetation playing host to endemic wildlife.

Varadero offers the perfect chance to relax and unwind, while taking advantage of one of the Caribbean's best beaches.



ALMACENES DE SAN JOSÉ ARTS AND CRAFTS MARKET (APPROXIMATELY 1-2 HOURS DAILY)

Havana's largest arts and crafts market is the Almacenes de San José at the Port of Havana. Built in 1885, this mammoth and ornate warehouse now serves as a cultural centre with art exhibitions, theatrical performances and recreational activities. Its most significant contribution is undoubtedly the handicrafts on sale. Unlike other Latin American countries, Cuba does not have a strong tradition in producing handicrafts. It is therefore really surprising to see how Cuban artistic handicraft has developed over the past three decades.



COLON CEMETERY TOUR (APPROXIMATELY 1-2 HOURS DAILY)

You will see the name Colon a lot in Cuba, and it doesn't refer to the section of your digestive system. This is in fact the Spanish spelling of Columbus, as in Christopher Columbus, who "discovered" Cuba on behalf of the Spanish. There are an abundance of landmarks named after him throughout the country, and Havana's Colon Cemetery is perhaps the most prestigious.

It might not be representative of the cemeteries you're familiar with, and there's an emphasis on the ornate. Some of these mausoleums (and there are more than 500 of them) are more akin to sculpted works of art. These mausoleums are an indication of prestige and



PARTAGAS CIGAR FACTORY

(WEEKDAYS ONLY, CLOSED OVER CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR PERIOD. APPROXIMATELY 2 HOURS)

Here is where the mystique behind cigar making will be revealed, allowing you to gain a sense of the significance of these beauties. You will also witness first hand the amount of effort, care and tradition that goes into making these Cuban treasures (even non-smokers will find this tour very interesting).



VISIT MERCADO AGROPECUARIO/ AGRO/ FARMERS MARKET (APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES DAILY)

What better sight than stands filled with tubers, vegetables and fruits? Potatoes, yucca, taro, sweet potatoes and plantains compete with tomatoes, lettuce, cabbage, carrots, watercress, Swiss chard, onions, peppers, cucumbers, green beans, beets and eggplants. And the fruits—guavas, pineapples, papayas, grapefruits, bananas, oranges, mangoes, watermelon and lemons—reign supreme. Meats are also sold at these markets, mostly fresh pork, mutton and ham.

VISIT AN URBAN FARM/ ORGANIC GARDEN (APPROXIMATELY 2 HOURS DAILY)

Visit an organic garden where local restaurants and the community source their fresh ingredients. Observe, first-hand, from local farmers how they go about growing and harvesting their huge selection of fresh vegetables, fruits and herbs! Learn about how recycled materials are used to create planting areas. Everything is grown with great care and even the compost is organic!



RAFAEL TREJO BOXING GYM (APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES, WEEKDAYS ONLY, CAN BE CLOSED WITHOUT WARNING)

Boxing is one of Cuba's national sporting pleasures and this will become evident when we take you to see the Rafael Trejo boxing gym. World-class athletes might spar in the main ring while children refine their own moves alongside them under the watchful eyes of trainers. You can even train here while you're in town.

IN THE EVENING

A large, dark silhouette of a person playing a saxophone dominates the foreground. The person's head is tilted back, and the saxophone is held high, its long neck curving upwards. The background is a soft, hazy sky with warm orange and yellow tones near the horizon, transitioning to a pale blue at the top. The overall mood is artistic and evocative of a jazz performance at dusk.

THE VIXEN AND CROW JAZZ CLUB (DAILY)

Take this opportunity to visit Havana's most famous jazz club (the memorably named The Vixen and the Crow), right on La Rampa. Entry is via a red English phone box, where the stairs then lead you down to a lively basement where freestyle jazz is played nightly.

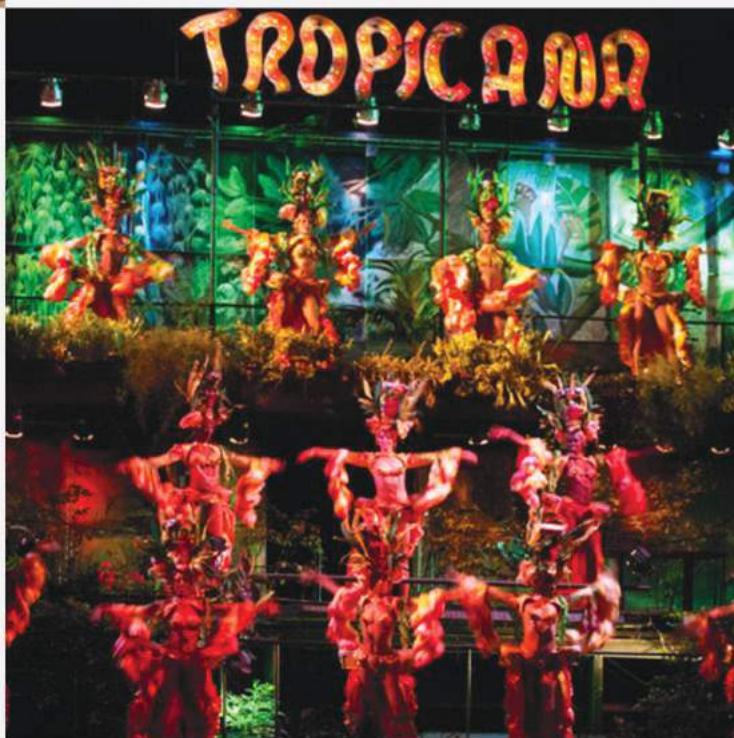


LA TABERNA FOR BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB MUSIC (FROM 09:00PM)

In the evening you can choose to visit La Taberna in the heart of Havana's Old Town. La Taberna offers the best traditional Cuban music as popularized by the Buena Vista Social Club.

TROPICANA CABARET (FROM 09:30PM UNTIL LATE)

The Tropicana Cabaret, Cuba's oldest and most prestigious cabaret, is set over lush tropical gardens in the Marianao neighborhood. Since 1939 this world-renowned singing and dancing spectacular has remained a 'must see' event for many a traveller to Cuba. Set under the open sky, Tropicana is a fantastic place to enjoy Cuban music and folklore, showcasing the colour, rhythm and passion of this vibrant Caribbean community.



CASA DE LA MUSICA (FROM 5PM ONWARDS)

There are many places in Cuba called the "House of Music," all with their own idiosyncratic charms. The Miramar House of Music is one of the most lively, with an atmosphere that manages to be both vibrant and refined at the same time. This is the place to go in the capital when you are chasing that quintessentially Cuban salsa sound. As a bonus, the club is situated inside a renovated old Havana mansion that speaks of the glory of the past (with an eye firmly on the present).



FABRICA CUBANO (THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY ONLY FROM 08:00PM)

Fabrica de Arte Cubano (FAC) is a true gem, and one that has luckily not become a victim of its own popularity, although it's still exceedingly popular with visitors and locals alike, all coming to sample the venue's unique mixture of art and music.

It's a performance venue, an art gallery, a nightclub, with many hidden nooks and crannies where you can simply sit with a cold drink and watch the hip side of Havana come out to play. It's a sure fire bet for an all-inclusive night out, since there's so much to see and do. You really could spend your entire evening here and still not see all

HAVANA JAZZ CAFE (1+ HOURS FROM 10PM ONWARDS)

The entertainment on offer at most shopping malls throughout the world is generally limited to multiplex cinemas and noisy amusement arcades, but this is not the case in Havana. The Jazz Cafe is in a fairly nondescript shopping mall that overlooks the Malecón, and is truly remarkable find. It's an upmarket supper club where you can be wined and dined, all while listening to some world class jazz. As the night progresses, the entertainment on offer becomes more varied, with jazz giving way to timba, and sometimes simply scintillating salsa (this is Cuba, after all).



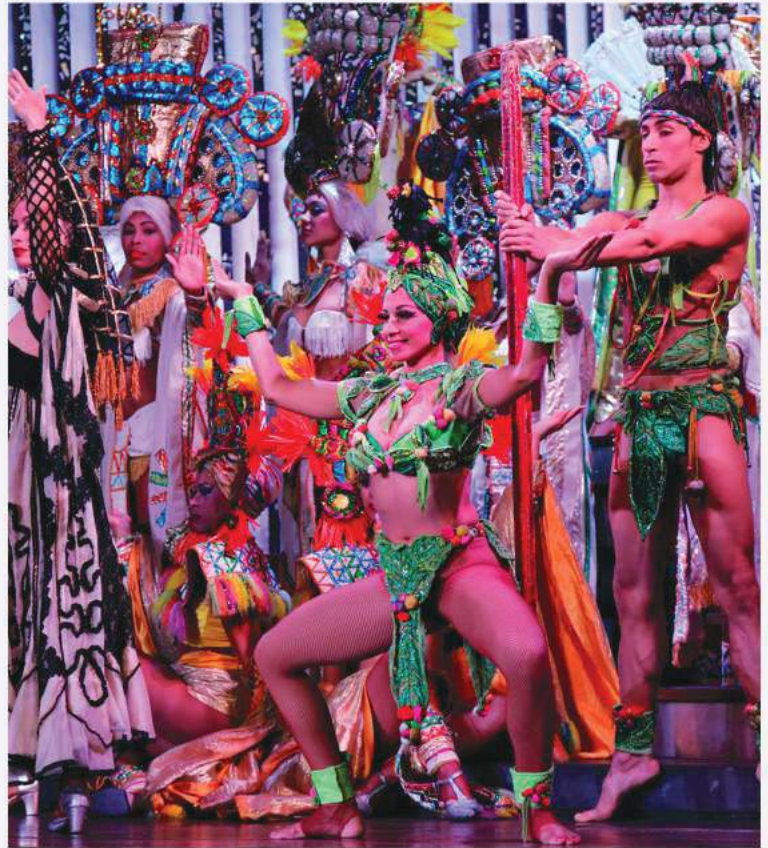
CAFÉ TEATRO BERTOLT BRECHT IN MIRAMAR

The German playwright Bertolt Brecht was never a truly outspoken Marxist, but his work continues to have an impact - to the point that this delightful little theatre in the Cuban capital was named in his memory. The name is perhaps misleading, since Brecht's work is not performed, and the venue is indeed one of the hip and most energetic in the city. This is where the contemporary music stars of Cuba come to perform, and their audience come to cram into a small space to bounce around and scream appreciatively. It's almost ludicrously inexpensive (with entry only being around 2 CUC). Get here nice and early if you want to take a seat at one of the few tables. It's not important if you're not able to bag a seat, since everyone will be on their feet as soon as the music starts.

PARISIEN CABARET AT HOTEL NACIONAL (FROM 09:30PM UNTIL LATE)

While in Havana you will need to see the Hotel Nacional de Cuba, which has become a tourist attraction in its own right. It's hard to miss it as it juts proudly out from a small hill overlooking the Malecón oceanfront esplanade. This elegant building recalls the glamour of yesteryear, and was the spot for the rich and famous of America to relax before the relationship between Cuba and the US soured (a situation that is now slowly being remedied). Stars from the golden age of Hollywood rubbed shoulders with organised crime figures and the privileged elite of Cuba. Even if you're not staying in the hotel, you should make the time to spend an evening here to take in the extravagant delights of the Parisien, one of the best-known cabaret shows in the country.

The performance is known as "Cubano, Cubano" and is an intoxicating combination of Latino, African, and Indo American cultures, all amplified to create an electrifying stage show that demonstrates the rich cultural heritage of modern Cuba, albeit in an enjoyably stylised way. Havana also offers the better-known Cabaret Tropicana, although Cabaret Parisien is more affordable, and takes place in the loveliest and most fascinating of venues.



VISIT HEMINGWAY SITES IN OLD HAVANA (AMBOS MUNDOS, FLORIDITA AND BODEGUITE DEL MEDIO, APPROXIMATELY 2-3 HOURS DAILY)



Havana is certainly now a city where you can party until the sun comes up if the need should grab you, although this was not always the case. Havana's ravishing Old Town was once the entirety of the city, surrounded by imposing, reinforced walls - the gates of which were closed at 9pm. Talk about a curfew!

San Carlos de la Cabaña is emblematic of Havana's turbulent and sometimes violent past. This austere fortress was constructed at the entrance of Havana's harbour in order to defend the fledgling settlement from pirate attacks, and a cannon was fired here each day at 4:30am and 9pm to signal the opening and closing of the city gates. They have fortunately dispensed with the morning cannon shot, but the 9pm cannon lives on, accompanied by a procession of uniformed guards.

The fortress is a magnificent, sprawling complex that was once under the command of Che Guevara and is well worth a visit for the 9pm firing of the cannon (although now you don't have to scuttle back to the walls of the city). Even if you're not directly at the site, you might still hear the boom of the gun. Please don't worry - the pirates are not back.



LEGENDARIOS DEL GUAJIRITO AT EL GUAJIRITO

You will often find original members of the Buena Vista Social Club and the Afro-Cuban All-Stars playing as the Legendarios del Guajirito at El Guajirito .

Once the lights dim for the show, you will be absolutely blown away. The singers and musicians are almost all in their 70's and 80's and are some of the most revered musicians in Cuba. A great option if you are looking to experience the lost Nirvana of the 1950s

KING BAR (FROM 5:00PM TO LATE)

There's no shortage of suitable spots in the city to dance the night away, but King Bar is... well... the King of them. It's located in a appropriately hip spot in Havana; Vedado, where locals generally prefer to unwind. The entrance might look unassuming, squashed between two large buildings, but once you're inside, your evening will get underway in the most fabulous way. There are a number of sensational cocktails on offer to lubricate your night (we suggest their famous Kingbed Beta) and the club is refreshingly spacious, so there will be plenty of room to dance.



BASILICA MENOR DE SAN FRANCISCO

(SATURDAY AND SUNDAY ONLY)

This imposing and beautiful basilica with fine acoustics hosts some of the most important classical music concerts in Havana. Set in the square of the same name, the church is the home of the Grammy-nominated Camerata Romeu, an all-female chamber ensemble, and many other excellent soloists, groups and choirs ask to be booked here. It is also the place where you might hear some of Cuba's best pianists such as Frank Fernandez playing Bach.



SALSA CLUB 1830 (FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY)

It would be faintly silly to not enjoy at least some of Havana's nightlife under the stars, and Club 1830 will not disappoint. Under the night sky, and with a refreshing breeze coming in from the ocean to cool you off after your inevitable dance sessions, the salsa club is located in a restored grand old Havana mansion with a beguiling outdoor garden facing the ocean. The club is generally packed with both locals and visitors - with the visitors trying to imitate the often-bemused locals in their seemingly professional dance moves. Don't be concerned if you have two left feet, since the locals are generally willing to show you a few basic dance moves.

GRAN TEATRO (FRIDAY 8:30PM, SATURDAY 8:30PM, SUNDAY 5:00PM)

This ravishingly sumptuous great theatre of Havana showcases a jaw-droppingly amazing selection of Cuban music and dance on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. While the selection is varied, the speciality of the house is in fact ballet, as it's the headquarters of the Cuban National Ballet. Check the program while you're in town and you'll be sure to find something that is going to whet your appetite. Spontaneity can be the keyword when visiting the Gran Teatro. Tickets are not particularly easy to purchase in advance and your best bet for securing a seat is to visit the theatre in the morning to get a ticket for the performance later that evening.



OLD HAVANA'S AMPHITHEATRE (SATURDAY AND SUNDAY)

If you're not concerned about your entertainment being lost in translation (or more accurately, lost due to no translation), then you simply must take in a show at the Old Havana Amphitheatre. The venue generally hosts mainstream musicals that began life on Broadway or London's West End, and the shows are performed in Spanish. Still, there might be a musical that you're already familiar with, and so you get to hear all of your favourite songs performed in Spanish... in Cuba, no less. Performances take place on Saturdays and Sundays at 9pm, and again, try to visit the theatre in the morning to purchase tickets for later that evening.

DAY TOUR TO THE ZAPATA PENINSULA AND THE BAY OF PIGS

You will take a day trip to the beautiful Zapata Peninsula to visit Playa Girón, Playa Larga and the Bay of Pigs, long associated with the USA's first military failure in Latin America. The natural beauty of this area is stunning with cave systems, coral formations and an abundance of sea life making it a must for snorkelers, divers and ocean lovers alike.

While passing along the Zapata Peninsula you will have the opportunity to visit Boca de Guama, the main tourist centre of the Peninsula de Zapata. The main attraction at Boca de Guama is the Criadero de Cocodrilos, a crocodile farm.

You can also take a boat out to an ancient Guama Indian Village.

The sandy arc of Playa Girón and Playa Larga nestles 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. In April 1961 it was the scene of another botched raid, the ill-fated, CIA-sponsored invasion that tried to land on these remote sandy beaches in one of modern history's classic David-and-Goliath struggles. Lest we forget, there are still plenty of propaganda-spouting billboards dotted around rehashing past glories.

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 diving and snorkelling.



DAY TOUR TO SATURNO AND VARADERO

To begin with you will visit the Cueva de Saturno. This natural wonder is located about 20 km (12 mi) west of Varadero. This big opening in the ground (cenote) is filled with fresh crystal-clear water. You can swim or snorkel to see the beautiful stalactites and stalagmites formations, fish, and blind shrimps.

Spectacular pristine beach bordered by lush tropical vegetation is what you can expect when visiting Varadero. On arrival you will be greeted by kilometres of immaculate beaches with wide stretches of fine white, sparkling turquoise waters, copious vegetation playing host to endemic wildlife.

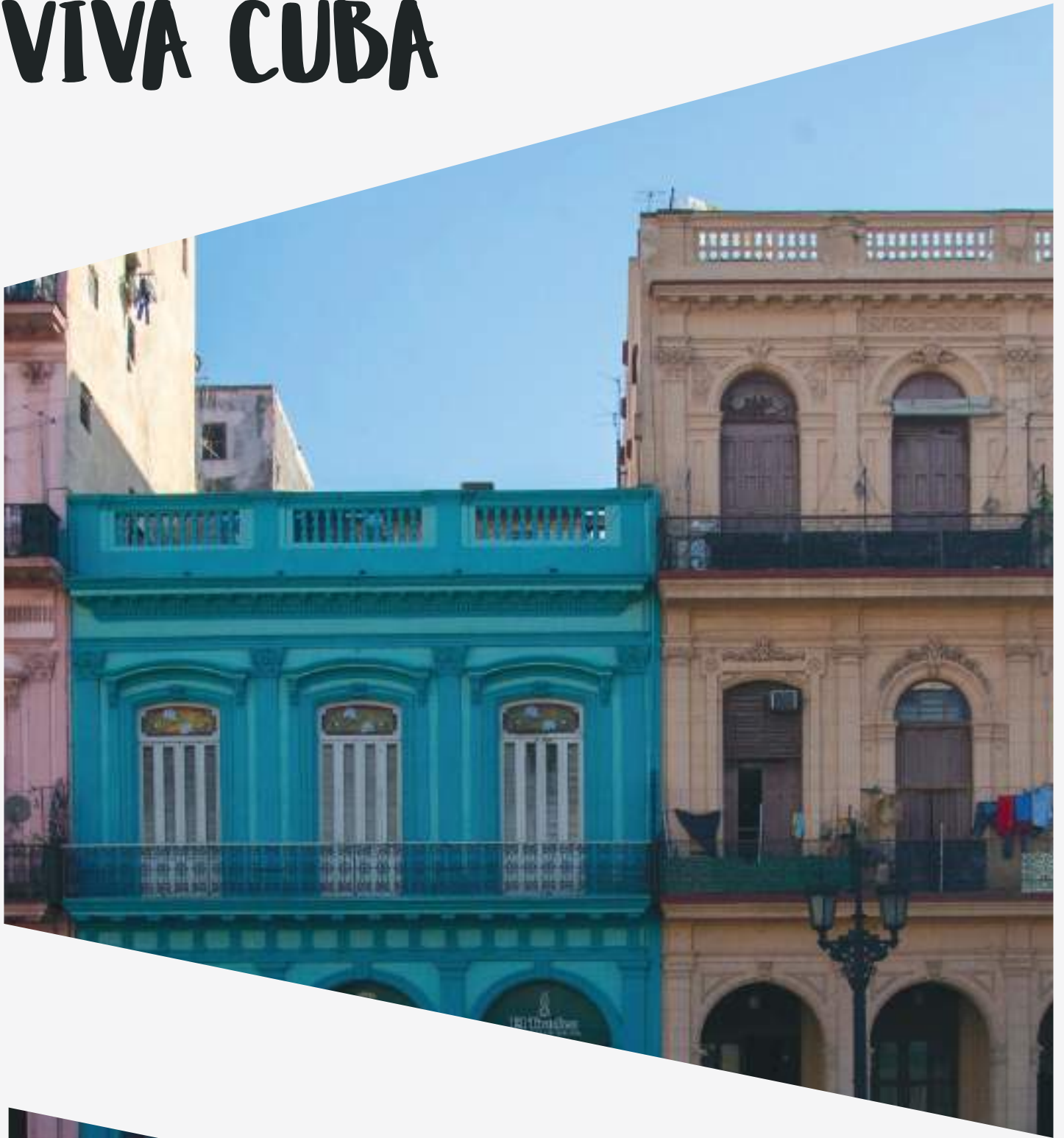
Varadero offers the perfect chance to relax and unwind, while taking advantage of one of the Caribbean's best beaches.

During your time in Varadero you will have lunch at a local Paladar and visit the local Varadero township. You will then have some quality time to explore Varadero beach (one of the Caribbean's best) and meet the locals.

In 2019, Varadero was named the second best beach in the world in the Trip Advisor Travellers Choice Awards.



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