



## IMPORTANT PRE-TRIP INFORMATION & PACKING LIST

You are traveling to Cuba under the **Religious Activities general license CFR 515.566** category of approved OFAC travel. We have crafted your itinerary to meet the requirements of the U.S. and Cuban governments.

**HOW MUCH CASH TO BRING AND GENERAL CURRENCY INFO:** You do not need to exchange money - USD and EUROS are accepted in Cuba. Please allow enough planning time to secure the **cash** you need from your bank. **U.S.-based credit cards and ATMs are NOT operational in Cuba.** You cannot get more money in Cuba if you don't bring extra cash. The Hotels do not exchange money.

Small denominations such as \$ '50s or \$ '20s are best. \$ 1s and \$ 5s are helpful for tipping. **Please request crisp, undamaged bills from your bank - some establishments in Cuba will not accept damaged or crumpled bills.** Your hotel room has a safe. You can carry as much cash as needed and keep your remaining money and passports in the room safe. You may sometimes get USD or Euros back in change or Cuban Pesos when paying for items. If there are pesos, you can use them while in Cuba or apply them as gratuities.

**MEALS:** All meals are included as part of your trip. You will dine in Havana's privately run restaurants (paladares). Breakfast is included and served at the Hotel each morning.

**BEVERAGES:** Included with your trip (if scheduled): 1 round of Mojitos at Bodeguita del Medio, 1 round of Daiquiris at Floridita, complimentary water bottle in the hotel room, and two water bottles per participant per day provided on the bus.

**CIGARS:** Current regulations forbid the importation of Cuban-origin alcohol or tobacco products. There is no restriction on purchasing or enjoying these products in Cuba.

We suggest bringing approx. **USD 100 CASH per person per day to be safe, or more if you plan to buy art, cigars, or souvenirs.** You cannot get more money if you don't bring extra cash. U.S.-based credit cards and ATMs are NOT operational in Cuba.

**HOTEL INCIDENTALS:** The room(s), daily breakfasts, and WIFI are all included and pre-paid. Charges for hotel incidentals such as room service, poolside cocktails, additional restaurant food orders, and laundry may be put on the room. [The Manzana Kempinski Hotel](#) can accept U.S. credit cards (charged through Spain) at check-out. The hotel cannot accept USD cash for hotel incidentals.\* We recommend that travelers with incidental charges settle up the night before departure since the credit card processing can take a few minutes. As a backup, should the credit card processing system or the card not go through, we recommend that travelers have enough cash to pay for their incidentals. \*In this event, the hotel will accept USD cash.

**U.S. OUTLETS FOR CHARGERS:** **The Gran Manzana Kempinski Hotel** has U.S.-type outlets and voltage, so no adapters are needed. All hotel rooms have hairdryers and safes. If you use any electronics that need a 3-prong outlet, such as a laptop computer, you may wish to bring a 3 to 2-prong block or an Apple block for an iPad or phone charger.

**INTERNET/PHONES:** All the major carriers connect to Cubacel. Your phone will work to make and receive calls, usually even texts. Data is expensive when roaming, so we recommend keeping your phone on airplane mode during the day and saving emails and social media for the time at the Hotel where WIFI is available. Depending on your carrier, calls made or received from/to Cuba can cost \$3/min.

The Hotel will have WIFI available and included in the room. WIFI at the Hotel is useful for emails, social media posting, etc., but it will not be fast enough for streaming. You may need to log in regularly to maintain connectivity. It's best to copy the login codes into your notes so you do not need to retype them continuously.

**PERSONAL PACKING LIST:** The weather in Cuba is like Key West Florida. Depending on the season, it can be WARM and HUMID. Temperatures generally range from the mid-70s to the low 90s during the day and the mid-60s to low 70s at night. The dry season is November to April, and the rainy season is May to October, though it usually only rains for a few hours in the afternoon. Be sure to pack comfortable walking shoes. And a bathing suit!

**DAY:** The standard Dress Code is casual; Lightweight clothing is vital as it can be hot during the day. Wear comfortable shoes or sandals. Consider a light sweater for some lobby spaces, restaurants, and bars that are powerfully air-conditioned.

**EVENING:** Cubans like to dress up a bit in the evenings. Think Guayabera Shirts or Tommy Bahama-style linen pants/ jeans. Men tend not to wear shorts or flip/flops in the evening. Some Salsa clubs refuse admittance if Men are in Shorts. Women should plan on nice casual such as dresses or pants with flats or wedges. A scarf, light sweater, or light rain jacket is always good. We recommend staying away from stiletto heels because the streets are cobblestone.

**WATER:** There will be complimentary water bottles in your hotel rooms and the vehicle daily. Avoid drinking tap water.

**TOILETRIES:** Bring Travel Sizes of everything. We advise all travelers to bring **mosquito repellent**, especially during the humid months of April - November. **Also, please pack anything cosmetic or pharma you might need**, especially medicine such as Immodium, aspirin, ibuprofen, acetaminophen, antacids, band-aids, razors, hygiene products, sunscreen, etc.

**We also recommend bringing a small pack of Kleenex, hand sanitizer, wet wipes, and one-dollar bills** whenever a public restroom is needed. The hotel and the paladars/restaurants will have toilet paper and soap, but if a public restroom is needed, they may not have these items or toilets with seats.

**Snacks** such as nuts, protein bars, granola, and trail mix - anything non-perishable and easy to travel with to supplement meals.

**Travelers with food allergies** should always carry their allergy medication or epinephrine auto-injectors (epi-pens) while traveling.