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BESPOKE LUXURY TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

Travelling Sue  
come away with me  
*Cool* CUBA

March 2019



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**Sunday 3 March - Monday 11 March 2019**

Come with me to the island of Cuba!

Join me and a maximum of 10 like minded woman who are fun, adventurous, interesting and want to discover the history,flavours and rhythm of the Island.

Included are the highlights with time for you to go off and explore yourselves but know we can share our stories over dinner, drinks and dancing.

Looking forward to travelling with you.

*Susan*

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Visa: You need a visa for Cuba - this will be arranged once the booking is confirmed
- Passport: Needs to be valid for 2 months post departure from Cuba
- Accommodation will consist of a mix of hotels and *Casa Particulares*, which are private residences that have a licence to host guests, almost all only have queen/king beds so we have a room per person throughout the trip.

**The owners are incredibly friendly, welcoming and you will be comfortable but it is not 5\* luxury it is boutique and real!**



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## Detailed Itinerary

**Day 1:** 3rd March 2019

Welcome to **Havana!**



Any Cuban journey must start in **Havana**. Her faded beauty is legendary, this is hands down the most winsome city in the Caribbean. It's also rising up from its ruins: a chunk of the tourist money that has hit the Cuban coffers over the last two decades has been showered on sprucing up Habana Vieja, the old colonial centre. Once fortified against the threat of pirates and colonial rivals, the seductive city has risen from the ashes with the painstaking restoration work of city architect Eusebio Leal, who had to bring some restoration artisans out of retirement to realise his dream and pass their wisdom on to the next generation.

Cobbled streets lead to now immaculately polished Baroque churches, castles and palaces. Plazas have been returned to their former glory, their fountains flowing once more, their facades re-rendered attentively. Along the seafront of Havana, the Malecon, the strains of salsa waft from the rebooted sound systems of vintage Cadillacs and Buicks, and the facades of grandiose seafront buildings are being slowly resurrected. Admittedly, the restoration money hasn't quite reached most of the rest of the city yet. Street life in Havana is key: on-the-ground socialising is the top Cuban pastime, whether that's domino playing, gossiping, or arguing loudly about baseball, so from the Havana belles to the beauteous buildings, there is always something to captivate and beguile.



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Upon disembarking you will be met at the airport and escorted through customs to your driver. You will then be transferred to your first hotel. As the accommodation tends to be quite small we have two private residences for the group.

### No.1 - Luxury Old Havana



Beautiful boutique private residence on the 6th floor in Old Havana (lift available), lovingly decorated in a 1940s-1950s style. 5 bedrooms en suite, combination of two apartments. Fully serviced by a daily cleaner and with nice touches like fully stocked minibar and flowers. Nice and quiet and with lovely views of Old Havana

### No.2 - Gardens Apartment



Newly refurbished apartment in the old town of Havana. 5 bedrooms ensuite. Great design with amazing views of the city.

Once you are settled in, your private concierge will welcome you and go through your itinerary explaining your exciting activities, answer any questions and make suggestions of places to see and things to do in your free time.



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### 17:00 - City Tour Colonial Havana

Walk in the footsteps of Havana's colonial past visiting the four key squares of Old Havana - a UNESCO World Heritage site. Visit Plaza de Armas, Plaza San Francisco de Asis, Plaza Vieja, and the Plaza de la Cathedral with your expert guide offering insight into history along the way. This is a walking tour and takes approximately 2 hours. Lunch and afternoon at leisure.



### 19:00 - Dinner at Paladar Los Mercaderes (Included)

Romantic and refined, this place serves great Cuban and international food with charming service in a luxurious first floor dining room.

**Day 2:** 4th Mar 2019

### 09:30 - Revolution Tour

Discover Cuban revolutionary history through some of the most historic sites in the Capital. Starting with a panoramic trip along the Malecon, where you will see monuments to some Cuban Independence War heroes, and discover how Cuban history then brought the country to the revolution lead by Fidel Castro. Visit the Revolution Museum, which was once the luxurious Presidential Palace of all Cuban presidents from Mario Garcia Menocal to Fulgencio Batista.

Stop by Hotel Sevilla in Old Havana to see and learn about the most famous mob men in Cuba who had Havana under control until 1959. Visit what most non-Cubans will never get to know, a bodega, one of the government shops used for the distribution of rationed low-priced food products to the Cuban people. See the price differences by then visiting a fresh food product market (Mercado Agropecuario). Finish the tour with some city sightseeing at Revolution Square, symbol of the Cuban socialist revolution.



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The rest of your day is at leisure roam the streets or head back to your room to sneak in a nap and rest.



**20.00** Head to dinner at **Cinco Sentidos**, known for the quality of food and their exceptional service ... one of the best new restaurants in town. Spectacular seafood dishes and great wine list.



**Day 3: 5th Mar 2019**

**10:30 Food tour and lunch (included) at Grados**

With your chef, you will visit a produce market to learn about the different ways Cubans have access to food (and the different prices). Then a lunch at Grados, a return to old school paladars where the owner is the chef. Raulito chats as he cooks while you enjoy a drink. Expect long lost childhood recipes from pre-revolution Cuba such as the delicious lamb slow-cooked in prú (an eastern Cuba herbal drink) or a countryside classic called farm eggs on a bed of maize.





**14:00 Cigar rolling at Conde Villanueva**

In the afternoon partake in a very old Cuban tradition and something the country is known for worldwide. In an atmospheric mezzanine bolt-hole in a small hotel in Havana Vieja, there is a Casa de Habanos, an official purveyor of Cuban cigars. An experienced cigar roller works everyday showing how the best cigars in the world are rolled. While this is not the factory experience it does give you a good idea of how cigars are made with more of a chance to ask questions.



Dinner at Leisure

**Day 4: 6th Mar 2019**

**09:00** Your guide and driver will collect you at your hotel in Havana and transfer you to Trinidad via **Cienfuegos**.

**12:30 Lunch at Camila's Bar and Restaurant (Included) in Cienfuegos**

A lovely option for brunch and lunch. Dine on Cuban creole or Caribbean food with a beautiful view of lovely Cienfuegos Bay.



**Trinidad** is by far and away the most handsome town in Cuba, with multi coloured pastel hue terraces and rust-red roofs. This fertile land of mountain and sea has always brought wealth to lucky locals. In the colonial area, especially between 1750 and 1850, sugar cane was huge, and fabulously rich Spanish families built gorgeous mansions around Trinidad's main square off the back of their sugar mills in the valley. Now their descendants rent rooms out to visiting foreigners. Mountain and sea collide around the Topes de Collantes, producing rich soil for crops. As produce is bountiful, the home-cooked food has always been superior, even in bad economic times



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### La Ronda



La Ronda is located next to Trinidad's historic center and is a 5 min walk from Plaza Mayor. The hotel has been recently renovated and due to its excellent position, visitors get the opportunity to have fast access to Trinidad's historic center and other interesting places. You will each have your own rooms.

#### 20:00 Dinner at Finca Kenia (Included)

Enjoy a home-cooked and locally sourced dinner at your host's home where fresh fish is a speciality. After dinner why not listen to some live music at Bar Colonial. Every night except Friday, the best band in Trinidad - Aire Fresco - jams away to the delight of sitting down customers and passersby. Old Cuban classics, blues and jazz, you name it, they got it.

#### Day 5: 7th Mar 2019

##### 10:00 Trinidad City Tour and Trinidad Art and Artisan Tour

A walking tour which introduces you to this UNESCO World Heritage Site. An expert guide will explain the history of the town, while visiting its architecture highlights, and give you insight into its fascinating history in the colonial era, and during the years after the Revolution. Trinidad is home to important artisan craft producers. From the pottery family, Santander, to Trinidad families who have been making lace for generations, you will see some of the best hand made crafts on this tour. Along with a very rich art tradition, too, the guide will take you on a tour to the best of both worlds.







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### Afternoon and Evening free

Enjoy free time to explore this beautiful and colour city. Walk through the streets admiring the lovely architecture, relax with cocktail in hand on the beach or discover little shops and food stalls.



**Day 6: 8th Mar 2019**

### 09:00 Jeep Safari to Topes de Collantes (Lunch included)



Today you will ride up to the Escambray mountains in 4X4 SUVs. You will go up to Guanayara and trek through the tropical forest of Topes. Bird watching and an opportunity for swimming at the waterfall make this a must for nature lovers; remember to bring your swimsuit, mosquito repellent and water.

You will have a typical Cuban lunch at Restaurant El Manantial.

Return to Trinidad for an afternoon at leisure.

### 20:00 Dinner at San Jose (Included)

The latest paladar in Trinidad, San Jose has a Cuban-Fusion inspired menu. It's fresh, tasty and comes in huge portions! The decoration is part New York loft, part Cuban colonial home with a mixed clientele of Cubans and tourists. There is an air-conditioned section for those who need to cool down.



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**Day 7: 9th Mar 2019**

**10:00** Your driver will collect at Trinidad and transfer you to Havana via Santa Clara.

No trip to Cuba is complete without a trip to the Che memorial.

Pay homage to this charismatic leader of the Cuban revolution where he fought and won the battle of Santa Clara.



A light lunch at Cafe Museo Revolucion (included). This new cafe pays homage to Santa Clara's (and Cuba's) revolutionary past with photos, old uniforms and other ephemera lovingly curated by the owner. The coffee and milk shakes are pretty revolutionary too.

After lunch your driver will head back to Havana for the next two nights.

As the accommodation tends to be quite small we have two private residences for the group. Check into Petite Chateau and Casa Bonita.

### Petite Chateau



The house was built in 1920 in Vedado. In addition to its superb location, it also features impressive architectural features. They offer 4 rooms ensuite.



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### Casa Bonita



A restored colonial house in the Vedado neighborhood. Vintage furnishings, including a terrace with garden. Modern bedrooms (3 bedrooms en suite) and a separate apartment with 2 bedrooms sharing one bathroom.

#### 20:00 Dinner at Dona Eutimia (Included)

An elaborate ambience, a fresh and functional design and a privileged location are attributes that allow this restaurant to offer both comfort and very good Cuban creole food. Situated in the heart of Old Havana just off the cathedral square.

**Day 8:** 10th Mar 2019

#### 09:30 Mafia tour, The Gangsters' Paradise of the 50's- open Vintage cars!

Since the 1930s Havana had been busy with scheming mobsters. Meyer Lansky, Lucky Luciano, and Al Capone to name but a few all came to meddle in Havana. This tour visits the haunts of the Mafia bosses and along the way takes in the panoramic views of the city and some of the best architecture of this period. All enjoyed with your guide and from the back of an open top vintage car.





**12:30 - Light Lunch at El Cafe (Included)**

One of the newest kids on the cafe block in Old Havana. This very chilled (unmarked) cafe is the perfect place for coffee, salads, breakfasts or filling sandwiches on homemade sourdough bread. Their fresh juices are highly recommended, too.

**14:00 - Hemingway Tour in classic American Car (in 3 open top vintage car)**

Hemingways villa in the outskirts of Havana is exactly as Hemingway left it 1960: hundreds of personal belongings, his large swimming pool, the Wheeler boat he used to fish, the three-story tower with a spectacular views, and much more. Your expert guide will show you around and share with you interesting insights into the life of Hemingway and that period in the history of Cuba.



On the way back to town, your guide will bring you to see Cojimar fishing village: a small picturesque town that inspired Hemingway to write the novel *The Old Man and the Sea*, and whose fishermen he dedicated his Nobel Prize to. As you finish the tour you will have an opportunity to see some of the most spectacular views of the city from the El Morro fort across the harbour from Havana. This tour takes approximately 4 hours

**20:00 - Dinner at Cafe Laurent (Included)**

A stylish and professional restaurant, foremost in the new wave of private Havana eating establishments which have opened in the last few years. It oozes 1950s glamour with old newspapers with 1950s adverts covering one of the walls. Billowing white awnings outside provide shade and a touch of modern Miami.

**Day 9:** 11th Mar 2019

10:00 - Private Transfer from Havana to José Martí airport



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**Cost Per Person: \$3,750.00** - 50% non refundable deposit required to secure a place

**Includes**

- 8 x Nights accommodation in individual rooms including VAT and taxes (rooms will be allocated on a first come first serve basis in each of the casas)
- 6 x Dinners with limited drinks
- 5 x Lunches with limited drinks
- Tips for guides, pre-paid meals, drivers (except airport taxis) and concierge
- Concierge service
- Return airport transfers
- All transport for specified activities
- Activities as specified:
  - Havana City private tour with English speaking guide
  - Havana Revolution private tour with English speaking guide
  - Havana food tour with lunch
  - Cigar rolling experience
  - Trinidad city and art private tour with English speaking guide
  - Jeep safari and walk private with English speaking guide
  - Havana Mafia private tour in vintage cars
  - Hemingway private tour in classic cars

**Excludes**

- Gratuities unless specified
- Meals unless specified
- Laundry unless specified
- Flights
- Travel Insurance
- Personal purchases
- Visa Costs
- USA Itinerary