

brightwater 
holidays

a breath of fresh air



PARTNERED WORLDWIDE HOLIDAYS 2024

IN ASSOCIATION WITH  ACADEMY
TRAVEL



Who is Brightwater Holidays?

It is our mission at Brightwater Holidays to provide our guests with quality garden and specialist interest tours, helping our guests to expand their horizons and fulfil their travel dreams. With the world more accessible than ever, we have partnered with our friends at Academy Travel to bring you an exciting tour to one of the world's most remarkable destinations, Cuba. Relatively undiscovered, culturally rich, with a colourful past as well as some breath-taking scenery, Cuba is just waiting to be explored. The largest island in the Caribbean, this 14-day tour allows you to immerse yourself in the country's rich culture and vintage charm, forged through its colonial and revolutionary history.



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Who is Academy Travel?

Academy Travel is a leading specialist in small-group cultural tours, who strives to provide well-planned, fulfilling and enjoyable itineraries, allowing you to travel with like-minded companions and learn from internationally renowned experts. The tours are designed to appeal to travellers with a strong interest in history, archaeology, architecture, the visual arts and the performing arts. All tours are designed around three basic principles: expert tour leaders, maximum 16 guests in a group, and carefully planned itineraries. Their aim is to provide a rewarding, in-depth travel experience with each tour providing a balanced programme showcasing the best of a destination.



How to book

Once you've finished browsing these pages at your leisure and you're ready to treat yourself to a place on one of our holidays, just get in touch and we'll do the rest!

Give our Specialist Sales Executives a call on **01334 766 046**.
Alternatively, you can email us at info@brightwaterholidays.com

For further details of any of the trips mentioned, including information about our day-by-day itineraries or to see our full booking conditions, please visit our website: www.brightwaterholidays.com

Happy holiday hunting and we look forward to hearing from you!



Havana, Cuba



Old Havana

14 DAYS FROM
£9,995

MAXIMUM GROUP
SIZE: 16

TOUR MANAGER
DR STEPHEN WILKINSON

Cuba – History, Art, Music & Culture

Situated in the Caribbean Sea, Cuba brims with colour, history and charm. The country's singular character was forged in the historical intricacies of colonialism, genocide, slavery, invasion and populist revolution. From the sugar cane fields that produce its famous rum, the ever-present salsa, the beautiful bays and beaches and the magnificent colonial architecture, Cuba enthral with its natural beauty, exuberant politics and diverse mix of cultures.

This 14-day itinerary is mainly centred in Havana, where you'll learn first-hand about Cuba's complex history of colonialism and revolution. In the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Old Town, this living history is on display with colourful colonial architecture, 1950s Americana, and the bars, cafes and music that reveal its diversity of cultural influences.

Further afield, we'll enjoy day trips to the revolutionary town of Santa Clara, the unique ecovillage of Las Terrazas and the historically significant Bay of Pigs. We'll also spend two nights exploring in and around the town of Trinidad, one of the best-preserved examples of Spanish colonial architecture on the island. The tour will take you beyond the 'rum and rumba' and give you special access to understand Cuba for yourself.

Monday 10 February 2024

We depart from London to arrive in Havana, Cuba later the same day. On arrival, we transfer to the hotel where the remainder of the evening is at leisure. (IF)

Sunday 11 February 2024

After breakfast, the day is at leisure to explore. Later, we'll gather in the evening for orientation and a light dinner in a nearby paladar, a small, family-run restaurant. (D)

Monday 12 February 2024

After breakfast, our first morning in Havana begins with a talk in the hotel, followed by a walking tour through the alleys and squares of old Havana, including the Plaza de Armas and the small Museo el Templete.

After a welcome lunch at a local restaurant, we'll embark on a tour through modern Havana in classic cars. We'll cruise along the Plaza de la

Revolucion and the Malecón, an eight-kilometre seafront thoroughfare and gathering place for musicians, poets and local fisherman. Along the way we'll stop for a cocktail at the historic Hotel Nacional. (B, L)

Tuesday 13 February 2024

After breakfast at leisure, our talk in the hotel this morning focuses on the Cuban Revolution, the momentous 1959 uprising that began the 50-year rule of Fidel Castro. Afterward, we'll follow up with a visit to the new Fidel Castro Centre, completed in 2021. Housed in a former socialite's mansion in a leafy upscale neighbourhood, the museum serves as a library and study centre for Castro's life and writings.

Later in the afternoon we'll visit Revolution Square and the José Martí Museum. Located in the birthplace of Cuba's national hero, the museum features seven exhibition halls that display personal items, recreate the atmosphere

of Martí's New York office, and commemorate his activities as a delegate of the Revolutionary Cuban Party. (B)

Wednesday 14 February 2024

This morning after breakfast, we depart by coach early for a day trip to Las Terrazas ('The Terraces'), a unique rural ecovillage located in the Sierra del Rosario, 75km west of Havana. Classified as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, this small artistic community is situated in a lush natural paradise, one of Cuba's most important national parks. We'll visit the ecovillage and its artisans, explore the forest canopy, and stop by a sustainable coffee plantation.

Following a lunch of locally produced organic food, you'll have the opportunity to swim in the pools of the San Juan River before we return to Havana (B, L)

Thursday 15 February 2024

After breakfast, the day begins with a visit to the National Art School of Cuba, conceived by Castro and Che Guevara to transform a golf course into a beautiful and tuition-free art school. The architects who designed the school—Porro, Gottardi and Garatti—rejected the International Style, instead adopting forms and materials that expressed the roots of Cuban culture: Catalan arches, terracotta, stone arcades, and free-flowing structures. Our next stop is Fusterlandia, an economically depressed neighbourhood transformed over time by the Cuban artist José Fuster into a surreal, colourful wonderland. Inspired by the public works of artists like Gaudi and the Romanian Brâncuși, this old fishing village now sports colourful mosaics, sculptures, recycled art and winding passages. (B, L)

Friday 16 February 2024

Cuban art often expresses the diversity of peoples and cultures who have made Cuba home: an eclectic combination of African, European, Caribbean and Latin American cultures. Today, we'll have a lecture on Cuban art at the hotel, followed by a visit to the National Museum of Fine Arts. The museum houses Cuba's historical collection of art, showing the development of fine art in Cuba from the colonial era to the main art movements of revolutionary Cuba.

After a group dinner at a local palada, we visit the Fábrica de Arte Cubano—the vibrant centre of contemporary art in Havana. This former oil mill was converted into an interdisciplinary space for visual arts, dance, theatre, architecture and music. The exhibitions held there run fluidly throughout the space and encourage collaboration and exchange between all varieties of artists and the public. (B, D)

Saturday 17 February 2024

Today is long but rewarding day as we make an early departure by coach for the 3.5-hour journey to Santa Clara, point zero for the history of the revolution. It was here that revolutionary guerrillas led by Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos defeated Batista's army, forcing the president to flee the country. This morning, after a talk on the coach about Guevara and the capture of Santa Clara, we visit two important revolutionary sites: the Che Guevara Memorial and Mausoleum, where the revolutionary's remains are interred, and the Monumento al Tren Blindado, where Guevara and a group of rebels successfully captured an armoured supply train sent by Batista.

After lunch in Santa Clara, we'll continue onto the colonial town of Trinidad. Along the way we'll stop at Sugar Mill Valley, a living museum of Cuban sugar production that includes the sites of 75 former cane sugar mills. We'll visit a sugar mill and ascend a tower built by the sugar-rich owners to keep watch over their enslaved workers. Upon arrival in Trinidad, we'll have dinner at the hotel. (B, L, D)

Sunday 18 February 2024

After breakfast this morning, we'll make the short excursion to the Sierra del Escambray for a trek through the green, hilly countryside with a specialist guide. The Escambray area is known for its rich biodiversity, winding trails and clear river waters.

After lunch at a farmhouse-style restaurant, you'll have the chance to go for a swim in a local river pool. On our return to Trinidad, we hope to stop for some wild-picked coffee courtesy of one of the locals. (B, L)

Monday 19 February 2024

After breakfast this morning, we'll make our way back to Havana by way of the Bay of Pigs. A beautiful white-sand bay on the southwestern coast, it was the site of a 1961 incident that sparked extraordinary tensions between the US and Cuba. Financed and directed by the US government, some 1500 Cuban exiles were dispatched to invade Cuba and overthrow Castro's government. Castro's troops quickly repelled the invasion, and tensions sparked by the conflict led to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. We'll visit the Bay of Pigs Museum and take a tour of the area to learn more about the incident.

After lunch, we'll take a boat ride through the mangroves at Guama in Zapata National Park. With its extensive and varied ecosystems, the area has gained a reputation as a bird-watcher's paradise. (B, L)

Tuesday 20 February 2024

Ernest Hemingway frequently lived in Cuba from 1940-1960, during which he reached the height of his success. Though he described himself as a 'garden-variety Cuban,' and US-Cuba relations deteriorated rapidly after the revolution, he is nonetheless honoured here as one of the country's most important cultural figures.

This morning after breakfast we have a lecture on US-Cuba relations, followed by a visit to Finca Vigía—Hemingway's house, preserved as a museum.

After a leisurely afternoon, we'll make a visit to La Tropicana, the legendary Havana cabaret. Situated on a lush, six-acre tropical garden estate,

the club features open-air high-energy shows with singing and dancing that will bring you back to 1950s Cuba. (B, D)

Wednesday 21 February 2024

After breakfast this morning, we'll take a walking tour of some Havana neighbourhoods, including a stroll down Callejon del Hamel, a narrow alley filled with colourful Afro-Cuban-inspired murals.

After a leisurely afternoon, we'll take a sunset drive in classic American cars along the Malecón on the way to our farewell dinner. (B, D)

Thursday 22 February 2024

After breakfast, we transfer to the airport for our return overnight flight to London. (B, IF)

Friday 23 February 2024

Arrive in London.

Inc. meals:

IF: In flight, L: Lunch, B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

YOUR TOUR MANAGER DR STEPHEN WILKINSON

Dr Stephen Wilkinson is Chairman of the International Institute for the Study of Cuba and holds a PhD in Cuban literature. Stephen will be accompanied by a local guide for the duration of the tour.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ International flights from London
- ▶ 6 lunches and 4 dinners
- ▶ 12 nights' bed and breakfast accommodation in centrally located 5-star hotels
- ▶ Arrival transfer from the airport to hotel
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary including tipping
- ▶ Services of Dr Stephen Wilkinson as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024	
10 – 23 Feb 2024	£9,995
Single Supplement	£1,495
Cuban visas are not included, call for details.	

Tour code: BACU

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