



★ *Destination* GUIDE ★

The Coast of Cuba

LUXURY *Yacht* GROUP

HOT SPOTS OF CUBA



- ① HAVANA
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- ④ CIENFUEGOS
- ⑤ TRINIDAD
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Yachting in Cuba is a sensual, dynamic, and astonishing adventure. Life plays out in timeless farms and villages, and the cobbled streets of colonial cities. Cement block apartments butt up against ancient villas that stubbornly refuse to crumble. Classic cars proudly choke and clatter all over the place. Hand-rolled stogies, paired with heady Cuba Libres and Mojitos, unbalance the timid and amuse the intrepid. Music – enthusiastically, beautifully, and spontaneously played – erupts everywhere. Ernest Hemingway is an industry, and sport fishing is eternally spectacular. The interior is a breathtaking landscape of forested mountains filled with the songs of birds. The coast, lapped by turquoise waves, has miles of white sand beaches that bedazzle beneath the Caribbean sun.



Havana

Cruising through the narrow inlet into Havana Bay, between the imposing *Castillo El Morro* fortress and the beguiling *El Malecón*, you follow the course of centuries of Spaniards, Pirates, Africans, French and Americans who sailed before you. The old and new seamlessly coexist In Havana. Architectural treasures; baroque churches, ornate palaces and colonial mansions are down the block from Soviet-style cement block complexes. Carlos Santana blares out of windows at odd times of the day. The *torcedor* rolls to suit at Hotel Conde Villanueva's cigar bar, where esteemed guests rate private humidors. Rooftop bars are everywhere, and sunset cocktails overlooking Havana at the Hotel Parque Central or the Hotel Saratoga are customary. The Tropicana showgirls don sequins and feathers nightly, and the sophisticated clubs around Vedado party until dawn.

Marina Hemingway Cuba — www.hemingwaycuba.com/marina-hemingway-cuba.html

Hotel Conde Villa Nueva — hotelcondedevillanueva.com

La Guardia Paladar — www.laguarida.com/en

“Raul Castro's economic reforms have generated a wave of new, private, cozy restaurants called *paladares*. They are often found in colonial homes with limited seating, amidst family antiques and vintage décor. The vibe is enchanting and the cuisine is exciting. My favorites are La Guardia, Dona Eutimia, and San Cristobal. The Vedado, Miramar and Playa districts are also prime *paladar* locales.”

— Captain Jorge Cardoso

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“If you want to see the local culture, every Cuban city has a Casa de la Cultura. In Veradero, the Casa de la Cultura includes local art displays, performances and poetry readings. Take a little Cuban culture home by learning a few dance moves, maybe the rumba or salsa. Find Melania, for Afro-Cuban dance, or try Gisela, who teaches salsa.”

— Captain Jorge Cardoso

Veradero

The famous resort town of Veradero is an international tourist Mecca for fun in the sun. This skinny peninsula offers 11 miles of powder beach, lined with all-inclusives, deluxe hotels and luxury homes. In the early 1930s, American millionaire industrialist Irénée du Pont de Nemours built his estate and golf course mid-peninsula; today his Xanadú Mansion is club house, hotel, restaurant, bar and wine cellar of the Varadero Golf Club. The peninsula, almost exclusively focused on tourism, has lots of arts and crafts markets, restaurants and nightclubs. This ocean playground of exquisite beach is great for wind and kite surfing, snorkeling, swimming and simply sunning with a mojito in hand.

Veradero Golf Club — www.varaderogolfclub.com

Marina Gaviota Veradero — www.gaviota-grupo.com/en/marina/marina-gaviota-varadero

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“ Pirates once anchored in the caves, but not all set sail safely. More than 70 sunken ships in Bajo de Zambo are the proof. Besides the wrecks, there are many kinds of coral, including Elkhorn, stag horn, black coral and gorgonians, and snappers, barracudas, groupers, sea bass, grunts, tarpon, moray eels, and turtles. ”

— Captain Enrique Chaviano

Isla de la Juventud

Columbus arrived in 1494, followed by pirates, Spanish exiles, British colonizers, Americans, the Mafia and Castro's international student community, of which only the island's moniker and some abandoned buildings remain. Isle of Parrots, Isle of Pirates, Isle of Treasure, Isle of Pines and today, the Isle of Youth, is a true tropical paradise. Waters surrounding the shore are shallow; from Cabo Frances in the south to Punta del Este in the east, depths rarely exceed 10 meters. Diving and fishing are spectacular. Most of the island is a wild wilderness to explore. Visit the Cueva Punta del Este caves with aboriginal paintings dating to 800 BC. Rendezvous with fellow yachtsmen, divers and fishing enthusiasts at the Mojito Bar on the dock of Hotel Colony for sunset cocktails.

Hotel & Marina El Colony — www.hotelescolony.com

Cuba Diving — www.undercurrent.org/UCnow/dests/Cuba-diving-scuba.shtml

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“You will see colorful corals and lots of fish around two boats, named Camaroneros I and II, which were sunk as artificial reefs at depths of 10-25 meters. There are six shipwrecks within minutes of town. At 30 meters, divers will see really big fish, groupers, barracuda, lobster, crab and even the majestic whale shark.”

— Captain Enrique Chaviano

Cienfuegos

La Perla del Sur is an intoxicating blend of French elegance and Caribbean panache. Settled in the early 19th century by French colonists, the architecture, parks, plazas and monuments are delightful examples of neoclassical, art nouveau and art deco styles. Poke around the cafés, shops and market stalls along Avenida 54. The scenic Paseo del Prado is the longest waterfront Malecón in Cuba. Join the promenade heading south to reach Punta Gorda's ornate 18th—19th century mansions. Palacio de Valle, built in 1917, is an astonishing confection of Spanish-Moorish, Gothic, Romanesque, Baroque and Mudejar arts. Visit the museum, the rooftop bar for mojitos with sunset views, and music at nearby Patio ARTex. See a concert or play at the Tomás Terry Theater, itself an architectural showpiece.

Marina Cienfuegos — www.worldmarineguide.com/cuba/marina/marina-cienfuegos.htm

Cienfuegos City — www.cienfuegocity.org

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Trinidad

Celebrating its quincentennial in 2014, Trinidad is deservedly famous for its Spanish baroque architecture, colorful adobe houses with filigree wrought iron grills and red tiled roofs, and ancient cobblestone streets. Cuba's meticulously preserved colonial city nestles between the Escambray Mountains and the Caribbean Sea. It's clear why sugar barons chose to be here. Have a coffee on the Plaza Mayor, then visit the Museo Romántico collection of porcelain, glass, paintings and decorative furniture. The Museo Histórico Municipal unravels regional history. On the terrace of the Casa de la Música, under sun or stars, it's always mojito and music time. At La Canchánchara, order the namesake concoction of lemon juice, honey and rum, served in glazed ceramic pots. Listen to great Cuban music at Casa de la Trova, then go dancing at Disco Ayala.

Trinidad Information — cubacasas.net/cities/trinidad

Official Website Cuba Tourist Board Canada — gocuba.ca

“ We take guests to spend an afternoon at Playa Ancón. Kids especially love the white sand beaches. A run along the coast, with a stop for mojitos, is great fun on the Jet skis, kayaks or paddleboards. There are good snorkeling and scuba sites and excellent deep-sea fishing.”

— Captain Jorge Manzano



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For centuries Camagüeyanos drank rainwater collected in giant ceramic vessels called tinajones. In the 20th century a water system was finally built, leaving 1,900 abandoned tinajones all over town to this day. Legend states that if a local maiden gives a male visitor water from a tinajón, he will fall in love with her and never leave.

Camagüey

Cuba's third-largest city is a labyrinthine layout of the most peculiar arrangement. Deliberately designed to confuse pillaging pirates, like Henry Morgan, it's narrow, cobbled streets lead to hidden plazas, baroque churches, fascinating museums, seductive galleries and welcoming bars. Getting lost in this maze should be your goal. On the Plaza San Juan de Dios, the picturesque array of blue, yellow and pink buildings includes the Museo de San Juan de Dios, mandatory for history buffs, and the acclaimed Restaurant 1800. The sophisticated city has a thriving art scene. The stunning home and gallery of painters Joel Jover and wife Ileana Sánchez in Plaza Agramonte will delight collectors. Sip signature cocktails at the Gran Hotel Bar Terraza. A performance of the Camagüey Ballet Company at the historic Teatro Principal is always splendid.

Restaurant 1800 — www.restaurante1800.com

Gran Hotel de Camagüey — www.hotelgran.com

Martha Jimenez Gallery — www.martha-jimenez.es

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Santiago de Cuba

Remote and removed from the help or hindrance of Havana, Santiago's people evolved from Afro-Caribbean roots with a fiercely independent spirit. Their unique heritage is detected in the lilting dialect, the flavors of food, and the music that hangs in the air. During celebrations, such as Carnival in July, the Festival del Caribe and Fiesta del Fuego, music genres that originated here are passionately played. The picturesque streets of Cuba's second largest city sweep gracefully up and down the steep hills encircling the bay. Every neighborhood has a distinct personality and boasts extraordinary architecture, fascinating museums, fine art galleries, and excellent restaurants. Great entertainment is everywhere, from live bands playing at rooftop hotel bars to phenomenal music and dancing at Casa de la Trova.

Restaurante Aurora — www.aurorahostal.com/restaurante

Casa del Caribe — www.casadelcaribe.cult.cu

“Diving is truly spectacular in the Baconao Park Zone, which has about 35 awesome sites. Large coral crags wind through tunnels and narrow channels and ledges with large gorgonians, purple fans, lots of delicate coral fish species, large fish, crustaceans and mollusks. The bottoms hold shipwrecks including Spanish Galleons, and enormous groupers you can feed by hand.”

— Captain Enrique Chaviano

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“Baracoa is really off the beaten track so my favorite beaches, Playa Maguana, protected by a coral reef, Playa Nibujón and remote Playa Nava, don’t get overcrowded. The surroundings are green, damp and tropical and it is a magical spot for a picnic or barbeque. Guests can enjoy snorkeling right off the beach and the sport fishing offshore is superb.”

— Captain Enrique Chaviano

Baracoa

The charm and hospitality of this seaside village is infectious, once you finally arrive, you won’t want to leave. Because of its seclusion, Baracoa has maintained its own unique identity. Cobblestoned streets are lined with cozy, single story, wood houses with weathered tiled roofs and folks relax on front porch rockers or play dominoes in the yard. Stroll the waterfront Malecón and visit forts built to repel pirate attacks. Hike El Yunque, the 575-meter mountain draped in jungle mists, wild orchids and cooling waterfalls, or go rafting on the Río Yumurí. Sample white chocolate discs encased in palm bark, a specialty produced from local cocoa trees. Also try cucuruchos, made of coconut, honey, and fresh seasonal fruit served in cones of palm bark.

Baracoa Website — www.baracoa.org

Hotel El Castillo — www.hotelescastillocuba.com

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WESTERN CARIBBEAN:

Regional Guide

TIME ZONE: UTC (GMT) -5 and UTC (GMT) -6; Yucatan, Cuba and Jamaica observe Daylight Saving Time.

ECONOMY: Tourism, Agriculture, Industry, Services, Banking

DRESS CODE: Dress is casual, proper attire should be worn in public areas. Bathing suits are appropriate only at the beach or pool. Exclusive establishments may require men to wear closed shoes, long pants and sometimes jackets, women customarily wear dresses.

DRIVING: Belize, Cuba, Honduras, Yucatan, motorists drive on the right side of the road as in the U.S. Cayman Islands and Jamaica, they drive on the left side of the road as in the UK.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, Spanish, Mayan, Creole

OFFICIAL CURRENCIES: Jamaican dollar, Belize dollar, Honduras lempira, Mexican peso. In Cuba, the Cuban Convertible Peso (CUC) is used by foreigners. Visa & Mastercard, of non-US origin only, are usually accepted. ATMs are rare.

When to visit:

Yachting is best in November and early December or from March to May, for the lighter winds and flatter seas. Winds are generally 15 to 20 knots blowing from the easterly quadrant. Summer has slightly warmer ocean temperatures but threat of hurricanes. It is a festive time of the year with carnival held in many cities, and festivals going on throughout the island.

CLIMATE DATA FOR CUBA

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
Average High °F	80	80.7	82.5	83.8	85.8	87.4	88.3	84.3	87.6	85.8	83	80.7	84.5
Average Low °F	66.2	66.1	68.1	70.2	72.6	74.8	75.3	71.8	74.7	73.4	70.8	67.6	71.2
Average Rainfall (in)	1.5	1.4	1.6	2.2	5.5	5.7	4	5.2	6.3	6.7	2.5	1.5	44.1

Climate:

Subtropical, humid, summer rainy season is May to November; the dry season is December to April. The height of the hurricane season runs mid-August through October. There is on average more rain in these months due to this tropical storm activity.

Most computers, cell phones, chargers, cameras and computer tablets automatically convert the voltage. If your device heats, cools, or has a motor, you may need a converter. These add weight to your luggage. Check with your crew about your converter needs.



ELECTRIC

POWER GUIDE

COUNTRY	VOLTAGE	PLUG
Belize	110/220 V	U.S. 2-pin
Cayman Islands	120 V	U.S. 2-pin
Cuba	110/220 V	U.S. 2-pin
Honduras	110 V	U.S. 2-pin
Jamaica	110 V	U.S. 2-pin
Yucatan	110 V	U.S. 2-pin

VISA INFORMATION

www.projectvisa.com



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▶ La Isla Grande awaits...