

Trek of the Revolution +

Day 1 • Thursday • Arrive Cuba / Fidel's birthplace / Welcome dinner

- Fly into Holguin International Airport (HOG). American Airlines has daily flights from Miami. You should plan to arrive by midday.
- On arrival proceed to Immigration. You will need to show the completed Immigration, Customs and Healthcare form which will have been sent to you. Your carry-on will once again be scanned.
- Collect your bags and go through Customs.
- You will be welcomed at the airport arrival lobby after you exit Cuban Customs. Look for the person holding a 'Cuba Explorer' sign. While bags are being loaded on your motor coach, you may want to get a snack at the airport. We will not be stopping for lunch.
- Depart Holguin Airport to Biran.
- On the motor coach you will have an overview of the itinerary and a discussion on the Cuba Revolution history of the area.
- Visit the Castro family home and Fidel's childhood outside of the small village of Biran on what was once their 25,000-acre plantation. It is the birthplace of Ramon Castro, 1924, Fidel Castro, 1926, and Raul Castro 1931.
- Depart Biran to Santiago de Cuba.
- Check into Hostal Heredia, Santiago de Cuba. (Included)
- Dinner at the selected private restaurant, El Palenquito, in Santiago de Cuba. (Included)
- View Balcón del Ayuntamiento (Town Hall Balcony) in Cespedes Park. Fidel Castro gave his famous Revolution victory speech from the balcony on January 1, 1959, after dictator Fulgencia Batista fled Havana at 3:00 am earlier that morning. Please see the Cliff Notes of History for this day in the extended itinerary: [Revolution Tour 2024 Itinerary with History Notes](#)

Day 2 • Friday • Final resting place of Marti and Castro / San Juan Hill / Moncada barracks

- Breakfast. (Included)
 - Visit Santa Ifigenia Cemetery and see the changing of the guard. The signature resting places are that of José Martí (1853 – 1895), whose mausoleum is guarded by three Cuban soldiers, and the ashes of Fidel Castro (1926 – 2016).
 - Visit Moncada Barracks, known as the cradle of the Revolution, where on July 26, 1953, 26-year-old Fidel Castro led an armed attack of 140 revolutionaries at 5:15 am. It was a total failure with 60 men shot or tortured to death. The rest, including Fidel Castro and his brother Raul, fled. Castro was later captured and kept alive, as opposed to being executed on the spot as was orders from higher up. The attack became widely accepted as the beginning of the Cuban Revolution and the date, 26 July, was adopted as the name for the revolutionary movement. (Included)
 - Lunch at El Morro restaurant, cliffside on the sea and adjacent to San Pedro fort, where the likes of Paul McCartney have dined. The view of Santiago's coastline is backed by the Sierra Maestra mountains where Comandancia La Plata, the remote guerrilla headquarters hide-out during the Cuban Revolutionary War, was located. Entrenched in the dense rainforest of the Sierra Maestra in 1958 the encampment was never found by the army. (Included)
 - Visit San Juan Hill. (Included) The Battle of San Juan Hill, 1898, was a decisive battle of the Spanish-American War. The San Juan Heights was a north-south running elevation about 2,200 yards east of Santiago de Cuba, Cuba. The names San Juan Hill and Kettle Hill were given to the location by the Americans. The fight for the heights was the bloodiest and most famous battle of the war in Cuba. It was also the location of the greatest victory for the Rough Riders, as claimed by the press and its new commander, Theodore Roosevelt. Teddy would become first vice-president and then president, and who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor in 2001 for his actions in Cuba.
 - Dinner at the selected private Aurora Restaurant, Santiago de Cuba. (Included)
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- Evening Optional: Visit the relaxed atmosphere of Casa de La Trova, a music salon dedicated to Cuban folk music. Enjoy Son Cubano bands, a genre of music that originated in the highlands of eastern Cuba during the late 1800's which has Spanish and African origin. The troubadour music scene has been prominent in Cuba for decades and many members of the Buena Vista Social Club formed part of the movement. Please see the Cliff Notes of History for this day in the extended itinerary: [Revolution Tour 2024 Itinerary with History Notes](#)

Day 3 • Saturday • Virgin of Charity / Hemingway's Nobel Prize / Travel west / CDR

- Breakfast. (Included)
 - Early departure from Santiago de Cuba following the path of the Cuban Revolutionaries on their move to Camaguey and eventually Havana, via Bayamo and Las Tunas. Travel one hour northwest of Santiago to El Cobre.
 - Visit Basilica de Nuestra del Cobre (Basilica of Our Lady of Copper), a Roman Catholic minor basilica dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is Cuba's most sacred pilgrimage site. There has been a cathedral on this site since the city's inception in the 1520s, though there have been three previous incarnations due to a series of pirate raids, earthquakes, and dodgy architects. The present cathedral, characterized by its two neoclassical towers, was completed in 1922; the remains of first colonial governor, Diego Velázquez, are buried underneath. An opportunity may present itself to be blessed by the priest, meet with parishioners and if so inclined, confession would be available.
 - Travel to Bayamo, a city predating both Havana and Santiago, where nearly half the population use horses for daily travel. On July 26, 1953, 24 revolutionaries attacked the Carlos Manuel de Céspedes military barracks in Bayamo, as a diversion to keep reinforcements from going to the simultaneous attack taking place on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago. Both rebel attacks were far outnumbered by government soldiers and defeated decisively.
 - Lunch at a selected private restaurant in Bayamo, Meson La Cuchipapain. (Included)
 - Travel Bayamo to Las Tunas.
 - Stop in Las Tunas, a sleepy agriculture town and provincial capital, to stretch and refresh.
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- On the motorcoach you will have a discussion with your guide about the Committee for the Defense of the Revolution, a network of neighborhood committees across Cuba. The organization, described as the "eyes and ears of the Revolution," exist to promote social welfare and report on counter-revolutionary activity. CDRs provide community services, such as assisting in literacy and vaccination campaigns, but have been criticized for human rights violations.
- Arrive Camaguey, Cuba's third largest city. The colonial center is a World Heritage site.
- Check into Apodaca 12 Hotel Boutique Cuba, Camaguey. (Included)
- Dinner at a selected private Italian restaurant in Camaguey, La Isabela. (Included) Please see the Cliff Notes of History for this day in the extended itinerary: [Revolution Tour 2024 Itinerary with History Notes](#)

Day 4 • Sunday • Farmer's market / Path of the Revolutionaries to Santa Clara

- Breakfast. (Included)
- Visit the Farmers Market in Camaguey
- Travel Camaguey to Ciego de Avil
- Lunch at a selected private restaurant in Ciego de Avil, Cafe 1874. (Included)
- Travel Ciego de Avila to Santa Clara. Che Guevera's liberation of Santa Clara in 1958 marked the end of the Batista regime in Cuba.
- Check-in Hostal D' Cordero, inside the Old City, was built in 1930. Replete with antiques and art, it is a brief walk to Leoncio Vidal Park where one can get wifi, surrounded by colonial buildings and the Hotel E Central Villa Clara. (Included)
- Dinner options, multiple, within walking distance of your casa and around the Old Square. (Not included)
- Evening free to explore. Please see the Cliff Notes of History for this day in the extended itinerary: [Revolution Tour 2024 Itinerary with History Notes](#)

Day 5 • Monday • Armored Train Monument / Statue of Che / Che Mausoleum

- Breakfast. (Included)
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- Visit the Armored Train Monument, a memento of one of the most relevant events near the end of the Cuban insurrection against the Batista dictatorship and see the American Made Caterpillar bulldozer used to rip-up the railroad tracks in Santa Clara. (Included) 18 men under the command of Che Guevara, equipped with rifles and grenades, captured a 22-car armored train containing 350 heavily armed Batista troops. Amazingly, this battle, which took place on December 29, 1958, only lasted 90 minutes.
- Visit Statue of Che holding a child. (Included) A life-size model of Che with hidden symbols all over. Sculptors took their time to create intricate details. You will find small models in his belt buckle of 38 men representing those who were killed with him in Bolivia, a girl looking out through the window on his left rib, a small boy riding a goat on his right shoulder and a man riding a horse on his shirt pocket. All are symbolic references acknowledging different parts in Che's life.
- Lunch at Finca de TA, outside of the city in a rural residential area that is farm to table. It is family operated and on the veranda of their home. (Included)
- Visit the monument, mausoleum, and museum of revolutionary Ernesto Che Guevara. Guevara's liberation of Santa Clara in 1958 marked the end of the Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista regime. There is a 22-foot bronze statue of Che.
- Dinner at Cafe-Museo Revolucion, a café/pub full of photos and memorabilia from the Revolution. Good food, great mojitos, fresh juice, and friendly knowledgeable staff. (Included) Please see the Cliff Notes of History for this day in the extended itinerary: [Revolution Tour 2024 Itinerary with History Notes](#)

Day 6 • Tuesday • Cienfuegos / Playa Girón – The Bay of Pigs / Playa Larga

- Breakfast. (Included)
 - Santa Clara to Cienfuegos
 - Motor coach tour of Cienfuegos. During the Cuban Revolution, Cienfuegos saw an uprising in 1957 against Fulgencio Batista and was bombed in retaliation.
 - Lunch at the family restaurant Villa Lagarto set on the water's edge overlooking the bay of Cienfuegos. Enjoy sea breezes and a great view. (Included)
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- Departure Cienfuegos to Playa Giron on the Bay of Pigs (Bahia de Cochinos). Along the road leading to Bay of Pigs you will see commemorative monuments to the Cuban soldiers who died during the 1961 invasion. Playa Giron is the site on the Bay of Pigs where the failed military landing operation by Cuban exiles, covertly financed and directed by the United States, took place.
- Visit Museum 'Playa Giron', devoted to the Cuban victory against the invasion, orchestrated by the United States Government, 1961. In all 200 attackers were killed, 1197 captured and 11 planes were shot down. Today, the entire Bay of Pigs is off limits to cruising boats, as a legacy to the conflict. (Included)
- Travel Playa Giron to Playa Larga, also on the Bay of Pigs (Bahia de Cochinos).
- Check into Playa Larga lodging. (Included)
- Dinner at Enrique's, one block from the Bay and on the upper terrace, you will enjoy fresh fish the owner personally caught. (Included) Please see the Cliff Notes of History for this day in the extended itinerary: [Revolution Tour 2024 Itinerary with History Notes](#)

Day 7 • Wednesday • Morning on the Bay of Pigs / Australia / Havana Hotel Libri / Stay in Old Havana

- Breakfast. (Included)
 - Morning to explore the Bay of Pigs.
 - Lunch of fresh seafood or vegetarian at Chuchi el Pescador, a small paladar personally recommended. The ceviche is fantastic. (Included)
 - Travel Playa Larga to Australia.
 - Stop in the small town of Australia, north of Playa Giron, population 8,850. It was the first sugar town in Cuba to stop using slave labor. In 1961, Fidel Castro personally staged operations in the village in response to the Bay of Pigs invasion. You will visit the small Revolutionary Armed Forces Command Museum, housed in the office of the former sugar factory, which tells the story of the deeds by the Cubans during the invasion.
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- Travel Australia to Havana. Quote from Lonely Planet: “No one could have invented Havana. It’s too audacious, too contradictory and – despite 60 years of withering neglect – too damned beautiful. How it does it is anyone’s guess. Maybe it’s the swashbuckling history still almost perceptible in atmospheric colonial streets; the survivalist spirit of a populace scarred by two independence wars, a revolution, and a US trade embargo; or the indefatigable salsa energy that ricochets off walls and emanates most emphatically from the people. Don’t come here with a long list of questions. Just arrive with an open mind and prepare for a long, slow seduction.”
- You will make a revolutionary visit of the Hotel Libre (the former Habana Hilton).
- Check into Hotel Palacio De Los Corredores, located on Plaza de San Francisco in historic Old Havana, a prime location to explore and discover. (Included)
- Dinner at Mojito Mojito, a private restaurant with great food that is just off Plaza Vieja in Old Havana. You will enjoy a wonderful meal, live music, and friendly staff.
(Included) Please see the Cliff Notes of History for this day in the extended itinerary:
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Day 8 • Thursday • Walking Old Havana / Capitol / Museum of The Revolution / Vintage cars / Galleria Raul Corrales / Tropicana optional

- Breakfast. (Included)
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Walking tour of Old Havana. Hola, La Habana Vieja [Hello, Old Havana], “In terms of beauty, only Venice and Paris surpassed Havana,” penned Ernest Hemingway. He was alluding to Havana’s incredible architecture, art, and, of course, the joie de vivre by the city’s engaging people. Old Havana’s four colonial plazas are full of color and personality, with a mix of palatial buildings, monuments, museums, galleries, churches, lively entertainment, restaurants, and bars. Together, the four plazas of Old Havana contain the most extensive collection of Spanish colonial-era architecture in Latin America. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, restoration and care of Old Havana’s wonders lies with the Office of the Historian of Havana.

Plaza de San Francisco [San Francisco Square] is one of the oldest plazas in the historical

quarter. It was christened after the magnificent Iglesia y Monasterio de San Francisco de Asís, Basilica of Saint Francis of Assisi, with its construction beginning in 1548. The basilica is a striking example of Cuban baroque architecture.

Cathedral Square is the most beautiful 18th-century colonial plaza in Latin America. Its centerpiece is the baroque masterpiece Catedral de San Cristóbal de La Habana erected in 1748 by the Jesuit order and showcases towers of unequal height. Christopher Columbus' remains laid in the cathedral between 1796 and 1898 before they were taken to Seville Cathedral, Spain. The Cathedral of Havana celebrates mass on Sundays at 10:30 am and Thursdays at 6:00 pm.

Plaza de Armas [Square of Arms] was a military parade ground for Spanish soldiers and is surrounded by such impressive buildings as Palacio de los Capitanes Generales, the former seat of the colonial government. Dating from 1776 it now houses the Museum of the City.

Plaza Vieja [Old Square] was the only civic square of colonial times. In contrast to the churches and government buildings of the other plazas, only opulent aristocratic 17th-century mansions surround the 'Old Square.' Today, with its small cafes, it is a buzz for nightlife.

As you stroll the historic cobblestone streets of Old Havana you will experience the sensations Ernest Hemingway felt amongst centuries old architecture.

- Visit the Capitol for the Republic of Cuba, El Capitolio. Construction began in 1926 and was completed in 1929. The building was the seat of government until after the Cuban Revolution in 1959. When the Cuban Congress was abolished the Ministry of Science Technology and the Environment eventually moved in. Though there is a striking resemblance to the U.S. Capitol it is not a replica. (Included)
 - Visit the Museum of the Revolution housed in the former Presidential Palace. The exhibits are largely devoted to the period of the revolutionary war of the 1950s and to the country's post-1959 history. Portions of the museum are also devoted to the 1895-1898 War of Independence waged against Spain, and an exhibit honoring Abraham Lincoln. On the grounds is a glass enclosure which houses Granma, the boat which transported 82 revolutionaries, including Fidel Castro, Raul Castro, Camilio Cienfuegos, and Che Guevara from Mexico to Cuba in 1956 to renew their overthrow of the regime. The Museum is a look at history through the eyes of Cuban Revolutionaries. (Included)
 - Lunch at Ivan Chefs Justo, a private restaurant with wonderful décor and ambiance. Chef Ivan studied in Montreal and was once Fidel Castro's chef. The restaurant has a series of levels, and an eclectic collection of trinkets, photos, and Knick knacks like from your grandmother's house. Highly recommended on TripAdvisor. The restaurant has hosted the likes of Mick Jagger, Chef Guy Fieri, and now you! (Included)
 - Caravan in a 1950's Vintage American car, a nostalgic experience. You will cruise the Malecon (a broad esplanade, roadway, and seawall), and see a number of historic sites: La Cabana Fort was used as a prison and for firing squad executions when the Revolutionaries took control, Monument to the Victims of the USS Maine, the University of Havana where Fidel Castro went to Law School, the Russian Embassy, and the Plaza de la Revolucion. (Included)
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- Visit the Galería Raúl Corrales. This boutique gallery displays the photography works of Raul Corrales, Fidel Castro's official photographer from 1959 to 1961. He was one of the best of a small group that became known as Cuba's "epic revolutionary photographers". His photos of Castro, Ché Guevara, the guerrillas, and peasants before, during and after the Cuban revolution established him. Among his early subjects was Ernest Hemingway, who lived in Cuba for almost twenty years. Your visit will be hosted by Raul Corrales' granddaughter, Claudia Corrales. She is an accomplished photographer in her own right and serves as a resource person for National Geographic Photographic Expeditions in Cuba. Gallery Limited Edition prints of Raul Corrales' works are available to purchase and come with the Gallery Stamp of Authenticity and a Certificate of Authenticity. Also, on exhibit are works by contemporary Cuban photographers. (Included)
 - Around the corner from Galería Raúl Corrales is the Floridita, the most famous bar in Cuba. It's the cradle of the Daquiri and homage to Nobel Prize winner, Ernest Hemingway. In 1932 the American novelist fished swordfish off the north coast of Cuba. The same year, he settled at the Ambos Mundos hotel in Old Havana. There he began the final version of his work, "For Whom the Bells Toll", just a few hundred yards from the Floridita. One morning, Hemingway was walking on Obispo Street, where both the Floridita and the Ambos Mundos are located. Hemingway came into the bar to go to the toilet. When he came out, the drinks that everyone was having attracted him. He tasted one and said: "That's good but I prefer mine without sugar and double rum". Since then, Hemingway came each morning to the Floridita at about ten o'clock to settle at the bar on his corner stool, have his daquiri and his driver brought the morning newspapers.
 - Independent time.
 - Dinner at the paladar Vistamar, on the sea. The wonderful food and airy atmosphere make for a special evening overlooking the infinity pool to the ocean. (Included)
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- Optional: The Tropicana is a Cuban international icon. The cabaret dates to 1939 and served as the center of Cuba's jet-set nightlife during the 1940s and 1950s. It's a glimpse of pre-revolution Cuba, where Carmen Miranda, Josephine Baker, Nat King Cole, and others dazzled wealthy guests with Latin dance numbers performed by women with 10-pound headdresses. It is located on a tropical six-acre garden estate in the Miramar neighborhood, the most glamorous section of Havana during the 1950s. The Tropicana helped spread Cuban culture globally and the performers created the showgirl-era. The lavish costumes and vibrant dance styles quickly spread from Cuba to Las Vegas, New York, and Paris. A full orchestra, loud colors, sultry rhythms, a few contortionists & acrobats provide a stunning production of more than 200 singers and dancers that will entertain you under the stars. There is a dress code of 'casual elegance' at the Tropicana. Women should not wear shorts, and men are asked to wear long pants and not jeans, a collared shirt, and closed shoes. Plan for a late evening. Your guide can be of assistance in arranging tickets. (Not Included) Please see the Cliff Notes of History for this day in the extended itinerary: [Revolution Tour 2024 Itinerary with History Notes](#)

Day 9 • Friday • Fidel Center / Revolution wrap-up / Iconic Hotel Nacional

- Breakfast. (Included)
 - Tour the Centro Fidel Castro Ruz. It opened in 2021 on grounds filled with 10,000 plants from more than 1,300 species, three years after work was begun and five years to the day after the Cuban leader died. During Fidel's funeral, Raul said no statues would be raised to his brother: "The leader of the revolution strongly opposed any manifestation of cult of personality." The Cuban government presents the new museum as a study center and library. It helps to symbolize and anchor the Revolution. Many in Cuba believe it goes against Fidel's opposition to cult of personality. (Included)
 - "The Revolution and Cuba Today", a tour wrap-up with a professor from the University of Havana sharing a perspective the Revolution has had on Cuba after 65 years and thoughts of the future of the 'Triumph of the Revolution'. (Included)
 - Enjoy a relaxing visit to the Hotel Nacional with a cocktail and time to wander the grounds. You can stroll the garden with peacocks, walk the site depicted in the Godfather Part II movie, enjoy a cigar, a mojito or just have a rest on the veranda where some of the world's most interesting personalities have taken a break while the winds from the Straits of Florida breeze by. (Included)
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- The remainder of the afternoon and evening is free to enjoy, and farewell explore Havana.
- Dinner. (Not Included) With all the great food you have experienced, this is your chance to visit a privately owned restaurant you may have heard about. Your guide will be of assistance. Please see the Cliff Notes of History for this day in the extended itinerary: [Revolution Tour 2024 Itinerary with History Notes](#)

Day 10 • Saturday • Havana / Home

- Breakfast. (Included)
 - Transfer to José Martí International Airport in Havana for flight home. (Included)
 - Airlines recommend you be at your departure airport 3 hours before takeoff. Please prepare accordingly. Your guide or driver will meet you in the lobby of your hotel.
 - After you clear Cuban Immigration, you will be screened and your carry on will be scanned. In the departure hall there is a duty-free shop, places to buy snacks and drinks, as well as souvenirs.
 - When arriving to your U.S. entry airport you will need to clear U.S. Immigration and U.S. Customs. If asked by an Immigration Officer about your trip to Cuba, note that you were on a sanctioned Support of the Cuban People tour. If asked what you did, tell the truth, and explain it was an opportunity to directly engage and support the Cuban people, learn about their life and country. To be clear: You were not on a vacation.
 - Memories of a wonderful visit to the Pearl of the Antilles: Cuba! (Included)
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