



## Que Viva Cuba!

### CUBA

A unique **riding holiday** in Cuba. Discover the incredible Cuban people, landscapes, history and culture on a trail ride across the "Pearl of the Antilles". Immerse yourself into the **Cuban culture** by sharing with locals and discover on horseback the Viñales area, Playa Clara, Valley de los Ingenios and Escambray Mountain. Your guides will share their knowledge of the traditional Cuban essentials: tobacco cultivation, salsa and reggaeton music and you may even partake in friendly, but competitive, **traditional equestrian games!** Explore fascinating historical locations such as the infamous Bay of pigs, Cascada del Pelou, Sierra del Escambray and of course, the bustling city of Havana.

<b>Trail Riding</b>	<b>15 days/ 8 days riding -</b>	<b>From £0</b>		Family holidays from 10 y.o
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One of the most varied riding holidays in Cuba!



Your guides will share their knowledge of the traditional Cuban essentials with you!



Your guide is Orly, who speaks Spanish, English and French

### ITINERARY

## Highlights

- Probably one of the most varied riding holidays in Cuba, with the opportunity to meet and spend time with the locals.
- All transfers in old American cars for an immersive Cuban experience
- A great diversity of landscapes and regions, starting from the west to the eastern coast. You will see colonial cities, ride across lush tropical forests, relax on beautiful beaches... Discover Vinales and the incredible mogotes.
- You will stay with locals and whenever possible, share meals with them.
- Several cultural outings, including tobacco and sugar cane farms, breeding farms, etc.
- Free time in Havana to discover this vibrant city at your own pace.

## Day 1 — 1 : EUROPE - HAVANA - No riding

Fly to Havana,Cuba. Your guide will be waiting for you at the airport, and you will be transferred to a Casa Particular (local guesthouse) for the night.

The time of the transfer is set by the first rider(s) to book: if you arrive on a different/later flight, then a private transfer is payable (approx. 30CUC payable locally - approx. £25).

Dinner to your account and overnight at the casa particular.

## Day 2 — 2 : HAVANA - VIÑALES - 3-4hrs transfer + 2hrs riding

Your first day in Cuba starts with a road transfer (approx. 3-4 hours), heading west towards the Viñales region, a UNESCO world heritage site. Tonight you will stay with at Rosi's, your host for the night. You will have just enough time to drop your bags before you head out to meet the horses. Today is a short

introductory ride into the valley, exploring the tobacco fields, local farms, mogotes (rounded hills that are typical of the region)... Enjoy your first canter through this beautiful area, before heading back to your host's casa particular. Those who are interested in a bit of culture could visit the village in the evening for a drink and some local music.

## Day 3 — 3: VIÑALES - 5-6 hours riding

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After a good night's sleep, you will meet your horses again and ride across the Viñales area. This is a very resourceful and plentiful part of Cuba, thanks to a fruitful agriculture and pleasant climate. Expect to ride over mountain tracks and enjoy canter in the open fields. You will also meet the Aquaticos community, who still believe in ancient healing traditions. Picnic lunch en route.

Back to the casa particular for dinner.

## Day 4 — 4: VIÑALES - 6-7 hours riding

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After breakfast, your trail ride takes you across the valley and surrounding plateaus. You will get closer to the mysterious mogotes, those incredible rounded hills piercing the landscape. The land becomes flatter, giving you opportunities for fun, faster canter. As the ride unfolds, you are sure to come across local farmers, some of them still using animal traction to plough their fields. If you are feeling adventurous, you can take a refreshing swim into the rio Resbaloso. Lunch will be held in a typical paladar (Cuban restaurant run by locals). Say goodbye to the horses before returning to the casa particular. In the evening, those who wish can listen to salsa or reggaeton bands in the village square, with a refreshing cocktail in hand.

Night at the casa particular.

## Day 5 — 5: VIÑALES - PLAYA LARGA - 6 hours driving-No riding

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 Finca La Guabina

Road transfer in the morning to your next destination. After a six hour drive, you will reach the infamous Bay of Pigs. This site is known for the role Cuba played during the Cold War and the Cuban missile crisis on 1962.

Settle in your casa particular for the night and get some well deserved rest.

## Day 6 — 6: PLAYA LARGA - TRINIDAD - 2 hours transfer - No riding

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Transfer to the beautiful, colonial city of Trinidad located in the province of Sancti Spiritus. Trinidad is a UNESCO World Heritage site, known for its beautiful and well preserved colonial architecture and pastel-coloured buildings. Settle in your new casa particular. You can spend the afternoon visiting the city, go for a salsa dance and cocktails in some of the nearby locals, or you may prefer to relax by the beach.

Dinner and overnight at the casa particular.

## Day 7 — 7: TRINIDAD - VALLEY DE LOS INGENIOS - 7-8 hours riding

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This morning, you will head to the stables to meet the new string of horses. You will leave Trinidad behind and reach the Valley de los Ingenios, a vast plateau where slaves used to cultivate sugar cane, for which Trinidad was once famous. During the ride, you will stop at a local farm to meet the owners and get a glimpse into their life. You will also ride by a waterfall where those who wish to can enjoy a dip. Lunch will be had at a traditional finca, where you will try a local meal of slow-roasted pig (lechón) and sugar cane juice (with or without rum!). In the afternoon, discover the lovely Ancon beach and swim in the Caribbean sea for the first time.

## Day 8 — 8: TRINIDAD - ESCAMBRAY MOUNTAINS - 6-7 hours riding

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Today is another long day in the saddle. You head back the Valley de los Ingenios, riding deep into the tropical forest that covers the sides of the Sierra del Escambray. This mountain range was once a hideout for Che Guevara's guerrilleros, and it then became a high place against the revolution. You will ride in lush vegetation: bamboo, coffee bushes, pine trees, orchids abound. Lunch in a farm, before heading back to Trinidad. After dinner, enjoy local Cuban music ringing through the streets of beautiful Trinidad.

## Day 9 — 9: TRINIDAD - MAYAJIGUA - FINCA SANTA RUBIA - 4 hour transfer- No riding

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You hit the road again, driving to the Finca Santa Rubia, lost in nature. This is where you will spend the next three nights, with your hosts Marbel and Yalianis. Before meeting the horses, discover the Cascada (waterfall) del Pelou, where you will learn about the history of the soldier who spent 40 years here in a cave, during the war for independence.

Your host will give you a tour of the premises, introducing you to the horses and herds of buffaloes and bulls. He will also share his knowledge of tobacco cultivation and drying process with you.

Dinner and overnight at the finca (Ranch).

## Day 10 — 10 : FINCA SANTA RUBIA - 6 hours riding

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After breakfast, set out on horseback towards the forest. The track will take you up to Boqueron, for a visit of the caves and a picnic lunch. Your ride then takes you to the Rio Jatibonico, with good opportunities for canters along the banks and wooden tracks. Those who have packed their bathing suits can also go for a swim!

Dinner and overnight at the finca.

## Day 11 — 11 : FINCA SANTA RUBIA - 6 hours riding

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You will ride across the mountains, towards a tributary of the rio Jatibonico. Picnic in Rincon before riding down Loma de la Campana (Bell Mountain) to reach the ranch. In the evening, the group will be taken to a hotel in Mayajiga for drinks and to enjoy the thermal pool.

Overnight at the Finca.

## Day 12 — 12: MAYAJIGUA - 4-5 hours riding

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Today is a day dedicated to something different: you will try new equestrian activities and traditional Cuban games. In the morning, you will visit the buffalo and horse farms. You will try your hand at cattle work, and perhaps even be able to swing the lasso! While you are riding, everyone else is busy getting dinner ready: roast goat or pig. There are other riding games planned in the afternoon, where teams will be made with the locals joining in. Dinner will be had to the sound of some latino/caribbean music.

Overnight at the finca.

## Day 13 — 13: SANTA CLARA - HAVANA - 7 hour transfer-no riding

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Back to the capital city. You will stop en-route to Camillo Cienfuego's, then Che Guevara's mausoleums in Santa Clara: two figures of the Cuban history and the Revolution. Arrive to Havana in the afternoon. Dinner to your own account.

## Day 14 — 14: HAVANA - No riding

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Today you are free to take a stroll through the city. Lunch to your own account. Transfer to the airport to catch your overnight flight home.

## Day 15 — 15: Arrival in Europe

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### DATES & PRICES

We are currently updating our dates and prices they will be online soon. If you want details of this holiday, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### Price details

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No departure for this destination. Please contact our travel advisers for more information.

- International flights are not included but can be booked upon request, please contact us.

- Rates are per person and based on two people sharing a double or a twin room.

- The time of the transfer is set by the first rider(s) to book: if you arrive on a different/later flight, then a private transfer is payable (approx. 30CUC payable locally).

- Group size is usually between 4-8 international riders plus guides.

- Please note: the ride will also confirm for 2-3 riders on payment of a supplement. Once the group has reached 4 people, we will remove this supplement from your invoice and refund you if you have already paid it.

Two riders: €650/£570 per person.

Three riders: €200/£175 per person

- There is a single supplement payable for anyone in a single room. This is c. €270/£240 for the week. If you sign up as a single rider, this will be invoiced and reimbursed as soon as a sharer is found.

- Dates can be changed to accommodate groups on request - please contact us.

- Maximum rider weight limit: 90 kg / 14.2 st / 198 lbs

#### IMPORTANT:

Prices are linked to the CUC rate of exchange and may be changed, up to 2 weeks before the ride departure, if there is a significant change in the rate. To enter Cuba, British nationals must have a visa, known as a tourist card, which allows for a stay of 30 days and is valid for a single entry. The cost for a tourist card is approx. £27.

#### Please Note

The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.

The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

## Price includes

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### SUPPORT TEAM

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1 English-speaking horse guide  
1 or 2 local equestrian guide(s) during the trail

### LOGISTICS

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1 vehicle and driver  
1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider  
1 support vehicle

### INLAND TRANSPORT

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Airport transfers at set times.

### ACCOMMODATION

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Twin or double rooms in Casa particulares and Fincas

### MEALS

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Full board during the ride including mineral water. No meals are included in Havana

## Price doesn't include

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### MEALS

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Beverages and personal extras  
Meals in Havana are not included in the price

### TRANSPORTS

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International flights bookable on request

### EXTRAS

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Tips to the local team - approx. £35  
Small group supplement - see above for the details  
Tourist card to enter Cuba

### INSURANCE

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Cancellation and travel insurance are not included in the above listed price. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend taking out an insurance policy as soon as your trip is booked to cover you in case of cancellation

## Optional

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### ACCOMMODATION

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Single room supplement

## TRANSPORT

Private airport transfers if your flight times do not coincide with the scheduled transfer.

## EQUESTRIAN INFO

### Horses

You will ride horses from 3 different stables. Horses include typical Cuban horses (Pinto Cubano, Criollo), and other breeds such as Appaloosa and Quarter Horse. All are sure-footed, in good condition, and suited to life on the island.

### Minimum riding ability

#### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You must be comfortable and balanced at all 3 paces - walk, rising trot and gallop - in open countryside and over varied terrain. You must be an intermediate to experienced level rider.

Maximum rider weight limit: 90 kg / 14.2 st / 198 lbs

#### PACE

The main pace of the ride is a walk with trots and canters only when the terrain allows.

#### TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

The teams at the different fincas along the route are responsible for the care and feeding of the horses. They will tack and untack your horses, but any help is always appreciated!

#### TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

Previous trail ride experience is not mandatory, but would be an advantage. You do need to be balanced in the saddle and physically fit. Riders who do not ride regularly must ensure they are riding fit before the start of the holiday as there are some long hours in the saddle.

Visiting a new country offers the opportunity to meet other cultures with different mentalities, therefore it is important to accept these differences and respect the local way of life.

#### EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Cuban tack, which is similar to Western saddles.

Saddlebags are provided in Trinidad but not anywhere else. You may want to bring your own.

We recommend you bring a bum bag.

## TRAVEL INFO

#### COMFORT

Trinidad/Havana: overnights in casa particulares, with private bathrooms.

Vinales/Cienfuego: casa particulares, private bathrooms.

Santa Rubia: nights will be spent at the Ranch, which is a little bit more basic. Meals will be had with the local team.

#### MEALS

The produce used for meals is, for the most part, organic, varied and healthy. A typical meal starts with fresh veggies/salads, rice and black beans, fish or meat. Vegetarian options are available.

Cubans eat at all hours and are not used to eating fruit during meals but rather throughout the day as snacks.

Make sure you don't drink water from any source of which you are not certain that the water is potable. Mineral water is provided on the trail but extra drinks are to your own account.

#### CLIMATE

Cuba has a subtropical climate. The tropics have two distinct seasons: the dry (autumn/winter) and the wet (spring/summer). The average temperature is

between 20°C - 30°C.

The dry season lasts from around November to May with an average temperature of around 25°C. The temperature can drop to as low as 14°C and in a country that's not built to be cold you can feel it!

The rainy season kicks off in June and lasts until October/ November. Heavy but short rain storms are typical, alongside hot temperatures – with an average of 27-28 °C.

## **GUIDE AND LOCAL TEAM**

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Your guide is Orly, who speaks Spanish, English and French.

## **TIPS**

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Tipping is quite standard in Cuba - plan to tip around £45. Certain restaurants include a 10% service charge. Tipping remains at your own discretion.

## **PACKING LIST**

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### Head

- A riding helmet is compulsory and we recommend that you take your own to ensure a correct fit. Helmet makers (GPA, HKM, LAS Helmets, Lamicell, Troxel, Equithème) now offer horse-riding helmets that are ventilated, strong, light and comfortable. You also have the option of buying protective shells to go under your hats (Ranch & Rider, Lexington Safety Products) or western hat helmets (Troxel).
- Sunhat (indispensable)
- Sunglasses with high protection lenses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana for protecting your neck and face from the sun, wind or rain

### Upper body

- T-shirts in cotton and long-sleeved shirts (to protect against the sun) or t-shirts made from quick-dry material
- 1 lightweight fleece or jumper
- 1 lightweight waterproof jacket made from Gore-Tex or a similar material that is waterproof and breathable

### Legs

- 2 pairs of lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub
- 1 change of riding trousers or jeans
- A swimming costume and a towel
- Non-irritant cotton or synthetic underwear

### Hands and Feet

- 1 pair of comfortable riding or walking boots. We recommend short boots with half-chaps specifically for riding. We don't recommend taking your favorite leather boots in case they get damaged
- 1 pair of lightweight shoes or trainers for the evenings
- Several pairs of socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun whilst riding

### Other useful items

- Travel bag 60-80 liters (hold luggage)
- Travel bag 25-30 liters (cabin bag)
- Double saddlebags are available on request; Only in some places saddlebags are included
- Water bottles - 2 bottles x 0.5L
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Toiletries
- Protein or cereal bars for the longer stretches of riding
- Toilet paper and a lighter to burn it after use
- Swiss army knife or equivalent (in checking-in luggage!!)
- Small plastic bags for your rubbish
- Ear plugs (may be useful)
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- A pair of binoculars

### Medical kit

Cuba's pharmacies are woefully void of pharmaceuticals, both prescription and over the counter. There are dollar only "Tourist Pharmacies", but your best bet is to bring with you whatever you may even remotely THINK you may need.

Make sure any allergies (to medication or otherwise) are clearly stated in your medical kit

- Any medication you regularly take
- Painkillers
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhea medication
- Vitamin C tablets
- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent
- Eye drops
- Hydrating/ soothing cream
- Plasters
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc..
- 10cm wide bandage
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel
- Tick tweezers

#### Our Recommendations

- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bumbag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc)
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!
- Carry a copy of your passport and insurance documentation with you.
- Hand luggage mustn't contain any sharp objects (knives, scissors, nail file or nail scissors, etc.) and the quantity of liquid allowed per passenger is limited to 100ml per container. Check with the airline for their imposed weight limits for hand/ hold luggage.
- A soothing cream may be useful to treat areas irritated by long hours in the saddle

## VISA & HEALTH

### Formalities

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#### Passports:

A passport valid for two months after departure from Cuba is required by all UK, USA, Canadian and other European nationals. Nationals not referred to are advised to contact the embassy to check visa requirements.

#### Visas:

Visas for Cuba are required by all nationals from the USA, Canada, UK and the EU.

The required tourist visa, known as a tourist card, allows the holder to stay in Cuba for 30 days and is valid for a single entry. You must provide proof of confirmed return flight and booked accommodation.

#### Visa note:

Nationals of the USA are subject to the Cuban assets control regulations enforced by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC);

<https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/pages/cuba.aspx>

#### Types and cost:

Tourist card: £15; business visa: £41, plus £19 processing fee for either if applying by post, courier or third party.

#### Validity:

The tourist card is valid for one entry of 30 days within 180 days of issue and can be extended in Cuba for a further 30 days.

The USA officially prohibits its citizens from travelling to Cuba unless they obtain a special license and very heavy fines are imposed on visitors not fulfilling this requirement.

The US government will allow the following to travel to Cuba (decided on a case by case basis): official government travelers, journalists, persons visiting close relatives once in 3 years, full-time professionals conducting research, full-time professionals attending certain international conferences, and persons who have received a specific license.

#### Embassies

British Embassy in Cuba

Telephone: (7) 214 2200. Website: <https://www.gov.uk/world/cuba> Opening times: Mon-Fri 0800-1530.

Embassy of Cuba in the UK  
Telephone: (020) 7240 2488 ; (020) 7379 9582.

## ADDRESSES OF CONSULATES

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- Consulat de Cuba  
14 rue de Presles  
75015 Paris  
Tél. : 01 45 67 55 35  
Fax :
- Office du tourisme de Cuba  
280 boulevard Raspail  
75014 Paris  
Tél. : 01 45 38 90 10  
Fax : 01 45 38 99 30
- Ambassade de France à Cuba  
Calle 14, N° 312, entre 3a y 5a avenida  
MIRAMAR  
Tél. : (00 537) 201 31 31  
Fax : (00 537) 201 31 07

## Health

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There are no vaccinations legally required to travel to Cuba. It's a good thing to get your vaccinations in order before travelling to Cuba. The general vaccination against Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio (DTP) are recommended. Also a hepatitis A vaccination is recommended and vaccination against hepatitis B, rabies and typhoid are also sometimes recommended for stays longer than 3 months.

Dengue sometimes occurs as well. There is no vaccination, so buy mosquito repellent (preferably with 50% DEET) and sleep under a net. Also wear long sleeves if possible.

## Insurance

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It is a condition of your booking with Equus Journeys that you have travel insurance which covers you for the riding activities to be undertaken. Your travel insurance should cover you for medical expenses and repatriation. You must show a Spanish translation of your policy on arrival at the airport - if you do not have it with you, you will be asked to purchase one at the airport.

Your guides will require your travel insurance details before they allow you to ride and may refuse to let you ride if you cannot provide them. You should take your insurance documents with you.

## Voltage

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110/220 volts AC, 60Hz. American-style flat two-pin plugs are generally used, except in certain large hotels where the European round two-pin plug may also be found.

## Budget and money

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There are two currencies in use in Cuba - the CUC (Convertible Peso) and the CUP (Cuban Peso). Tourists use the CUC. Cubans call the tourist dollar a "chavito" and the Cuban peso "moneda nacional" or MN. Very few travellers will see the Cuban Peso during their trip. The CUC has a pegged currency exchange rate of \$1.08 and is officially only exchangeable within the country. There is an additional 10% penalty assessed on US dollar conversions, so travellers are advised to bring Canadian, Mexican or European currencies.

Coins in circulation are one, five, ten, 25, and 50 centavo coins and one and five peso coins. The one centavo piece was introduced in 2000, and the five peso coin is very rare. Banknotes in circulation are one, three, five, ten, 20, 50 and 100 convertible peso bills.

To exchange money, currency exchange desks are set up in airports near the luggage carousel. In Havana's Jose Marti Airport, there is also an exchange counter in the public reception area and a bank on the 2nd floor. Throughout Cuba, any bank and most CADECA exchange counters will convert for you. When departing Cuba, you can exchange most of your CUCs prior to arriving at the airport as occasionally, your currency of choice may not be available.

## Telephone and jetlag

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The country calling code to Cuba is 53. To make an international call from Cuba, the code is 119.

Telephone calls from Cuba are very expensive. You should ask your telephone company for the option» (Roaming international).