

## THE HISTORY OF THE CUBAN CIGAR

Cuba can be described as an astonishing cocktail of sweet kindness and invigorating aromas topped with the joy of life and served with an open heart. Explore the magnificent architecture in the vibrant city of Havana and the breathtaking landscapes of the Vinales region where life is lulled by Cuban music. Discover the story of the Havana cigar 'puro habano' and perfect your education of the cigar whether you are a novice or an aficionado. At the end of your stay you are sure to leave for José Martí airport with a head full of wonderful images, perspectives and flavours - lasting memories made with new friends...

 Region	La Havana
 Activity	100% Cuba
 Duration	9 days
 Code	CUPUROSFIT
 Price	From €1,483

## ITINERARY

### Day 1 Welcome to Cuba



Travel to your hotel accommodation in Old Havana, evening at leisure to get settled in and to enjoy dinner.

*Accommodation: Homestay*

*Evening meal included*

### Day 2 The Capital of Cigars

#### The Capital of Cigars

Today is dedicated to discovering Old Havana and its Colonial Squares.

Sample a Mojito with a local Habano cigar and dine at the Conde De Villanueva Hotel and meet the famous 'torcedor' Cigar roller who will present the treasures of his cigar store and give a demonstration about how to make a Habano cigar. From the comforts of a classic old american car, tour the city, the military fortresses and visit 'la Triada' cigar shop where the longest cigar in the world is on display. This evening, dinner is followed by a tasting. Try old Cuban rums and puro habano on the roof terrace of the hotel Ambos Mundos where the famous writer Ernest Hemingway lived for 10 years.

*Accommodation: Homestay*

*Meals included*

### Day 3 Pinar del Rio and the best tobacco in the world



Transfer to the beautiful region of Vinales. Visit on the way, the community of 'Las Terrazas' where you can admire coffee plantations and taste a coffee at the café María. Lunch in Buena Vista restaurant; then visit Pinar del Rio and the cigar Factory. Once you arrive in Vinales, you settle into your lodgings and dine at the 'Los Jazmines' hotel with unrestricted views of the valley and its mogotes - these impressive domelike mountain features and the valley are classified as a UNESCO world heritage site. Tonight, you can visit Vinales and experience its Latin music festivities...

*Accommodation: Hotel*

*Meals included*

### Day 4 Vinales: A real paradise



Go hiking in the stunning valley or visit a tobacco farm to observe the plantations of drying processes depending on the season. You will have the opportunity to talk to the owner of the farm, to learn more about traditional cigar farming and rolling techniques and to enjoy a coffee and cigar with him. Lunch at the 'Mural de la Prehistoria' restaurant.

Then you return to the village and enjoy dinner at a private restaurant surrounded by music and the joy of living...

Upon return to the village, you visit the dreamlike Garden of Caridad and then dine in a restaurant on a promontory. You admire a beautiful sunset accompanied by a cigar and a glass of 'Old Rum'...

*4 hours of walking*

*Accommodation: Hotel*

*Meals included*

#### 📍 Day 5 **Culture and Nature**



Return towards Havana. On the way, visit Soroa Orchid Botanical Garden where you can admire thousands of exotic varieties of flowers and trees. Lunch at the restaurant 'Casa Del Habano' at Miramar and possibility to enjoy a Habano. Free time to explore the city at leisure this afternoon. Accommodation in our hotel.

*Accommodation: Homestay*

*Breakfast and lunch included*

#### 📍 Day 6 **A date with History**



This morning, visit a cigar maker of your choice. Then explore the craft market in Old Havana. Enjoy lunch at the restaurant 'El Patio' in Cathedral Square. After lunch, you can sample a daiquiri and a puro habano under the benevolent gaze of Ernest Hemingway in the legendary El Floridita bar. Then, discover the museum of rum. Dinner and a night-time visit to the fortress de San Carlos de la Cabana to experience the historic cannon firing ceremony.

*Accommodation: Homestay*

*Meals included*

#### 📍 Day 7 **Relax...**



A day at leisure at the famous 'Club Havana' beach in the diplomatic quarter of Miramar. Enjoy the magnificent white sands, crystal pools and the Casa Del Habano restaurant (drinks and cigars at own expense). Return to your hotel to dine.

*Accommodation: Homestay*

*Meals included*

📍 Day 8 **Bord de mer**

Journee detente pour profiter de la plage et vos cigares, accompagnes d un vieux Rhum.....

*Nuit en hotel 5\**

*All Inclusive.*

📍 Day 9 **Farewell**

Possibility to make arrangements for your last day and transfer to the airport.

*Breakfast included*

The details in this programme are updated regularly but imponderables and unpredictable circumstances may result in inaccuracies. In order to provide the adventure which is best suited to your demands, the weather and the operational conditions, changes to the programme may be made. For safety reasons, we reserve the rights to interrupt your participation in this programme at any time if your technical level or fitness are deemed unsuitable or if you are seen as a danger to the group or yourself. This will in no case give rise to refunds or compensation.

## PERIOD & BUDGET

### When to travel?

The best period for travelling is during the following months:



### Price

**From 1190 € per person (based on 2 travellers)**

*The budget is an indication of the price per person, subject to availability. Your local agent will send you a customized quote with the exact price. The price can vary according to availability, level of services, period of travel, number of participants, booking time frame and other items.*

### Included

- 7 nights in hotel, refuge on the farm and homestay with breakfasts
- Meals from dinner Day 1 to breakfast Day 8 excluding dinner on Day 5
- Entrance fees to sites in the itinerary
- The accompaniment by an English speaking driver-guide, a specialist on the history of Cigars
- Our English speaking assistance 24 / 7

### Not included

- International flights
- Tourist card (necessary for entry into the country)
- Evening meal Day 5
- Drinks, tips and personal expenses - all that is not 'included'

### Additional Options

- Single Room Supplement: Consult us

### Terms and conditions

#### Inscription

Booking a trip with Altaï Cuba implies acceptance of the terms and conditions of sale. Each customer is required to complete a registration form and, subject to availability at the time of registration, travellers are expected to pay a deposit of 35% of the total price to complete their booking. Payments can be made online or by bank transfer. You will receive an e-mail with your booking confirmation.

#### Facturation

Once your booking is confirmed you will receive an invoice by e-mail. The full balance of the trip must be received at least 30 days before your departure date. Altaï Cuba reserve the right to cancel your booking, free of charge, if this deadline is not respected.

#### Annulation

If for any reason you have to cancel your trip, Altaï Cuba require written confirmation of your decision. The money you have paid will then be refunded according to the following deductions:

- Cancellation received more than 30 days prior to the departure date: a sum of €50 per person will be retained
- Cancellation received 30 to 21 days before the departure date: your deposit, 30% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 20 to 14 days before the departure date: 50% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 13 to 7 days before the departure date: 75% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received less than 7 days before the departure date: 100% of the total trip price will be retained

#### Special cases:

Please note that, regardless of the date of cancellation or modification if you have agreed to pay for services such as hotel reservations, flights or additional activities, these services are usually non-refundable so additional fees may apply.

- Fixed airfares: if your airline ticket was issued in advance, often done to avoid significant surcharges, you will be charged 100% of any non-refundable fees if you wish to change or cancel your flight plan.

- Fixed in-country costs: early charges for firm bookings will be charged if you cancel or modify your trip.
- Insurance costs: if you have taken out comprehensive or cancellation insurance, the cost of insurance is due and cannot be refunded.

**Please note that fees apply according to the date we receive your cancellation or modification request in writing.**

If we have to cancel a departure due to an insufficient number of participants, you will be informed no later than 21 days before departure and a full refund will be issued, you will not be entitled to further compensation. We reserve the rights to cancel departures due to exceptional circumstances which may impact the safety of participants. Such circumstances include those amounting to 'force majeure' in which case participants will receive a full refund but they will not be entitled to any compensation.

### **Modification du contrat**

If you wish to make a change to your booking please contact Altaï Cuba in writing; you will be expected to pay any fee which might arise from this change. In the event of unforeseen external events, Altaï Cuba may change some aspects of the travel contract. If any changes are necessary you will be informed as quickly as possible.

### **Prix et révision des prix**

The prices on our website are updated regularly and all of the prices we advertise are accurate when published. Altaï Cuba reserve the rights to make changes to any of these prices. Before you make a booking we will give you the up-to-date price of your chosen holiday including any supplements, upgrades or additional activities you may have requested. If the number of travellers is fewer than the indicated number of participants on the website, a small group surcharge may be applied. For all of our trips we include details of services, prices and what is/is not included but please be aware that changes to the prices may be necessary in accordance with exchange rates or price changes of various components of the journey.

### **Cession du contrat**

If you are unable to travel for any reason, you can transfer your booking to another person in which case our modification conditions apply. Both the transferor and transferee will be jointly and severally liable for payment of the total holiday price and other associated expenses. Some airline carriers treat name changes as cancellations and you may be required to pay for the cost of a new ticket.

### **Insurance**

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By law, all tourists visiting Cuba must have travel insurance to cover medical costs. You may be asked to provide proof of your travel insurance policy when you arrive at the airport.

### **Altaï Travel Insurance Options**

You have up to 14 days, from the day you book your Altaï trip, to subscribe to our travel insurance. Travel safely and benefit from our partnership with [Assurinco](#) and Mutuaide Assistance. We offer two different insurance packages tailored to meet your needs, cancellation insurance (3% of total trip price) and multirisk insurance (4% of total trip price). Please [contact us](#) for more details.

## PRACTICAL INFO

### Staff

This trip is supervised by a Cuban Spanish speaking driver who is part of our Altai Cuba team. During the stay, your driver will be assisted by Spanish speaking expert local guides.

### Food

#### Breakfasts, lunches & dinners

All breakfasts are included, served at our accommodation. For days when lunches are not included you can choose to purchase a picnic or to eat in a restaurant. Sometimes our hosts prepare lunches for us. Homestay accommodation often includes a homecooked evening meal prepared by our hosts. When dinners are not included you will discover restaurant options for every budget.

#### Eating Out

Due to the American embargo that has been raging in Cuba for many years now, state-owned hotels and restaurants offer simple Cuban cuisine, often limited in terms of variety. Menus served in state restaurants normally include chicken, fish or pork accompanied by congri (rice and kidney beans) and plantains (cooking bananas). Private restaurants are beginning to emerge, offering richer and more refined cuisine.

#### Homestay Meals

Homestay dishes are significantly more varied and plentiful. You will have a chance to sample local products like breadfruit, cassava, plantain, mango, guava, pineapple, papaya, coconut, pork, chicken, fish and sometimes lobster.

#### Drinks

In Cuba, we find excellent seasonal fruit juices, local beers (Bucanero and Cristal) and of course rum which features in many Cuban cocktails like mojitos, daiquiris and pina coladas. During your stay, all drinks, including mineral water, are your responsibility. You can fill your water bottles in villages, springs and hotels. We advise that you treat water with purifying tablets and avoid the purchase of plastic bottles which must then be recycled. If wish to buy bottled water, we advise you to invest in a large bottle or two (5 or 10 litres; available to purchase in Havana, Santiago or other main cities), from which to fill your personal water bottle up from as you go.

### Accommodation

#### Homestay

For the most part you will stay in Casa Particular accommodation. You will be welcomed into the homes of local Cuban families. You sleep in a double / twin rooms; mostly with private bathrooms although in some places the bathroom is shared between 2 rooms.

#### Hotels

For some stages, we have chosen local 3-star category hotels with standard comfort. Please note that hotels in Cuba belong to the state meaning that we have no control over the quality of the services delivered. The rooms are always clean and spacious with private bathrooms but it may be that in some establishments, the rooms are not up to international 3\* standards.

#### Other Accommodations

In Sierra, some steps require sleeping in rustic shelter accommodation with basic comforts. You sleep in a dormitory of 4 to 6 people. Blankets are provided but we advise you to bring a sleeping bag liner and or sleeping bag for cooler nights depending on the season.

### Transportation

Transportation is provided by private air-conditioned vehicles. For some routes we use 4x4 vehicles.

### Budget & exchange

Two currencies circulate: the Cuban peso (CUP) and the **Cuban convertible peso (CUC)** which is the only currency usable by foreigners.



1 CUC is more or less equivalent to 1 USD. Visit [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for the latest currency converter and exchange rates.

Only Visa and Master Cards are accepted by hotels. You will find cash machines which accept only Visa cards in Havana and Santiago. To exchange your cash, go to one of the many "casa de cambios" at the airport or you can exchange money at hotels in the main cities of the country. Please note that American Dollars are not accepted.

## Tips

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An example of good tipping etiquette in Cuba is...

- 3 CUC per day and per participant for your English-speaking guide
- 2 CUC per day and per participant for your driver
- 1 CUC per day per participant for your Spanish-speaking local guide

Please note that tipping is not obligatory. It should be adapted according to the standard of living and the duration of your trip and it should be left to the discretion of each individual.

## Vital equipment

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- A sleeping bag liner (or sleeping bag) for your night in a shelter (blankets provided)
- Water purification tablets
- A refillable water bottle or 2 (2L)

### From head to toe

- A sun hat
- A bandana, to protect your neck
- A pair of sun glasses (good quality, 3 or 4)
- Thermal tops and bottoms
- T shirts, shorts and trousers suitable for hiking
- Appropriate underwear and pyjamas
- A warm layer
- A coat / jacket
- A rain coat (good quality, breathable with hood)
- Water proof trousers
- A swimsuit & fast drying towel
- A pair of hiking boots
- Thick socks for hiking
- A pair of casual shoes for evenings/gentle strolls
- 1 pair of shoes for wearing in water for snorkeling, swimming, etc

## Material

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We prefer that you do not wear cotton clothing, including underwear, when participating in activities. When cotton gets wet from water or sweat it ceases to insulate and it does not dry fast. The best materials for outdoor activities are fast drying materials like polyester or materials which are warm when wet like wool. The most powerful materials against the wind and rain are 'breathable' materials like Gore-Tex or Nikwax.

## Helpful equipment

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- Your personal toiletries
- Sun-cream (body and lips)
- Head torch and spare batteries
- A pair of hiking poles
- A waterproof bag cover (or plastic bags) to protect your belongings

## Luggage

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Please bring two bags; a small rucksack to use as a day bag and a larger bag (35L min) to store the rest of your belongings in. Your day bag should be comfortable to walk with and big enough to carry your lunch, water, swim stuff, spare layers and any personal belongings/medications. We ask that your larger bag is a flexible rucksack or holdall bag rather than a hard cased suitcase for easy transportation. Please note that it is possible to do laundry in the middle of your trip.



## Medicine

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Our guides are all certified First Aiders and will carry a First Aid Kit in case of emergencies. We recommend that you bring a small personal first aid kit containing any medication you may need such as inhalers, plasters, antiseptic and painkillers.

## Passport

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Most travellers require a passport which is valid for at least two months beyond the proposed duration of their stay. It is your responsibility to confirm your specific passport requirements and please be aware that proof of onwards travel may be required.

## Visa

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Most travellers need a tourist visa known as a Tourist Card and proof of onwards travel may be necessary. The tourist card enables travellers to stay in Cuba for up to 30 days; it can be obtained from your Cuban Consulate in person or by post (£39). It is your responsibility to confirm your specific visa requirements.

## Mandatory vaccines

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No mandatory vaccinations are required. Recommended vaccines include Tetanus, Diphtheria, Poliomyelitis, Polio, Typhoid, Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B. A consultation with your doctor is a prerequisite for any trip.

## Health information & recommendations

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Please take the usual precautions to avoid being bitten by mosquitos. The risk of Malaria is very low but other mosquito-borne and spread viral disease are present - follow your doctors advice. Tap water is not drinkable in Cuba. Please take extra care to observe basic hygiene measures effectively such washing your hands frequently and before each meal and take care to properly disinfect any skin wounds.

## Weather

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The subtropical climate of Cuba is influenced by the mild trade winds of the northeast. Temperatures vary very little throughout the year and only two seasons are clearly identifiable:

- The wet summer which lasts from May to October.
- The drier winter is from November to April. Average temperatures range from 22°C (71°F) in February to 30°C (86°F) in July and August

The east of the island is slightly warmer than the west. September and October hold rain records and correspond with the peak of the hurricane season.

## Electricity

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Most electrical outlets are flat 110V two pin plugs as in the USA. Some places are also equipped with 220V round two prong plugs as in Europe. Always check before plugging anything in and use appropriate adapters.

## Local time

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Coordinated Universal Time (UTC)/ Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) - 5 hours. Daylight Saving Time (DST) is observed.

## Sustainable tourism

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Altai always aims to have as little impact on the environment as possible. As adventure and wilderness travel experts who run trips to some of the most remote parts of the world, we take responsible tourism very seriously.

Since the beginning, we have advocated for responsible tourism and the importance of equitable and sustainable principles. Harmonising these fundamentals ensures a fair distribution of economic benefits, improved working conditions for local teams and an increased awareness of the importance and practice of environmental protection.

We kindly request that you adopt the following simple actions when travelling with Altai Cuba in order to support our ethical, sustainable and responsible tourism policies:

- Avoid dropping litter - use bins or carry your rubbish with you.
- Use drinking water sparingly - avoid wasting water, take showers not baths, report leaks, etc..
- Support the preservation of cultural sites - resist the temptation to touch statues, move stones etc..
- Exchanges are preferable to donations - generations gifts can destabilize the local economic balance.

- When walking, be aware of fragile ecosystems, observe wildlife from a distance, stick to trails, limit trampling and do not steal from the nature - resist the temptation to pick flowers, collect fossils or stones...
- Some hotels have air conditioning - to avoid excessive energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, please use sparingly and remember to cut the aircon when you are not in the room.