



Cuba- Discovering Cuba by Bike (2024)

8 Days/ 7 Nights

Group Guided



Pedal through the narrow alleys, cobbled lanes, and vast landscapes of Central Cuba on this tour that starts and ends in Havana. You'll experience up close and personal the diversity in nature and architecture and that this jewel of an island has to offer with visits to five different provinces. You won't just see Cuba, you'll immerse yourself in its streets and its culture, accompanied by your English-speaking tour leader, bike mechanic, and support vehicle driver.

OK Cycle & Adventure Tours Inc. - 666 Kirkwood Ave - Suite B102 – Ottawa, Ontario Canada K1Z 5X9

www.okcycletours.com Toll Free 1-888-621-6818 Local 613-702-5350

TICO Ontario Registration No: 50022848



Accommodation is in privately owned guesthouses that are typically run by local families. In Cuba this form of accommodation is the best way to get an insight into how the locals live – their food, culture, and it provides opportunities to interact with the family members. Recently comfort levels of this type of accommodation in Cuba have increased considerably and are highly rated by our travellers. The tour starts and ends in Havana, so if you are interested you can add a few days before or after the tour to experience this unique city.

Day by Day

Day 1 - Arrive Havana

Welcome to Havana! Home of the most fascinating architecture and the famous seawall, el Malecón. Your included airport arrival transfer will take you to your guesthouse in Havana. The tour leader will conduct a welcome meeting at 6:00pm in the main guesthouse. Your optional snack kitty of US\$20 will be collected. This money will be used to buy additional water, sodas, crackers, fruits, vegetables, nuts, etc for the road because it is difficult to buy food in remote areas. It is a good opportunity to learn about how the locals like to fuel themselves between meals and to try new foods. We offer this as a convenience, it is optional but those who don't contribute will not have access. Due to the scarcity of snacks in Cuba, we also recommend you bring your own packaged snacks from home.

Day 2 – Varadero

In the morning we meet the crew for bike fitting and mechanical check, then it's off we go on our first riding adventure as we tour the modern part of Havana on two wheels. You'll cycle through the neighborhoods Vedado, Nuevo Vedado, Havana Forest, and Miramar. We'll stop for a photo op at the Revolution Square where the state buildings are adorned with metal sculptures of some of Cuba's most important historical figures. We'll have a delicious lunch at a paladar (private restaurant) in Old Havana before we stretch our legs on a two-hour walking tour of Old Havana four main plazas after which we will hop on our support vehicle and head to one of the top-rated beach destinations in the world, Varadero! **Included Activities: Cycling tour of Modern Havana (20km, elevation gain 132m), 2-hour walking tour of Old Havana** Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 3 – Matanzas

Rise and shine for an early 30 min drive to Camarioca, just outside of Matanzas, where we start our first cycling route. We ride to Matanzas on a lightly undulating road in good condition. Matanzas is known by many monikers such as the "Athens of Cuba" "Venice of Cuba" or "City of Bridges", it is rich in art and music heritage and is birthplace of many of Cuba's most important cultural figures as well as Afro-Cuban history and culture. This hidden gem is often neglected by tourists in favor of the crystalline waters of nearby Varadero, we explore its treasures of everyday life on bike tour through the city. Afternoon is at your leisure, you can enjoy the sun and sand, bike around on your own, or watch the sunset on the beach. **Included Activities: Cycling for 40km (elevation gain: 138m), Bike tour of Matanzas** Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

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Day 4 – Santa Clara

We hit the pedals early to our next destination Santa Clara. The cycling route is mostly flat through agricultural fields, small villages, and interesting cities such as Cardenas and Colon. Santa Clara is the city of Che, as here is where the national hero is laid to rest near a gigantic bronze statue of his likeness. Another city overlooked by tourists, Santa Clara is unapologetically edgy, its large student population means that subcultures are well-represented here. It is a city of creativity, and rebellion. Today dinner is included. **Included Activities: Cycling for 50km (elevation gain 156m), entrance to the Che Guevara Museum and Memorial.** Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 5 – Trinidad

Make sure you fuel up with a good breakfast this morning as we will be uphill riding for much of today's route. We cycle early to the mountains of Guamuaya, with an average incline of 4% during 10km. We'll meet a farmer family in Jibacoa who will prepare a farm to fork meal while we rest our legs and enjoy the conversation. After lunch we take our support vehicle to colonial jewel Trinidad where we'll do an orientation walking tour in the historic center. For many visitors to Cuba, Trinidad is their standout favourite destination. No other colonial city in Cuba is so well preserved, and the local residents are extremely friendly and festive. Trinidad is steeped in religiosity, none the least of which is Santeria, which is one of several Afro-Cuban religions. After the tour the rest of the evening is free. If you have some excess energy to burn, we recommend a salsa lesson followed by a night of dancing in arguably one of the best places for nightlife in Cuba. **Included Activities: Cycling for 30km (elevation gain 390m), orientation walking tour in Trinidad** Included Meals: Breakfast, farm lunch in Jibacoa, Dinner

Day 6 – Cienfuegos

With the turquoise waters of the Caribbean Sea at our side, we ride along the coast from Trinidad to Cienfuegos, or “The Pearl of the South”. Expect the terrain to be slightly undulating in the first 5km, then it flattens out with the sea to the left and mountains to the right for about 40km. The last 20k will be hilly. We’ll take the rest of the journey in the support vehicle. French inspired boulevards and architecture await you in the elegant and peaceful city of Cienfuegos. After an orientation tour of the center of the city, around Parque Jose Marti, you are free to explore on your own. Don’t miss some of Cuba’s most beautiful buildings on Punta Gorda. There is nothing like an ice-cold beer at the Yacht Club or the astounding Palacio del Valle while watching the sun set. **Included Activities: Cycling for 60km (elevation gain 356m). Orientation walking tour of Cienfuegos.** Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 7- Havana

We start our last day of the tour with a ride in the support vehicle to Bay of Pigs, site of the infamous U.S. invasion during the JFK presidency. We’ll learn the Cuban side to this story with a cycle on flat terrain to the Museum of the Invasion. Afterwards we’ll have an hour to enjoy the beach snorkeling or swimming and lunch on the road. Back in Havana for our bittersweet farewell dinner (not included). Who could say good-bye to Cuba without a final night out for music and mojitos? Perhaps at the Buena Vista Social Club or the Time Magazine honored Fabrica de Arte Cubano, art and nightlife megaplex (optional). **Included Activities: Cycling for 30km (elevation gain 64m), entry to the Museum of the Invasion** Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch



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Day 8 – Departure Day

Today you can depart at any time, there are no activities or cycling today. We suggest you stay longer to enjoy the many wonderful restaurants, museums, and galleries that Havana has to offer. Your departure transfer is not included but a taxi can easily be arranged with your casa host. Included Meals: Breakfast

Route



Moderate experienced cyclist who can cycle at least 20 - 40 km every day. A person who cycles frequently should find this tour enjoyable, rather than overly strenuous. However, you must be prepared for the year-round heat, humidity, and hills. The support vehicle is always available.

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Summary of Travel Times (in Vehicle)

Havana to Varadero 2.5 hours

Varadero to Matanzas 2.5 hours return

Varadero to Santa Clara 3.5 hours

Santa Clara to Trinidad 2.5 hours

Trinidad to Cienfuegos 2 hours

Cienfuegos to Havana via Bay of Pigs 5 hours



2024 Travel Dates

- March 17-24
- April 14-21
- May 19-26
- June 16-23
- July 21-28
- August 18-25
- September 15-22
- October 20-27
- November 17-24
- December 15-22

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Prices in US dollars – all prices subject to confirmation on booking

Double Occupancy	\$1495
Single Room Supplement	\$223
E-bike upgrade (limited availability)	\$338

Accommodation

For these small group Cuba tours, accommodation is in private guesthouses .

Guesthouses in Cuba (“casas particulares”)

Guesthouses, Bed and Breakfast, B&B, *casas*, *casas particulares*, family stays, and homestays - these are all names for the same type of accommodation in Cuba.

Many travellers discover that the guesthouse accommodation is a major highlight of their visit to Cuba. This is not just because of comfort levels, but also because the *casas* are generally run by local families and located in residential neighbourhoods, so they provide a great opportunity for travellers to interact with everyday Cubans.

Better than Cuban Hotels? Guesthouse rooms are generally quite basic but reasonably comfortable and very clean, and the families in Cuba will try to make you feel at home as much as possible. They are usually not as roomy as typical hotel rooms, however the *casas* are consistently rated by travellers, as more enjoyable than staying in hotels and about the same comfort level as perhaps a 3 star Cuban hotel. It's the level of service and personal attention in the *casas* that is generally far superior to the hotels in Cuba. This is because the *casas* are privately run, profit making enterprises that rely on word-of-mouth recommendations among travellers, so the owners and staff are highly motivated to provide the best service possible and the families take pride in their work. This is in contrast to government run hotels where the staff are State employees on a fairly low wage - the consequence of which is low staff morale, poor maintenance, inefficiencies, and generally poor service.

Variety is the Spice... While every family and every *casa* in Cuba is *unique*, with slightly different levels of comfort, the guesthouses we use in Cuba on our tours are much nicer than the average Cuban dwelling. The *casas particulares* are a form of accommodation for foreigners in Cuba that is legal and formalised, and the rooms for guests are required to meet a certain standard of comfort for the house to obtain a State licence to rent. The owners pay a fee to the government for this licence and they also pay tax on their income.



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Included

- 7 nights accommodation
- Group size 2-12
- Hybrid bike
- 2-hour old Havana walking tour, orientation walking tours in Trinidad and Cienfuegos. Cycling routes as noted.
- All breakfasts, all lunches, 1 dinner.
- Cold filtered water to refill bottles.
- Airport arrival transfer.
- English-speaking tour leader
- bike mechanic

Not Included

- International flights
- Visa and passport fees
- Insurance (Travel Medical Insurance is required to participate on the tour)
- Food: meals before Breakfast on Day 2 and after Breakfast on Day 8, dinners (except on Day 4), additional snacks (snacks included for snack kitty participants)
- Drinks
- Tips
- Optional activities
- Airport departure transfer

Bikes

Giant Roam 3 Disc- The Roam 3 Disc is built for multi-purpose adventure. With a lightweight aluminum frame, flat handlebar, front suspension, powerful disc brakes, durable components, and fast rolling 700c wheels, it is a great choice for town-to-trail adventures.



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E-bikes- The eBike option is subject to availability and requires an additional payment.

Easy Motion Rebel Cross Lite PW



The eBike has four different levels of assistance from “Eco+” through to “High”. This means you can set the bike to your own personal level of fitness and also be able to switch to a higher level of assistance when faced with a steep uphill or a strong headwind, or otherwise at the end of the day when you might be feeling tired.

The Rebel Cross Lite PW blends efficiency with comfort. It features perfect weight distribution for improved handling, super-quiet motor operation, and maximum efficiency for climbing and going long distances. It is compact, quiet, and reliable.

This is a partner tour

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