

HAVANA AND THE HEARTLAND OF CUBA
Havana, Viñales Valley, and Cayo Jutias Island
7 Days / 6 Nights



**WILDLAND
ADVENTURES**

**AUTHENTIC WORLDWIDE
EXPLORATIONS**

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Itinerary In Brief

Commemorate Wildland Adventures’ 30th anniversary on this active people-to-people exploration into the heartland of Cuba visiting some of its lesser-known and beautiful UNESCO-designated traditional towns, nature reserves, and Caribbean islands. Take in the sights, sounds, and flavors of Old Havana on a guided walking tour and on a bicycle-taxi. We learn to prepare traditional Cuban dishes, and have private visits in artist studios, with a social psychologist, and a presentation from a musicologist who introduces us to the sensuous Latin rhythms that are ubiquitous in the city. In the beautiful Viñales Valley a small tobacco farmer shows us how to roll the best cigars, and in Viñales National Park and Biosphere Reserve we hike on easy trails and cycle down meandering country roads through spectacular landscapes of towering limestone karsts covered in rainforest. Snorkel and paddleboard among Caribbean reefs and white sand beaches in Cayo Jutias, and hear the fascinating story of the Las Terrazas “Green Revolution” project initiated by Castro in 1968 turned nature reserve and eco-community.

DAY	OVERNIGHT	HOTEL	MEALS	HIGHLIGHTS
1	HAVANA	Hotel Sevilla	LD	Flight to Havana. Fusterlandia! Welcome dinner
2	HAVANA	Hotel Sevilla	BLD	Music and dance demonstration, walking and bici-taxi tour of Old Havana. Visit primary school and El Floridita bar. Private meeting with professor on changing socio-economic conditions. Dinner at Los Mercaderes paladar
3	HAVANA	Hotel Sevilla	BL	Cojimar farmer’s market and cooking lesson. Visit Hemingway’s Finca Vigia. Free afternoon and night out on the town
4	VIÑALES VALLEY	Casa Particular Private B&B	BLD	Drive to Viñales, visit tobacco farmer, hike in Vinales National Park. Lunch in Paraiso Agroecologica organic farm. Walk and ride bikes in Viñales. Dinner in private home
5	VIÑALES VALLEY	Casa Particular Private B&B	BL	Boat down underground river, snorkel and/or paddleboard off Cayo Jutias island. Seafood lunch. Evening gathering at Casa de la Cultura community cultural center
6	HAVANA	Hotel Sevilla	BLD	Return to Havana. Las Terrazas “Green Revolution” planned community and Sierra del Rosario Biosphere Reserve. Resident artists and zip-line. Farewell dinner
7	DEPARTURE		B	Transfer to airport for international departure

Daily Itinerary

DAY 1: FLIGHT TO HAVANA—FUSTERLANDIA!

Arrive in Havana where you are welcomed on the shores of this Caribbean isle by our local expert guide. After lunch you head to the Jaimanitas neighborhood on the outskirts of Havana to visit the home of Jose Fuster, one of the most well-known Cuban artists of the 20th century. His two main inspirations for his work are Gaudi and Picasso, and it only takes one look at his house to see this transformation of his neighborhood into a work of art. You contrast crazy Fusterlandia at an exclusive meeting with a successful ceramist who shares her inspirational work. Check into your hotel before an orientation meeting and welcome dinner at Los Naranjos. Known for its fusion Cuban cuisine, classic glamor architecture and interior design, this intimate *paladar* is located in the bustling neighborhood of Vedado flanked by mansions of Cuba's pre-revolution aristocracy. There is always an opportunity after dinner to seek out Afro-Cuban jazz or live salsa music. Overnight **Hotel Sevilla** or similar. [LD]



DAY 2: OLD HAVANA WALKING & BICI-TAXI TOUR – MUSIC AND FAMILY IN CUBA

What better way to kick off your first full day in Cuba than visiting a local Cuban musicologist who leads a lively discussion and dance demonstration discovering how various rhythms and music permeate Cuban culture and daily life setting the tempo for your adventures ahead. You take in the sights, sounds, and flavors in the center of Old Havana on foot, and then ride bicycle taxis down narrow alleyways among old colonial homes in residential neighborhoods and to city landmarks of this UNESCO World Heritage City. You stop along the way to taste street foods, perhaps refresh yourselves with fresh cane juice and coconut water, before stopping at a primary school for insights into the educational system in Cuba.



After lunch in a favorite *paladar*, you stop at Ernest Hemingway's favorite bar, El Floridita, to enjoy a refreshing daiquiri before your private meeting with Daybell Pañella Alvares, a Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Havana. Daybell shares her work on economic class structure in Cuba, specifically how the roles of race and gender in the Cuban perspective of what is defined as success are evolving with rapid socio-economic changes. After free time for independent exploration you meet before dinner to enjoy a drink with a few bilingual Cubans who live in Havana chatting informally about their everyday life. Dinner tonight is at Los Mercaderes, one of the finest *paladares* in Old Havana serving a fusion of dishes combining Afro-Cuban style with international flavors and flair. Overnight **Hotel Sevilla** or similar. [BLD]

DAY 3: COJIMAR MARKET AND COOKING LESSON – HEMINGWAY’S FINCA

Today you discover the culinary renaissance in Cuba whereby local chefs and Cuban households are returning to their traditional roots as menus expand with the infusion of international influences. You head out to Cojimar on the outskirts of the city to experience community life where you meet up with our chef in the local farmer’s market to buy ingredients for a cooking lesson a *lo Cubano!* (“the Cuban way”). Learn how to make traditional dishes such as *ropa vieja* and *el ajíaco*, and of course, how to mix a *mojito*. It’s a short drive to Finca Vigia, Ernest Hemingway’s home while he lived in Cuba, allowing time for individual exploration of Old Havana and dinner on your own. We can provide excellent recommendations (and make reservations) to the best *paladares* in Havana. As the Havana night sets in there are many entertainment options to consider such as the Bertolt Brecht Theater, groove to live Afro-Cuban jazz by the hugely popular international touring house band [Interactivo](#), or to see if local legend [Ray Fernandez](#) is playing. Overnight **Hotel Sevilla** or similar. [BL]

DAY 4: VIÑALES VALLEY CIGARS AND ADVENTURES

Heading westward from the capital, the beautiful province of Piñar Del Rio is the cultural and adventure heartland of Cuba where cowboys roam and the world’s finest cigars are cultivated and hand-crafted. The 2.5-hour drive is an opportunity for your guide to lead an in-depth discussion about Cuba’s more complicated issues related to politics, social structure, healthcare, and culture. You stop at a local tobacco farmer’s house to see first-hand why Cuban cigars stand out in the world, walking into the fields and entering a studio where the farmer rolls his own.

Heading towards the coast you hike in Viñales National Park and World Heritage Site, a stunningly beautiful natural area and cultural landscape of towering karst outcrops crowned by lush tropical forest habitat bordering verdant green farms and multi-ethnic villages of Spanish, Portuguese, French, and West African descendants. At Finca Paraiso Agroecologica (Agro-ecological Paradise Farm) in the Valley of Silence, Wilfredo and his family proudly show you their organic agriculture production and serve up a delicious organic lunch full of flavor and color, including roasted pork and vegetarian dishes, and their anti-stress smoothie of yerba buena, coconut milk, basil, mint, anise and a splash of Cuban rum.



After lunch in the valley you walk around this rural town getting to know the many *cuentapropistas* (private entrepreneurs) mostly involved in farming and fledgling ecotourism businesses. You can also ride bikes on easy meandering roads through the countryside. This evening is a special opportunity to experience the real Cuba staying in a local *casa particular* private bed and breakfast. These private bed and breakfasts are a genuine opportunity to get to know local Cuban families and are always a highlight of the trip. Enjoy a homemade dinner at a private home. Overnight in a **Casa Particular** private bed and breakfast. [BLD]



DAY 5: CAVING AND COASTAL ADVENTURES IN CAYO JUTIAS

Today you glide in a boat through white limestone and minerals of coppery earth in the *Cuevas de los Indios* (Indian Cave), a 4 km waterway deep within a *mogote* where Guanajatabey Indians built their homes. On to Cayo Jutias, an island of the archipelago of Las Coloradas, you reach the fine white sands and clear turquoise waters of the Caribbean and one of the most beautiful beaches near Viñales. A resident guide introduces you to the marine habitat full of multitudes of fish and corals with opportunities to snorkel, stand-up paddleboard, or walk the beach. You then sit down to a delicious fresh seafood lunch of grilled lobster and fish before heading back to Viñales for free time or join with locals to partake in a salsa class. Dinner is on your own tonight. This evening is an opportunity to walk to the local *Casa de la Cultura* (Culture House) where neighborhood musicians gather to share live music and dance. Overnight in *casa particular* private bed and breakfast. [BL]

DAY 6: LAS TERRAZAS GREEN REVOLUTION -- HAVANA

Making your way back to Havana you stop for a garden tour at an orchid farm with the resident orchid expert, and then continue to the ecotourism rural development project known as Las Terrazas. Started in 1968 as a “Green Revolution” project by Fidel Castro, today it’s a small community of 250 members in the Sierra del Rosario Mountains surrounded by a nature reserve in a designated UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. A local community guide shares the history of the planned community and the challenges and successes it has endured. You also visit the home of one of many well-known artists who live in this beautifully inspiring landscape and learn about the inspiration it provides for creative art. There is also an opportunity to ride a zip-line on a canopy tour through the community.



Enjoy a traditional Cuban lunch of roasted pork, beans, rice, and sweet potato fries en route to Havana, stopping at an artisanal market to buy last-minute artwork or handicrafts from private artist entrepreneurs. Tonight's farewell dinner at San Cristobal is one of the best paladares in Havana, then for anyone up for a night in Havana you celebrate your journey with an aperitif and music. Overnight at **Hotel Sevilla** or similar. **[BLD]**

DAY 7: DEPART OR EXTEND YOUR STAY

After breakfast visit the Plaza de la Revolution, an important center of Cuban public affairs and an opportunity to reflect on Cuban politics, economy, and the future of Cuba surrounded by government buildings of this historic square. Proceed to the international airport for your flight back to Miami, or ask about additional people-to-people experiences in Havana or other areas of the island. **[B]**

END OF SERVICES

THE 'WILD STYLE' IN CUBA

As a legal people-to-people tour we are immersed for 5-6 hours a day in Cuban life and culture, urban and rural. We have carefully designed this itinerary in collaboration with our American escort and Cuba maven, Joslin Fritz, ala 'the Wild style'. Based on Joslin's many years of exploring Cuba we connect with local Cubans from all walks of life many of whom are her friends and personal acquaintances. We dine in some of Cuba's best *paladares*, privately owned restaurants and cafes, and our accommodations range from classic boutique hotels to renovated *casas particulares*, private family-run B&Bs hosted by enterprising Cubans interested in engaging with the world by opening their doors to share their life at the start and end of their day.

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[Click here for Dates](#)

INCLUDED SERVICES:

- All guided tours and excursions (subject to change)
- Legal, licensed travel permit as a people-to-people program and Cuba tourist visa fee
- Bilingual America guide throughout
- Local expert Cuban guides and fees for presenters for certain activities
- Accommodations in 4-star superior hotels and private *casas particulares* B&Bs
- Meals as indicated [BLD]: 6 Breakfasts, 5 Lunches, 4 Dinners plus 1-2 drinks at lunch
- Private air-conditioned transportation within Cuba
- All entrance fees to scheduled activities and guest lecture fees
- Gratuities for luggage service and meal tips
- Legal, licensed travel permit as a people-to-people program and Cuba tourist visa fee
- Wildland Adventures travel consultation and pre-departure services

NOT INCLUDED:

- Drinks, alcoholic beverages, and meals other than those listed above
- Personal expenses for extra services or goods, optional activities, or changes in your itinerary for reasons beyond our control
- Gratuities for American tour escort, local guides and drivers
- Tips for local musicians at restaurants and hotel staff
- Checked baggage fee (\$20) and departure tax (\$30)
- Travel insurance for trip cancellation, medical services or evacuation

TRIP LEADERS



Joslin Fritz

Joslin is our Cuba maven, on-the-ground fixer, and lead guide. She has an extensive career as an international tour leader and outdoor recreational guide. She has facilitated adventure trips to such destinations as Bhutan, India, Vietnam, and Ecuador, though she now considers Cuba her specialty. Having traveled and explored the Caribbean island from one end to the other many times for many years, she is captivated by the warmth of the Cuban people and the vibrant music, culture and history of this inimitable country. Joslin spends the majority of the year in Cuba having helped us design our trips in the 'Wild Style' that assures our people-to-people experiences are as fun and personable, as they are informative, allowing for spontaneity and time for individual exploration.



Yadira Sardinias

"Yadi", as she is affectionately known in her native Cuba, has been involved in tourism for over ten years. She studied languages at the University of Havana and is fluent in English, German, and Spanish. She is passionate about sharing the history and culture of her country and has led trips across the island. She has a darling young son, Yadiel, who is two years old. She prides herself on sharing her wide network of friends and acquaintances to create up-close and personal experiences for Wildland travelers so you better understand her complex country and fall in love with its people.

Other experts that we engage on this trip generally include:

Fernando Saez – Actor, artist and co-founder of Malpaso dance troupe, and graduate of the prestigious School of Performing Arts at the Institute of Superior Arts.

Daybel Panellas – Professor of Sociology at the University of Havana with a focus on economic and racial class structure.

Private departures and custom trips are available on request for a minimum of 4 persons. We are traveling under a people-to-people license as authorized by the Office of Foreign Assets Control by the general license of 31 CFR § 515.565(b).

ACCOMMODATIONS



HOTEL SEVILLA, HAVANA

Built in 1908, the historical Hotel Sevilla is located in the old Havana neighborhood, a world heritage site and a great choice for travelers looking for live music, history, and atmosphere. The exterior façade showcases beautiful Moorish architecture with many rooms offering balconies. There's an outdoor pool and fitness center, as well as 3 on-site bars and 2 restaurants. The 178 rooms are furnished with flat-screen satellite TVs, air-conditioning, safes, refrigerators, hairdryers, and bathrooms that feature a bathtub. Wifi is available.



CASAS PARTICULARES

Casas particulares are private homes operated like a B&B by enterprising Cubans opening their doors to the world to share their lives and to learn from their guests. These modest colonial homes are renovated for comfort with private bath, natural light, and a/c. The neoclassic style of many homes conforms to spacious rooms gaily painted with outside gardens or terraces. Each *casa* is different with unique décor reflecting every family's personal charm and style. Although modest in amenities and service, these experiences offer us a truly memorable up-close-and-personal people-to-people experience.

Note: Actual routes and activities may vary. As tourism to Cuba continues to evolve, together with our in-country American expert, Joslin Fritz, we are always looking for new 'Wild-style' travel opportunities to share deeper and more personal insights through our expanding network of friends, boutique hotel proprietors, artists and musicians, professors and diplomats, and other Cubans who have much to share with us. Due to such rapidly changing developments in Cuban tourism, we may change programmed activities as new opportunities arise, and to substitute accommodations when other properties come on line. As a result of increasing tourism to Cuba domestic prices continue to rise and are subject to change without notice, so it's best to book your trip ASAP to lock in your cost.

Booking your Wildland Adventure

HOW TO RESERVE A TRIP

You can book online using our [Reserve a Trip form](#) or by calling 1-800-345-4453. Your space on a trip is confirmed once we receive your reservation form and initial trip deposit. All travelers must sign and submit a [Release of Liability](#).

Deposit requirements are as follows: *

- \$1000 per person
- *Additional deposit may be required to hold room reservations depending on time of booking

CUBA PAYMENTS, CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

Full payment of the trip balance is due 90 days prior to departure. If you must cancel before departure, money will be returned less the cancellation fees charged by WA Inc. plus the trip deposit, and any other additional non-refundable cancellation fees and payments already advanced to airlines, hotels and local operators:

Days Prior to Departure	Cancellation fee per person
91 or more:	Deposits are non-refundable
61-90 days:	50% of land and charter air cost
60 or less:	100% of land and charter air cost

PRE-DEPARTURE SERVICES

Upon receipt of your deposit and completed reservation form, we will send you a comprehensive Pre-Departure Dossier. This contains important information to help you prepare including immunizations, visas, trip insurance, packing checklist, reading list, maps, cross-cultural information, optional trip extensions and more. You will receive a final trip packet including Final Reminders and local contact information in your destination 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

REFERENCES AND QUESTIONS

Have any questions or concerns? Call us a 1-800-345-4453 or email info@wildland.com. We're here to help and are happy to provide you with references from previous Wildland travelers.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Wildland Adventures, Inc. has arranged your trip utilizing the travel services of local in-country ground operators who are independent contractors. These local outfitters, lodges, hotels and other suppliers of your travel services will make every effort to conduct this trip as described in the itinerary; however, it is possible that due to transportation schedule changes, weather, delays and unforeseeable acts of God, humans or nature, this itinerary may vary from what is described. Participants must assume all risks whether identified in advance or unforeseen. All optional activities are at your own risk. Extra costs due to unexpected changes in your itinerary for reasons beyond our control are not included. We highly recommend purchasing traveler's insurance for trip delay, trip cancellation, baggage, accident or sickness. Representatives are available for assistance at any time during your trip. If preferred hotels are not available, every attempt will be made to reserve alternative accommodations of similar quality (if upgrade is necessary, higher rates may apply). All information and services provided are subject to our [Terms and Conditions](#)