

VISIT CUBA

PREPARATION BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

VACCINATIONS

All routine vaccinations, COVID, HPV, etc. Consult with travel doctor. **CDC recommends: Typhoid and Rabies inoculation.**

Request Azithromycin or Fluoroquinolones.

STATE DEPARTMENT "SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM"

Complete STEP the week before you leave at "step.state.gov". Use information from itinerary to complete the application.

VISA AND PRE-ARRIVAL INFO

Two different forms which are required to enter Cuba.

1 – Tourist/Visa Card. Actual Visa. Purchase online for \$85. Complete in pen (exact info) before flight. **Will be mailed to you. Complete carefully – Customs doesn't like cross outs.**

2 – D'Viajeros. Pre-arrival "eVisa". Fill out at least 24 hours (but no more than 72 hours) before you arrive in Cuba. Save PDF and print out one copy. Make sure to **include your first and middle name when it asks for your "Primary" name.**

You will present a printed copy of the QR code to Cuban Customs and to the airline at check-in. You will need to skip automated check-in and go directly to the counter when you check your bags.

SIM CARD

You will need a phone which has a SIM card slot. You will not be able to download apps in Cuba. You *may* not be able to access some email services. More info on the next page.

Turn off SMS 2-factor-authentication if you need to.

Plan to use WhatsApp to communicate. Your Cuban SIM card will provide data to allow you to communicate using your USA telephone number as your ID. You will probably not use your Cuban telephone number. WhatsApp uses WiFi and Cuban data.

When you get your SIM they will give you a plastic card with printed info. **Take a photo of the PKU and PIN.** You NEED the PIN to open your phone with a SIM card here (*this feature is usually disabled in the USA*). There is space to write that down on the next page.

DON'T FORGET TO PACK

- Sun screen (expensive!)
- Flip flops (impossible to find)
- Grocery bag/carrying bag (you can purchase canvas bag for several dollars from tourist shops if needed)
- Headphones (FYI - people do not generally engage with content in public)
- Charger
- Bring toiletries (shampoo, soap, hair spray, pills, etc.)
- Recommend books, mini-Spanish dictionary
- Power bank (power cuts happen)
- Life straw water bottle (can't drink the water)

BAGGAGE

CARRY ON: including the handles and wheels, cannot exceed 22 x 14 x 9 (sizer at the airport).

PERSONAL ITEM: should not exceed 18 x 14 x 8", must fit under the seat, etc."

CHECKED BAG: 62" circumference of bag, 50 lbs.

Wrap your luggage. Purchase two wraps, pack one, use the other.

CASH

Cuba has a very complex currency system but we will primarily be using US dollars and "*moneda nacional*" (pesos).

Prices are generally given in pesos, and when paying in dollars it is common for a person to show you the calculator as they convert from pesos to dollars.

You will always receive pesos as change, never coins. Do not accept less than _____ pesos per dollar. You can always ask someone to write it down the number "*escriba por favor*".

Check eltoque.com for exchange rate.

**NOTE: CONDITIONS IN CUBA CHANGE OFTEN,
DOUBLE CHECK ALL THIS INFORMATION BEFORE
MAKING ANY PLANS**

VISIT CUBA

ARRIVAL AND FLIGHT INFORMATION

DO NOT FORGET

1. Passport
2. “Card” Visa
3. Printed D’Viajeros QR code check-in sheet
4. Cash
5. Check departure time
6. Download (in the USA)
 - a. VPN (log in)
 - b. WhatsApp
 - c. LaNave (need to be in Cuba to open)
 - d. Offline maps
 - e. Music/videos
 - f. Google Translate (offline mode)
7. Complete STEP with State Dept.

MONEY

Credit/debit essentially do not work in Cuba. **Withdraw cash at bank counter in USA, ask for “new” bills. Recommend splitting bills into smaller packs**, distributing around carry-on. Purchase money belt if wanted, carry around chest, not waist. Do NOT exchange money at any official stand. US bills are universally accepted. Change is always given in CUP (pesos).

EXCHANGE RATE IS: _____

VISA – REMINDER!

Purchase “tourist card” at least 21 days before trip. Can be purchased at most airline counters in airport for extra \$15. **Keep your tourist card in a safe place: YOU CANNOT EXIT CUBA WITHOUT IT!**

Complete D’Viajeros (eVisa) online 72 – 48 hours before arrival. Print the QR code to present at customs.

AS YOU LAND

Take a moment to prepare

- (1) your passport,
- (2) tourist visa,
- (3) eVISA QR code (D’Viajeros),
- (4) cell phone,
- (5) SIM collection email/screenshots

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Departure time and date: _____ @ _____

Estimated arrival time in HAV: _____

HAV flight number: _____

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

Beinvanidos! Exit the plane. Collect your SIM card. Pass through customs/immigration control. Present your D’Viajeros and “Card” Visa. Pass through security. Collect your baggage. Exit the terminal.

It will be hot and humid, and you will *immediately* begin getting offers for a taxi.

CELL PHONE

You cannot access either app store in Cuba. **Before arriving in Cuba download WhatsApp, offline maps for Havana (La Habana), an app called LaNave (Uber), log-in to your VPN, and set Google Translate Spanish to offline.** Download music or podcasts app and set your app to offline when you arrive.

SIM email confirmation code: _____

Pick up your Cuban SIM at the airport. **Look for a ‘CUBATUR’ booth before Customs** (customs = red walled booths), **near the stairs just after you deplane.** Keep the small card and manual they give you with the SIM Card. **Take a photo of the PKU and PIN info** – write them down here when you can. You NEED the PIN to open your phone with a SIM card here (*this feature is usually disabled in the USA*).

SIM PKU: _____

SIM PIN: _____

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TRAVEL TO CUBA

Reminder: Flying to Cuba from or through the U.S. for **tourism is not allowed**. There are 13 permitted reasons for travel. Our reason is “**Support for the Cuban people**”. This reason is automatically chosen for you when you purchase your Card Visa.

NUMBERS

10 diez		
20 veinte	60 sesenta	
30 treinta	70 setenta	
40 cuarenta	80 ochenta	
50 cincuenta	90 noventa	
100 cien	600 seiscientos	2000 dos mil
200 doscientos	700 setecientos	3000 tres mil
300 trescientos	800 ochocientos	“
400 cuatrocientos	900 novecientos	“ etc.
500 quinientos	1000 mil	

DIRECTIONS

Up	“arriba”	Down	“abajo”
Left	“izquierda”	Right	“derecha”
Forward	“adelante”	Backwards	“atras”
Here	“aqui”	There	“alli”
Close	“cerca”	Far	“lejos”

FINAL DATES

Order VISA by _____
Order SIM card by _____
Book experience by _____

THINGS TO KNOW

ETECSA – phone company , CUBATUR – tour company
How do I get to – “*Como llego a ...*”
Bus = “*Guagua*”, Taxi = “*Taxi*”, shared taxi = “*Collectivo*”
Avoid bici(bike)-taxis, coco-taxis (yellow coconuts)
Negotiate prices **before** entering a taxi
Do not order food without seeing the price on a menu
You have to pay to use the restroom! Tip at least \$1.
Wraps your luggage going in and out!

ADDRESSES

Much of Cuba was built before modern mail and addresses. Some streets have two names. **You will typically receive a cross-street with any address** you are given (and you are expected to provide the same). Most buildings have an official number, which comes after the street name. Buildings may have names which prefix the street name and number.

Building numbers are written on doors, walls, or plaques. There is little uniformity in signage.

Street signs in modern areas are clear. In older areas street names are on brass plaques about 8 feet up, affixed to buildings on the corner of each street.

- Follow local pedestrians’ example whenever possible
- Be mindful of cars, animals, bikes, dripping water, and potholes.
- Watch for traffic **always!**
- Sidewalks are uneven universally (when they exist)
- Traffic lights function as stop signs in power outages.

BUILDINGS

Only very expensive shops will have signage. You may need to look into each doorway as you get close to your destination.

- Be aware that some buildings are unstable – avoid construction sites.
- Do NOT use handrails like we do in the United States.
- Do NOT lean on any railings or force any doors.
- Keep an eye out for electrical cables on the ground and exposed high voltage connections.

Locks are often triple/double turn (deadbolt has two/three positions of “locked”)

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EMERGENCY INFORMATION

EMERGENCY PLANS

You are unable to get your SIM card:

Note the reason. If we need to visit an ESTECA office later, we can.

Unable to find your arranged driver:

Pay for a taxi. You will usually have your pick. Start with \$20 (absolutely no more than \$40) to go to:

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

If you need a phone, you can ask to use someone's cellphone or calling card (payphone are common but use cards). \$1 USD will more than pay for your phone call. You can also buy your own calling card.

Cuba's country code is +53. The USA's county code is +1.

On WhatsApp you need to enter the full number.

Via a phonebooth or landline you will skip dialing the "+53"

Directory Assistance – 113

To call the United States from Cuba:

Dial 116. Enter your card number. Press #.

Dial 119. Then 1 and the phone number.

(ex. To dial the US number 707-555-1212

116,123456#,119,17075551212)

YOUR BUDGET

Meals: \$5 – 15 / meal

Activities: \$20 - 150 each

Lodging: \$15 – 150 / day

Taxis: \$5 - \$20+ / trip

9-1-1 EQUIVALENTS:

1-0-6 for POLICE/EMERGENCY

1-0-5 for FIRE

MEDICAL: Flag down a private car to get to a hospital.
Ambulance services do not exist.

U.S. Embassy

Telephone +53 7839-4100

Press "1" for 24/7 operator.

Address:

Calzada between L and M Streets,
Vedado,
Havana, Cuba

Past the Grand National Hotel, near the Malecon

The US Embassy can:

- *help you find medical care*
- *assist you in reporting a crime to the police*
- *contact relatives or friends with your written consent*
- *provide general information regarding the victim's role during the local investigation and following its conclusion*
- *provide a list of local attorneys*
- *provide information on victim's compensation programs in the U.S.*
- *provide an emergency loan for repatriation to the United States and/or limited medical support in cases of destitution*
- *help you find accommodation and arrange flights home*
- *replace a stolen or lost passport*