

Trek Cuba



Duration: 10 days

Cuba, described as the pearl of the Caribbean, is a gem of an island known as much for its unique, colourful culture and history as for its golden beaches. Vintage cars, art deco mansions, colonial plazas and Baroque churches, set against a backdrop of salsa music and captivating street-life ... and that's just the icing on the trekking cake!

Heading to the heart of the island, we trek through the lush tropical rainforest and coffee plantations of the Escambray Mountains. Waterfalls tumble into crystal-clear pools and hummingbirds dart among the orchids and giant ferns. Hot and hard-going at times, it's inspirational and diverse trekking.

Finishing on the south coast at colonial Trinidad, this trek offers the perfect combination of trekking through pristine natural surroundings and discovering the authentic culture of this unique island.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Fly London to Havana

Arrive in Havana, a legendary city of faded beauty where the street life is as captivating as the colonial buildings and former seafront grandeur. We transfer to our *casa*, a traditional guesthouse in Old Havana and relax! Night hotel.

(Dinner not included if late arrival time)

Day 2: Havana – Santa Clara

After a good sleep we load up and depart vibrant Havana to Santa Clara, where we're free to spend the afternoon exploring. Santa Clara has a revolutionary spirit; scene of Che Guevara's Battle of Santa Clara– you can't go far

without seeing statues and images of Che, and an eternal flame marks his mausoleum. The history of the Revolution aside, Santa Clara is an unspoiled and authentic Cuban town, and a fascinating place to wander. We meet again for dinner and a briefing, and prepare our kit for the start of our trek tomorrow. Night hotel.

(Lunch not included)

Drive approx 4 hours

Day 3: Santa Clara – Guanayara

After breakfast, we transfer to Hanabanilla Reservoir, where our adventure begins with a ferry ride (approx one hour) across to the southern tip of the lake. Nestled between foothills and the higher Escambray Mountains, it's a scenic start to the day. We then begin our trek, passing through beautiful shady forests on wide tracks, passing cascading waterfalls. It's a relatively gentle introduction to the natural beauty – and the heat – we will be trekking through. We'll pass old *campesino* (farmer) houses, which often provide a good coffee-stop. Reaching our camp at Rio Guanayara, in hacienda grounds, we settle in for the night. Night camp.

Trek approx 6-7 hours (17km)

Day 4: Guanayara – Codina

After a hearty breakfast we set off on a day which ramps up both the scenery, and the challenge! Our route climbs steadily on small mule tracks through lush orange and mango orchards; it's beautiful but an energy-sapping start to the day. After a brief stop we continue to climb through coffee plantations, affording great views back down to the reservoir. We then drop steeply down to the road, and on to El Sirio for a convenient drinks stop before continuing on to lunch. The afternoon sees a long, fairly gentle climb on narrow paths up to Codina. Night camp.

Trek approx 7-8 hours (17km)

Day 5: Codina – Topes de Collantes

A shorter day today, which may be very welcome! We head out from camp after a fuelling breakfast, along a small track passing coffee plantations. Our route undulates – steeply at times – to La Batata, where the river dramatically pushes through a crack in the limestone. If time permits, we'll enjoy a refreshing swim and find a picturesque stop for lunch. We then walk through more dense forest on undulating paths which are steep at times, continuing onwards until we reach the Nature Reserve of Topes de Collantes. Night camp.

Trek approx. 5 hours (8km)

Day 6: Topes de Collantes – Mi Retiro

A tough day today, which sees us dropping from an elevation of around 800m to 375m, and then ascending back up the other side of the valley, to a similar height. The paths are steep at times, and it's a challenging day – though the scenery is stunning. After breakfast we head down to Caburni Falls, a 62m waterfall which cascades over rocks to meet with the Rio Vegas Grande, where our path takes us along the river-bed for a short section. It's then a steep, narrow, tiring ascent to the Vegas Grande Falls – this picture-perfect waterfall is the perfect reward for

our efforts. We'll have some time to enjoy this beauty spot, before easier paths take us more gradually uphill to Mi Retiro for the night. Night camp.

Trek approx 8 hours (12km)

Day 7: Mi Retiro – Trinidad

Our final day! We set off along a hillside path, high above the valley floor. We encounter the obligatory steep climbs en-route but are rewarded on reaching the top with stunning views down to the UNESCO World Heritage city of Trinidad and our first glimpse of the sea. As we descend through rural farmland, passing *campesino* houses, we come to the beautiful Cabellero waterfall and its surrounding crystal clear pools. There should be time for a dip, and it's a beautiful place to reflect on your achievements this week. From here it's not far to the end of our trek. Night hotel.

Trek approx 6-7 hours (15km)

Day 8: Free day Trinidad

A free day to explore the delights of Trinidad, generally viewed as the most beautiful town in Cuba, with its colourful pastel-hued houses, rust-red roofs and colonial architecture in a stunning location between mountains and sea. It's also easy to arrange transport to the coast; the white sandy beach of Playa Ancon is not far. We gather together in the evening for dinner and to celebrate our achievements. Night hotel.

(Lunch and Dinner not included)

Day 9: Trinidad – Havana – Depart

We load up and drive back to Havana, where we transfer to the airport for the international flight home.

(Lunch not included)

Day 10: Arrive London

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- All return transport from London to Havana
- All meals except where specified, accommodation and camping equipment
- Discover Adventure leaders; doctor with group of 15 or more participants; local guides, porters and cooks
- Local support and back-up equipment
- Entrance to any sites visited as part of the itinerary

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- Any meals specified 'not included' in itinerary

- Travel insurance
- Personal spending money, souvenirs and drinks
- Tips for the local guides and support crew
- Cuba entry visa
- International airport departure tax (no tax applied at the time of writing)
- Sleeping bag
- Fees for any optional sites, attractions or activities
- Airline taxes: we cap these so £250.00 is the maximum you will pay
- Any applicable surcharges as per Terms and Conditions

GRADE | YELLOW

Trips are graded Yellow, Orange or Red, in increasing level of challenge. This trip lies within the **YELLOW** range.



The grade is determined by factors such as terrain, distance, climate, altitude, etc. Each colour grade has a **spectrum** which reflects the difficulty of these factors; trip duration, accommodation and living conditions (see icon) are also taken into account.

[Trip grading explained](#)



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Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 25 Apr 2024, and the challenge is subject to change.