
Cuba Travel Readiness

US Citizens Traveling to Cuba

US Citizens Traveling to Cuba will need to:

1. Have a valid **US Passport** and accompanying immigration documents.
2. Have a valid **Cuban Entry Visa**.
3. Complete the **OFAC Certification of Travel** form.
4. Complete the **Cuban Advance Information Form (D’VIAJEROS)** for entering and departing Cuba, within 48 hours of arrival in Cuba.

The Citizen Ambassador Program will guide you through each step of the documentation process.

1. US Passport and immigration documents

All travelers to Cuba must possess

- a valid passport
 - Which does not expire earlier than 6 months after your arrival date in Cuba
 - A minimum of 2 blank pages for entry and exit immigration stamps
- A return airline ticket- *included by the Citizen Ambassador Program*
- Travel Insurance with medical coverage - *included as part of your airline ticket and stamped on the back of the ticket.*

2. Cuban entry Visa

A Cuban entry visa also called a tourist card- We recommend the Marazul Tours Inc. for visa services. Marazul is partnering with the Citizen Ambassador Program in the operations of this delegation. [Cuban Entry Visa Form for Marazul](#)



Important: Persons born in Cuba, no matter what your current citizenship, will require additional documentation. Please contact our office for further information.

You may choose to apply for your Cuban Entry Visa through alternative providers. Please note, that neither the U.S. The Embassy in Havana nor the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C. process Cuban visa applications.

In the event you are denied boarding the flight from Miami to Havana due to lack of a visa/tourist card or the required insurance, any costs incurred as a result of the program delay or inability to travel to Cuba is your responsibility.

3. OFAC Certification of Travel

Travel to Cuba for tourist activities remains prohibited by statute for US Citizens. However, the Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) has authorized travel for 12 categories of travel. Travel for Professional Research 31 C.F.R. § 15.564(a)(1), (exchanges fall within this category) and Non-professional guests accompanying authorized professionals 31 C.F.R. § 515.561(a) are authorized under the General License.

The [OFAC Certificate of Travel](#) form is the documentation by which you attest to qualify as either:

- **A Professional Delegate**- participating in the professional program which serves as professional research in Cuba, subject to the conditions stated below and such additional activities or transactions as are directly incident to professional research are authorized, provided that:

(i) The purpose of the research directly relates to the traveler's profession, professional background, or area of expertise, including areas of graduate-level full-time study. (Is this your chief pursuit?)

and



(ii) The traveler's schedule of activities does not include free time or recreation in excess of that consistent with a full-time schedule of professional research.

Reference: **31 C.F.R. § 15.564(a)(1)** Professional Research in Cuba

- Or as **An Accompanying Guest** of a professional participating on the professional program is referred to as “visiting a close relative”, in this case, the professional participating as a Professional Delegate, subject to the conditions stated below.

(i) U.S. person, and persons who share a common dwelling as a family, who are visiting or accompanying close relatives (who are subject to U.S. jurisdiction) traveling to Cuba under one of the OFAC defined 12 categories of general licenses, specifically, Section 515.564(a)(1) authorizing travel to conduct professional research.

Reference: **31 C.F.R. § 515.561(a)** Visiting Close Relatives

Important Things to remember when traveling under the OFAC authorization:


- All Citizen Ambassador Program Delegates and Accompanying Guests will be asked to attest to meeting these requirements by signing the Certificate for Travel to Cuba.
- No early arrival or extended departures, beyond the delegation specific dates will be covered by this certification or arranged by the Citizen Ambassador Program.
- Professionals and Guests must participate in the approved programs as set forth by the Citizen Ambassador Program. The programs will be in compliance with the general license for professional research and will be conducted during times which are associated with the delegation field of research.
- US Citizens traveling to Cuba must keep full and accurate records of the transactions related to this travel for 5 years from the date of the delegation. The Citizen Ambassador Program will maintain a record of the delegation and your participation. A copy of your Certificate of Travel

and a copy of the final schedule of activities (published at approximately 30 days prior to the delegation convene date), will serve as your documentation.

4. Cuban Advance Information Form (D'VIAJEROS)

All travelers to Cuba must complete the online [Cuban Advance Information Form \(D'VIAJEROS\)](#) form within 48 hours of arrival in Cuba. **Please complete this form prior to arriving at the airport, as airport internet connections can be slow or unreliable.**

Steps to complete the online form:

1. Access the document via the link above or by copying and pasting the following link into your browser:
<https://www.dviajeros.mitrans.gob.cu/inicio>.
2. In the upper right hand corner click on the translation icon  to translate the website to english.
3. Select Request Form
4. Page one- Personal Data:
 - a. First and last name (surname), date of birth (note: dd/mm/yyyy), passport information (United States is listed as USA), contact information.
5. Page two- Migratory Information (arrival)
 - a. Date of entry, flight information (see airline ticket provided by the Citizen Ambassador Program/Marazul). Airport/port of entry is A.I. Jose Marti (La Habana (HAV). Reason for travel- select VISIT.
6. Page 3- Sanitary Information (health)
 - a. Place of accommodation- select HOTEL, Traveler's address- select Grand Aston La Habana
 - b. The balance of this page is **not required** at this time.
7. Page 4- Customs Information
 - a. Unaccompanied Baggage-select NO (your baggage is traveling on the same flight with you, checked or carried on)



- b. Currency- if you are carrying more than \$5000USD, please declare the total amount.
- c. Material goods- are you carrying more than your personal belongings? If so please indicate the value of the goods. Select the category of the goods from the menu. Follow for Equipment.
- d. Telecommunications, if you received authorization for specific communications materials, please list this number. **(This does not include laptops or cell phones, considered personal items.)**
- e. If above b,c,or d, do not apply select you have nothing to declare to customs- select NO. (A yellow box re asks the question, disregard and proceed.)
- f. Complete the form by entering the code into the verification box.
- g. You will receive a confirmation see below- with a QR Code, available to print immediately, and sent to your email address provided. (as an attachment to the email) and a private code, should you wish to edit your form. You can save thisQR code to your cell phone for easy access.



Información Adelantada del Viajero

Advanced Traveler's Information

Nombres / Given Names

Dawn

Apellidos / Surnames

Davis

Fecha de Nacimiento / Date of Birth

13/10/1961

Fecha de Emisión / Date of



Accommodations

Your delegation will be staying at the [Grand Aston La Habana](#). Located near the US embassy, with convenient access to Old Havana, the Vedado commercial district and the Malecón. The hotel décor is eclectic and modern, featuring the colors and vibe of modern Havana.



This 5-star hotel was chosen as it has been approved by OFAC for US Citizens. Section 515.210, restricts US Citizens from lodging, paying for lodging, or making reservations at certain properties in Cuba. This hotel is NOT prohibited for [US Citizens by the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs](#).

Weather

Cuba has a semi-subtropical climate, divided into two seasons: wet (May–October) and dry (November–April). However, regional variations and trade winds account for fluctuations. Cuba’s average temperature is 77 °F. Compared to most countries, Cuba experiences little variation, although July and August can be hot and humid. Nearly two-thirds of all rainfall occurs during the wet season.

Packing

In Cuba, goods aren’t as readily available as in other countries. Remember that Cuba isn’t one of those places where you can go out and buy what you forget to pack. It is recommended you make sure you have the following:

- Prescription Medication (prescription label must have your name) and non prescription medications.
- Attire for both professional meetings and cultural orientation (see attire recommendations below)
- a light jacket or sweater for cool evenings
- sunscreen / sunglasses
- alarm clock
- soap
- extra pair of glasses
- OTC medications/Band Aids



- Spanish-English dictionary
- hand Sanitizing wipes or liquid
- chargers and or adaptors

Some additional items to consider bringing are: shaving cream, razor, insect repellent, contact lens solution, toothpaste, toothbrush, dental floss, bandages, creams & ointments (travel first aid kit), feminine hygiene products, over-the-counter drugs. It's also a good idea to keep toilet paper or tissues in your bag, along with hand sanitizer, as many public restrooms do not have toilet paper or soap.

Luggage

- Suitcases, both hard and soft sided (wheeled versions are OK), with a small padlock (must be unlocked for air travel).
- Checked baggage weight limitation is 50 lbs. Per bag. Overweight baggage will be assessed a fee by the airlines . Carry on limits are the same as on your domestic flights and in line with airline policies.
- **Tags: Airline regulations require identification tags on your luggage. Most airlines provide these at their check-in counters at the time, if you do not have one. You will receive**

Attire Recommendations

Dressing for professional meetings is far more casual than in the United states. However, shorts, capris, or vacation wear are not recommended and would offend your counterparts. Good walking shoes are a must. Many of the streets are cobblestone and buildings often do not have working elevators.

- **For Women**, this can include slacks and skirts with light blouses. Some facilities have air conditioning, yet this can be blowing very strong, so a light wrap is recommended.
- **For Men**, short sleeved shirts with collars are what you will find most of your counterparts wearing. Rarely will you find a man wearing a tie. Sports jackets are appropriate for any



ministerial meeting.

Dressing for non-professional program activities is the same as it would be for any caribbean vacation. However, due to the travel restrictions, the cultural orientation/non-professional activities are interspersed between the professional meetings.

For Accompanying Guests, your program will include many opportunities to meet Cuban people. You may visit a Cuban home, so dressing comfortably, yet respectfully would not offend your hosts. Bathing suit tops or skimpy attire is not recommended.

Pre-departure and Arrival Information

WhatsApp

Your delegation will have a **WhatsApp** group set up with all members invited to join. Your Delegation Leader(s) and Delegation Manager will be a part of this group. Your invitation to join this group will be sent approximately 30 days prior to the convene date for your delegation. This is an easy way to chat with the other delegation members, ask questions and in the event of flight delays, airport transfer issues or an emergency, you will be able to easily reach the leadership, support team and members of your delegation.

Name Badges

Your name badges will be distributed at the first meeting of the delegation by your Delegation Leader or Delegation Manager. Please wear your name badge throughout the program, so you are easily identified as a member of the delegation.

Rooming List

The rooming list will be included in your final Information, sent at approximately 30 days prior to your delegation convene date. *Take a few moments to make sure you are assigned as per your request.* Please advise me immediately of necessary changes.



Customs & Immigration

Before traveling overseas, it is a good idea to become familiar with Customs procedures and know what to expect before you depart. Below is a link to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection site that includes general information on traveling overseas and returning back into the U.S. [U.S. Customs and Border Protection | Securing America's Borders](#).

Currency Exchange

After operating with a dual currency system, the Cuban peso (CUP) and the Cuban convertible peso (CUC) since the early 1990s, in January 2021 Cuba adopted the CUP as its sole currency, leading to the abolition of the CUC.

The Cuban peso (CUP). Unlike other currencies that can be exchanged anywhere in the world, you can't get Cuban pesos outside of Cuba.

The exchange rate is roughly 1 USD to 25 CUP. The [Global Exchange](#) website has the most up to date exchange rates.

US dollars (USD) are widely accepted in Cuba. They can be used to pay for goods and services in most tourist-oriented businesses, including hotels, restaurants, shops, and taxis. USD can also be exchanged for Cuban pesos (CUP) at authorized banks and exchange bureaus, including the hotel exchange desk. However, it is important to note that the exchange rate for USD is not always favorable to tourists. It is therefore advisable to exchange only enough USD for your immediate needs. It is also a good idea to have some CUP with you in case a merchant only accepts that.

US credit cards do not work in Cuba.

The use of credit cards and debit cards in Cuba has been authorized by the U.S. government, but must wait until the organizations, banks, credit card companies in the U.S. which issue credit or debit cards have agreements with vendors in Cuba.

As a general rule U.S. issued debit/credit cards are not recognized by Cuba banks. It's necessary to bring a sufficient amount of cash with you to cover the



entire duration of time that you'll be in Cuba. Further, often non-US issued credit/debit cards will not work in Cuba. **PLEASE bring U.S. dollars or Euros to Cuba for your stay in Cuba.** Do not count on accessing an ATM for cash or using your credit card.

The Cuban government requires that travelers declare cash amounts over the equivalent of 5,000 USD.

Language

Spanish is the official language of Cuba. Please note that Cuban-Spanish contains variations, making it difficult for native-Spanish speakers, who may get lost in translation at times. The majority of Cubans only know Spanish, but in larger cities and tourist areas, English is commonly spoken. Although knowledge of Spanish isn't required, we encourage you to learn some simple words and phrases to maximize your experience with Cuba.

Special Dietary Requirements

We will do our best to accommodate special dietary needs, however, please keep in mind that certain cultural differences or limitations due to logistics can make it extremely difficult and at times impossible to accommodate dietary restrictions. It is important to bring a flexible attitude and supplemental snacks if you have dietary limitations.

If your dietary needs have changed since you enrolled on the program, please inform us immediately.

Telecommunications

There is direct dialing between the U.S. and Cuba (Cuba's country-code is 53; Havana's city-code is 7). Please check with the hotel before placing a call to the United States as the cost can be very high.

Cell phones

Your U.S. mobile phone may work in Cuba if your mobile phone is capable of roaming in Cuba and your mobile service provider has an international roaming agreement with ETECSA, Cuba's state-owned telecommunications provider.



AT&T, Sprint, Verizon and T-Mobile currently have roaming agreements with ETECSA. We advise that you contact your current carrier for the most up-to-date information on usage and roaming costs, etc. before leaving.

You can also get a CUBACEL SIM card for us on an unlocked quad band GSM cell phone at the airport.

Internet/WIFI

You can access the Internet in the rooms and public areas at the Grand Aston Hotel, the cost is USD 5 per 24 hours. Internet is also available by purchasing a prepaid NAUTA Internet card at the airport. This service is only available at ETECSA Wi-Fi hotspots or internet cafes and the connection speeds vary widely and may not support voice or video calls.

Electricity

The electricity in Cuba is 110/220V, 60Hz. The most common type of plug is the American flat two-pin plug (Type A). However, newer hotels are being built with 220V and use european-style round two-pin plugs (Type C). Please make sure you bring plug adaptors and converters with you as they are difficult to find in Cuba.

Keep in mind that Cuba has infrastructure challenges and the power goes out periodically. Keep everything charged and make sure you have a backup portable charger.

SHOPPING

Please note that effective September 24, 2020, authorized travelers may no longer return to the United States with alcohol and/or tobacco products acquired in Cuba as accompanied baggage for personal use.

Gratuities

Most of the tips associated with this program for bus drivers, porters, restaurant staff and hotel luggage service have been included in your program cost. Their



tips will be paid from the program office.

Tips for your Delegation Manager HAVE NOT been included, as the Delegation Manager is critical to the success of the program and will be the individual with whom you interact the most. Your Delegation leader will coordinate the tip for the national guide; passing the hat on the final day. The suggested total tip for Delegation Manager is \$8-12 dollars a day, per person.

If any of the others, including bus drivers and hotel staff have impressed you, providing additional gratuities to specific individuals whom you would like to recognize their excellent service additional gratuity is always appreciated.

If you are out on your own, below are suggested amounts:

<u>Service provider</u>	<u>Suggested tip</u>
Taxi drivers	\$1-\$2 in line with the service
Waiter/Bartender	10% of the total bill
Cleaning ladies	\$1-\$2 per day

Health and Safety

Vaccines

While there are no required vaccines needed for travel to Cuba, it is important to consult with your personal physician for recommendations. You can also get more information about vaccines and travel from the The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) website.

General Health Tips

We strongly recommend **drinking bottled water only**. The most common afflictions for visitors are mild diarrhea, heatstroke, and sunstroke. Cuban water is not safe to drink. Drink only bottled or boiled water or carbonated drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. The hotel may state that the water is



safe (potable) in the hotel, however, we still recommend using bottled water, this includes for brushing your teeth. Bottle water is readily available in the shops around the hotel and bottled water will be provided for you on the delegation bus each day.

Additionally:

- Get plenty of rest before departure.
- If you are prone to upper respiratory infections, carry cough, cold, and sore throat remedies, and aspirin. To avoid delays at customs, always use the original containers for over the counter and prescription drugs.
- Common travelers' ills can be treated with antacids, aspirin, and preparations such as Imodium or Pepto Bismol or Imodium. If you suffer from motion sickness, take along a preventive remedy.
- Ask your doctor for a broad-spectrum antibiotic that you can take with you, just in case.
- If you wear glasses or contact lenses, bring an extra pair.
- Watch out for spicy dishes, especially at the outset of your program. Avoid eating food from roadside stalls as well as unpeeled fruits and fresh salads in small hotels. If you absolutely must eat food at a doubtful location, make sure it is served hot.
- Always use an insect repellent if you find yourself in a mosquito-prone area.
- If traveling in scorching heat, remember to drink enough water and to use hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Avoid venturing out in the midday sun.

Personal Safety

Your personal safety is usually a matter of common-sense awareness of your surroundings. Keep wallets in an inconspicuous location; don't leave expensive jewelry or other valuables unattended in your hotel room. The surest way to protect these items from loss or theft is to leave them at home. Take advantage of hotel safes and always lock your door when in your hotel room.

When traveling in markets and public areas, take care of your belongings and leave valuables back at the hotel. It is wise not to accept gifts of food or drink from any strangers. Do not go with anyone soliciting business or services away



from the delegation or public spaces. Take care with your passport, credit cards and money – a money belt to fit beneath your clothes is highly recommended. Avoid walking alone after dark in isolated places.

Prescriptions

Please take the following precautions to avoid complications while traveling:

- Leave all medication in its original packaging with all prescription details.
- The prescription must be in your name.
- Bring extra medication in case of loss or damage.
- Discuss the issue of time zone changes with your physician to ensure that you are receiving the proper dosage at the proper time of day. You should also discuss alternatives for medications that require refrigeration, as this is not possible while traveling.
- You will need an original, signed letter from your doctor to bring certain medical devices such as syringes, pumps, or EpiPens® on the airplane.

Ensure you have all the medicine you require for your time in Cuba. Medicine (prescription and over the counter) is not readily available in Cuba. Always carry your prescription medication in original packaging, along with your doctor's prescription.

Medical Services

Please understand that your local guides and Delegation Manager do not necessarily possess first aid training. People with serious medical concerns must take this into account while choosing any destination. We recommend that you bring an ample supply of personal medications with you in your carry-on luggage.

In the event you do get ill, please contact your delegation leader and delegation manager as soon as possible. The hotel does have medical personnel available 24 hours a day.