

Havana and the Valley of Silence

April 10, 2025



Day 1 - Arrival in Havana, relaxing evening

Our welcome to Cuba!

The largest island in the Caribbean, Hemingway's much-loved abode. We will first relax and enjoy your first night in Havana. We will kick things off with a **cocktail, light dinner and sunset views**.

Day 2 – Havana, walking tour

After breakfast, our guide will take us on a walking tour of Old Havana, Cuba's capital and the finest surviving Spanish colonial city in the Americas. Havana is a bustling capital full of historic monuments, cathedrals and palaces. It has been preserved by a combination of very little war damage, post Revolution restoration work and the millions of dollars invested since it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1982.

As well as visiting Havana's four colonial plazas, we will understand the history of Batista and relationship to the United States and the influence of the Mafia. We will visit many of the local businesses and contemporary Cuban art. We'll have lunch in Old Havana in a local paladar.

Lunch on your own plus we split the cost of lunch for the guide.

After lunch we will board one of Cuba's famous vintage cars for a tour into the Havana Forest and Fusterlandia.

The Forest of Havana is a refreshing urban oasis right in the heart of the city. It's like a peaceful escape from the city's hustle and bustle. You can chill out, go for a relaxing walk, and enjoy a little break from all the city chaos. The trees and plants make it super chill, and it's a great spot for a laid-back afternoon. It might not be the biggest forest you've seen, but it's easy to get to and totally worth it for a quiet, nature-filled break right in Havana.

Fusterlandia is a vibrant art community in the Jaimanitas neighborhood of Havana, Cuba, created by Cuban artist José Fuster. The neighborhood was transformed into a colorful mosaic masterpiece, making it a magical place that seems straight out of a child's imagination

Group Dinner at one of Havana's paladars' (private restaurants).

Day 3 - Travel to Vinales

This morning, we will head west to Viñales in Cuba's western-most province, Pinar del Rio. The Valley of Viñales forms part of the Los Organos Mountain range, the oldest area in Cuba. The valley is famous for its mogotes, or karsts – rounded mountains that seem to bubble out of the ground. This striking phenomenon dates back to the Jurassic Period when the area was a cave system that collapsed, leaving steep walls that turned into these unique mountains. This dramatic landscape also happens to be where the best tobacco in the world is lovingly grown.

Despite becoming a popular tourist destination over the last decade, Viñales retains its laid-back, small-town feel. You will see farmers working the land to the stunning backdrop of the valley's unique mogotes, children riding horses to school, farmers enjoying a cigar under the shade of an avocado tree and oxen slowly pulling carts.

We will first stop at the Orchid Garden for a brief stop before heading to the outlook to get a view of the beautiful valley before proceeding to lunch. Our **lunch** will be at farm to table organic restaurant overlooking the famous Vinales tobacco farms. After lunch we will stop at Benito's tobacco farm where we will learn all about the tobacco-growing process, from seedling to harvesting the tobacco for the cigar. Here you will be able to purchase your cigars!

This evening, we will walk to the main square to visit the shops, listen to the music or find a dinner spot on your **own**.

Day 4 – Vinales Sunrise Hike

The early sunrise walking tour. We will be picked up from our accommodations and begin a walk-in prehistoric valley mountains. We will then hike to a viewpoint on a local farm. From this vantage point we will be able to view the Mogotes, hear the sound of the birds and enjoy the natural beauty of the area. Here we will have **breakfast** of fresh fruit, coffee, natural juices.

Return to the hotel. **Lunch** on your own. Later in the afternoon will be picked up from our accommodations and go the Indian Caves which has the best underground river tour via boat. There is a small artisan market at the exist.

Group Dinner at a family restaurant near the caves.

Day 5 - Mountain Bike; pig roast

We will ride our bikes to the pig roast! On the way to the pig roast, we will pass the Indian Caves. We will arrive at lunch via carts pulled by bulls. **Lunch** will be roasted pork with Creole food and fresh vegetables as well as other traditional Cuban foods at a tobacco farm. We will learn about sustainable agriculture in the region.

Dinner on your own.

Day 6 – Cayo

From our Viñales casas, we transfer to Cayo Jutías from which you'll enjoy a piece of paradise located on the north coast of Cuba. This is a day of relaxation on one of the most beautiful beaches in the Caribbean!

We will be picked up at our casas in Viñales at the scheduled time and start a 2-hour drive to reach Cayo Jutías. Once we arrive at our destination, you'll have 5 to 6 hours of free time to enjoy this breathtaking natural site. It's one of the main sandy islands that make up the famous archipelago of Los Colorados.

If you work up an appetite, in this little haven of peace and tranquility, you can also try the local specialty on your **own**: lobster! And if you bring your snorkeling mask, you can discover the magnificent giant starfish that live on the seabed. Though it's a rare species, there are plenty that inhabit this area.

This is a full day. **Lunch and dinner on your own.**

Day 7 - Horseback riding

Biking for those who do not want to or some other activity. There is no need to be an expert rider as it will be the first time for most of the people who book a Horseback riding tour.

We will be picked up at the hotel via horse carriage. Then we will ride for 4 hours with different stops at various viewpoints in the National Park. We will travel along the path that passes many local farms. Then a stop at a coffee and tobacco farm for an explanation of the coffee drying processes, how they collect honey; how agriculture works in the valley. We will then go to the caves for swimming in the natural pools. **Lunch** on your own.

Group dinner in town.

Day 8 - Ride to Murals

Ride to murals for one last look of Vinales. Back to Havana for an overnight prior to departures.

What's included:

- Accommodation for 8 days
- All Breakfasts, 2 Lunches, 4 Dinners
- English-Speaking Cuban tour guide
- Transportation to and from Havana, Vinales; city vintage tour

What's not included:

- Flights, travel insurance, visas, gratuities

Total Cost of Trip: \$1084

Single Supplemental: Additional \$212

What to bring:

- Sun protection, High strength sunscreen, sunglasses, sun hat
- Water bottle with filter if you would like to be able to refill from the tap
- Light Clothing; light cotton and linen clothing suitable for tropical climates.
- Personal toiletries and any essential medication (including insect repellent and antihistamines). Cubans dress casually but are always impeccably turned out. Avoid bringing expensive jewelry.
- Donations

References:

- [Orange County - Not Just Tourists](#)
- [Travel Insurance - Curated Options That Fit Your Style](#)

