



Cuba Travel Plan

15.02.2018 – 02.03.2018

Joi 15.02.2018 - Vineri - 16.02.2018 - București - Havana

Avion Dus

13:55 Bucharest Henri Coandă Intl. (OTP), Romania - 15:25 Frankfurt Frankfurt Intl. (FRA), Terminal 1

17:10 Frankfurt, Frankfurt Intl. (FRA), Terminal 1 - 19:40 Toronto Pearson Intl. (YYZ), Terminal 1

Take UP Express

Time 25 minutes, Pearson T1 to Union Station

Cost \$12.00 one way per adult (see below)

Web Site www.upexpress.com

The Union Pearson Express (new as of June 2015) connects Union Station in downtown Toronto with Pearson International Airport in 25 minutes, with trains running every 15 minutes from 5:30 am to 1 am. Trains have ample luggage space, free WiFi, and power ports at every seat.

Visit:

The CN Tower is a 553.3 m-high concrete communications and observation tower in downtown Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Address: 301 Front St W, Toronto, ON M5V 2T6, Canada, Open hours: 9 AM – 10.30 PM, cost: \$36 Canadian Dollars

See **Lake Ontario** which is one of the five Great Lakes of North America. It is surrounded on the north, west, and southwest by the Canadian province of Ontario, and on the south and east by the American state of New York, whose water boundaries meet in the middle of the lake.

Explore Toronto Old Town

Go for patio drinks under the stars on the roof of 7 West Café.

Open 24 hours

07:55 Toronto Pearson Intl. (YYZ), Terminal 1 - 11:30 Havana José Martí Intl. (HAV), Cuba

Vineri - 16.02.2018 - Havana

11:30 – 12.30 Aterizat și ridicare bagaj - Havana José Martí Intl. (HAV), Cuba

12.30 – 13.10 Transport Taxi – Aeroport – Cazare (durează aproximativ 30 – 40 minute, costă 20-25 CUC, dar e bine să negociem călătoria înainte de a pleca, rareori folosesc aparatul).

13.30 - 14.30 Cazare CASA ABELLAN 259 Mercaderes apto 14 entre Tte Rey y Amargura (cazarea se face după ora 14.00)

Walk along the Malecón, the sea wall that runs along the Havana coastline. At weekends this is where the locals come to party, so bring a bottle and join in. A favorite stroll for tourists and locals, a walk along the Malecon runs along the main streets of Havana and provides stunning views of the Bay.

Enjoy the glory of **La Habana Vieja** (*The Old Town*), some of it faded and crumbling - but there are many beautifully restored buildings as a result of the UNESCO World Heritage Site designation.

Plaza de la Revolución. Huge square dominated by a statue and monument of Jose Marti and the iconic image of Che Guevara adorning the Ministry of the Interior. Arrive either early or late, as it is often swamped by tourists and gets very hot during the day.

Sâmbătă - 17.02.2018 - Havana

Walk around Havana Vieja in the early mornings, or take a very long walking tour with "Havana Frans", a Dutch jazz photographer who lives in Havana.

Walk along the Prado street in the evening. Great public space - unfortunately not illuminated at night. The Prado hums with street life, cafes and charm.

Museum of the Revolution and the Capitol Building.

Visit a live **cigar factory**. One offering tours is at the intersection of Peñalver and San Carlos (just 1 mile southwest of Old Havana La Habana Vieja), tickets can/should be bought in advance (10 CUC per person as of July 2014). English tours are available. Please note that there is no photography allowed. It is the place where you can also be sure to get the correct cigars in the shop - more expensive than 'street offers' - but the quality of these "street offers"

is definitely questionable. Note that the Partagas cigar factory just behind the Capitol Building has closed permanently since late 2011 and moved; the original factory is now a shop only.

Havana Club Rum Factory. Go on a guided tour of Havana Club, one of Cuba's most famous rums. Most of the exhibits are subtitled in English and are fairly self-explanatory. (7 CUC, Jan 2017)

Hotel Habana Libre in Vedado. The hotel housed Castro's soldiers for several days after they took Havana. It has an excellent selection of photos in the lobby along with one of the only 24 hour fast food restaurants in the city.

Enjoy extraordinary 360-degree views of the city using the large **Camara Oscura** in the old town.

The **Catedral de San Cristobal** in old Havana. Said to be the only example of a baroque construction that possesses asymmetrical features, one of the towers is wider than the other.

Plaza de Armas. Spacious and elegant, the square is surrounded by baroque constructions that give it a authentic colonial milieu. It was laid out during the 1600s, replacing an old plaza which acted as the center of religious, administrative and military activity. Until the mid-18th century, it was used for military exercises and parades. After its remodeling between the years 1771-1838, it became a favored meeting spot for the city's wealthy. Today it is also known as Céspedes Park, in honor of the country's Founding Father, whose monument stands at its center. This square is one of the most outstanding in the city, enlivened by vendors of antiques and classical books on Latin American and world literature. Attractions of remarkable historical value lay around the square such as the capok tree (Ceiba) under which the first mass for the city's founding was officiated in 1519.

Duminică - 18.02.2018 – Havana

Go to the eastern beaches (Playas del Este) — There's a bus leaving from Hotel Inglaterra every 30 minutes. Price is 5 CUC for a roundtrip. The ride takes about 30 minutes.

Take a tour in an old car — For around 20-30 CUC an hour for up to four people, be driven around Havana in style. Choose a car you like near the Hotel Inglaterra or outside the Museum of the Revolution. Note that those on a budget can ride old cars by taking shared taxis for 1 CUC or less.

Fusterlandia - Well this is a strange place. It's a long way out of the main city centre, probably best to take a taxi too. We tried taking the tourist buses and it was a failure. A neighbourhood has been decorated to depict all sorts of things in ceramic tiles, my wife and I found it very weird. Some of it is stunning, other parts are strange, but as a whole it's totally worth seeing!

Castillo de la Real Fuerza is the oldest bastioned fortress in the New World and has now reopened as a Cuba's premier maritime museum. (There is also a small naval museum in Cienfuegos.). The museum contains excellent exhibits of Cuba's maritime past, from pre-Columbian days through to the 18th Century with the Royal Shipyard of Havana, one of the largest in the world which built nearly 200 ships for the Spanish Crown. The museum features a huge four metre model of the Santísima Trinidad, located on the main floor with a large interactive touch screen, which describes life aboard an 18th Century ship-of-the-line in Spanish, French, and English. The original ship was launched into Havana Bay on March 2, 1769 and was the largest ship in the world in the 18th Century, with 140 cannons on four gun decks. She was one of four Cuban-built ships at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Downstairs you will find ancient navigational instruments, underwater archaeological artifacts, and gold and silver from the colonial era. Also note the original weathervane, La Giraldilla, while her replica moves in the breeze on the top of the fortress tower, which commands a fantastic view of the city. The second level of the museum hosts many other historic and contemporary models of ships with links to Cuba and is also a good location for viewing the harbour and city skyline.

Luni - 19.02.2018 – Havana - Viñales

9 – 12.40 - Transport spre Vinales – Viazul (statia din Havana pt viazul este pe Ave. 26 y Zoológico, Nuevo Vedado, la 8 km de cazare, cu masina facem 20 minute, probabil vom lua un taxi până aici – e lângă Gradina Zoo)

09:00

12:40

10.32 EUR

Statia pentru Vinales este pe Salvador Cisnero No. 63, la 600 m de cazare, mergem pe jos, facem aproximativ 8 minute.

13.00 – 13.30 Cazare Casa Lala, Calle Camilo Cienfuegos, Viñales, Cuba # 26 A

Calle Salvador Cisneros. The main street was named after Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, who was a leader in the war of independence (1868-1878) and later was President of Cuba from 1895 to 1897. Today it's more and more covered with all sorts of restaurants that cater tourists tourists.

Casa de la Cultura. In the central plaza, the Casa de la Cultura puts on events every day (or night), including music, fashion shows, and children's events. cover charge typically ~1 CUC.

The Central plaza. Also on the central plaza is an art gallery and the church. On Saturday mornings there's a farmer's market at the plaza

Cycling . This is another good way to see the valley up close. As it is a valley, it can be a bit hilly and the paths are mainly unpaved tracks, that aren't fun to ride with anything but a decent mountain bike. Nevertheless, exploring by bike is a great way to explore the valley and Viñales

is one of the best places to cycle in Cuba. Bikes can be organized through your casa or rented at various locations in town. Quality of the bikes varies quite drastically, so check your bike before starting and probably shop around a bit, especially if you're planning to rent for more than one day. See the [#Hiking](#) section for some ideas where to go. Cycling tours can also be booked at the travel agents in town. 1 CUC per hour, 5 CUC per half day, 10 CUC for a full day.

El Palenque de los Cimarrones. Tiny museum as you walk through a smaller cave (Cueva de San Miguel) showing how slaves hid out in centuries past. Restaurant at back with slave show, mostly for bus tours. Cave is best known for its disco at the weekends where all the locals go to hang out. Food also served.

Parque Nacional Vinales visitor centre. The park covers 150 sq km and the visitor centre located close to the hotel Los Jazmines offers information, hiking and guides. (2km from Vinales). The visitor centre in itself does not have a lot to see, some wall charts with walking routes and a small model of the valley. It is the view that is stunning and from here you can organise your excursions into the valley.

Mural de la Prehistoria. Perhaps the worst tourist attraction in Cuba. In 1961 Fidel Castro visited the beautiful *valley of the two sisters* (*Valley de Dos Hermanas*) 3km west of Viñales. He commissioned that the cliff should be painted with snails, dinosaurs, and a family of cavepersons, in garish colors! There's a restaurant, bar, and gift shop. To be fair, reputedly, the food in the restaurant is excellent and the live music is good. Also there's horseback riding. So consider visiting the mural and doing something other than looking at the mural. You don't need to pay the entrance fee to see the painted mountain cliff, its visible from the road already.

Martí - 20.02.2018 - Viñales

Gran Caverna de Santo Tomás (15 kilometers west of Viñales near El Moncada). This is the biggest cave in Cuba. Basic tours are two hours and you must hire a guide. Helmets and headlamps are provided, although you might want to bring a more powerful flashlight, if you have one. Also you're required to wear shoes, which is a problem for female Cubans, who seem to own nothing but sandals. The cave is spectacular, especially where the roof has collapsed and you walk into a green jungle paradise sunk into a mountaintop. The cave has 45 kilometers of galleries on eight levels. Also, the town of *El Moncada* was another of Fidel's ideas, and the streets are laid out to form a C, U, B, and A. probably at least 10 CUC.

Tobacco Farm Casa del Veguero (500 m from Vinales). To learn about tobacco farming, visit this tourist oriented tobacco farm and drying shed. Food also served.

Cueva del Indio (6km north of Vinales). An easy to visit cave well-developed for tourists, featuring a boat ride through the cave. Nearby is a restaurant, gift shop, etc. 5 or 10 CUC per person.

Hiking. Exploring the area on foot is possible since many sights are within walking distance. Don't expect to actually hike up to the mogote peaks. There are no paths and allegedly doing so would even be forbidden since it's a national park area. The national park building (near the Hotel Los Jazmines) has maps and exhibits showing fourteen excursions.

The main hike everyone does circles around the **Mogote de Valle**. From Viñales follow the *Calle Adela Azcuy* north-west. **Walk through the Cueva de la Vaca**. The cave is not exciting at all, but it's great that you can pass through the mountain and continue your hike on the other side.

Make a brief stop for shade at the **Ancient large tree**. It has some religious history. (updated Apr 2015. Next you'll continue a bit through the *Valle de la Guasasa*, can take a refreshing swim in the Cueva de la Piscina and continue further through the valley. **Swim in the Cueva de la Piscina** (likely the same as Cueva del Palmarito) (4km north of Viñales in the Valle de la Guasasa). The cave is only accessible through a trail. It's at the edge of walking distance from Viñales and most visitors come here by bike or horse. You'll be walked in by a guide until you reach a pool after about 200m. It's about 30m long, you can go swimming inside and the cool water will be a welcome refresh from the hot air outside. The depth of the water varies and there's rocks reaching up every now and then. The guide has a small light, otherwise the cave is completely dark. 2 CUC per person.

It's worth taking a brief detour to the **Mirador** (viewpoint). It has a great view on the valleys and offers refreshing fruit juices starting from 3 CUC, before heading into the *Valle de Dos Hermanas* where you'll get a glimpse at the awfully painted hill *Mural de la Prehistoria*. Passing the *Campismo*, the now paved road returns to Viñales. Since it's not that exciting, its worth taking a cab/bus or hitchhiking these last 4km.

Miercuri - 21.02.2018 - Viñales – Cienfuegos

6.45 – 14.25 Transport spre Cienfuegos cu Viazul (statia Salvador Cisnero No. 63, la 600 m de cazare), fie rezervam fie vorbim din timp cu baiatul de la cazare din Vinales, pare descurcarea din review-uri)

06:45

14:25

27.51 EUR

Statia Viazul din Cienfuegos este pe Calle 47 s/n e/ 56 y 58, la 750 m de cazare, 8 minute pe jos.

Cazare: Hostal Casa Gomez Adresa: Calle 37 (Paseo del Prado) #5820 e/ 58 y 60. Frente al restaurant El Mandarin

Parque Jose Marti - is a UNESCO Heritage site with many paved sidewalks and a gazebo/band shell. Distinguishing this park are lions on pedestals at each entrance, the imbedded zero kilometer compass rose signifying the center of Cienfuegos, triumph arch, and

the focal point the Jose Marti statue. Surrounding the park is the: Catedral de la Purisima Concepcion, Tomas Terry Theatre, Ferrer Palace, Collegio de San Lorenzo.

Tomas Terry Theatre, Parque Jose Martí (*North of Parque José Martí*). Victorian theatre, built in 1890. Lots of original features, and very pretty. Also has a nice cafe. 2 CUC.

Museo Histórico, Av 54 e/ calles 27 y 29 (*south side of Parque José Martí*). A historical museum, with exhibits ranging from archeology of the original Indians, to the colonial eras

Malecon de Cienfuegos - The Malecon offers pleasant sea views and a cooling breeze with the sea coming right up to the wall. It's lovely being there in the evening with the sun glinting off the water as the heat goes out of day. There are a couple of open-air bars on the landward side of the road but beware, you will be over-charged (draft beer is 6 CUP per glass for the locals but 1 CUC for tourists - a factor of 4).

Palacio de Valle - Located on the Punta Gorda peninsula or split extending into the Cienfuegos bay, the Palacio is an interesting collection of Spanish-Moorish, Gothic, Romanesque, Baroque and Mudejar arts. Built between 1913 - 1917, artisans used many imported materials such as bronze, Carrara marble, Venetian glass, and Talavera ceramics. Inspired by 12th and 13th century Moorish influences in Spain, Islamic designs and inscriptions can be found. Currently, The Palacio is a National Heritage Memorial and serves as a event venue, restaurant, museum, and bar.

Punta Gorda - Punta Gorda is a really prestty seaside suburb quite close to the centre of Cienfuegos. There is a seafront promenade with some very elegant houses in a variety of styles. It's very peaceful and worth a visit if you have extra time. Really lovely at sunset.

Joi - 22.02.2018 – Cienfuegos

Guanaroca Lagoon - The lagoon opens at 8am, and I would recommend going there early so you can see the flamingos and other wildlife. Visit the place in the early morning, so that you have a chance to admire flamingos (they're gone around 10:00). It's a beautiful and peaceful place. Firstly, you hava a short guided walk through the woods. The guide spoke English and was very nice. Then, you go in a small boat (3 people per boat) to admire the flamingos. We were lucky because our boat guide spoke English and could tell us more about the place, nature and birds. My friends who went with a non-English speaking guide were also extermely happy about the trip, so don't worry you'll miss something. For 10 CUC you get a guided walk into the woods and down to the shore of the lagoon.

Rancho Luna Beach (5 km from Cienfuegos): We visited the beach at late afternoon on a Sunday. There weren't many people. The water is so warm, and the sand is soft and lovely. You can walk in quite a way to swim. Great place for children and collecting shells. There a thatched umbrellas to protect you from the sun. The public beach area is much nicer than the

part in front of Rancho Luna Resort. It has weeds close to shore. There are a couple of places to buy beer or pop, but late in the day they were sold out of most beer. The beach is a good place to hunt for shells.

Peninsula de Zapata (Cienaga de Zapata) – Playa larga - A haven for birders and nature lovers, the Peninsula de Zapata is a remote, sparsely populated area of Cuba with diverse landscapes and one of the largest wetlands in the Caribbean. The Cienaga de Zapata, or the Zapata Swamp as it is affectionately known, is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, home to approximately 150 different species of birds, including rare bandicoots, waterhens, parrots, and heron. Crocodiles are also common. One part of the peninsula is a designated nature reserve, the **Gran Parque Natural de Montemar**, where visitors can see some of these creatures in their natural habitats.

At the mouth of the Bay of Pigs (Bahia de Cochinos) is **Playa Giron**, the famous site of the 1961 Bay of Pigs Invasion. Visitors can explore this fascinating history at the small **Museo Giron**. At the top of the Bay of Pigs, **Playa Larga** is home to a beautiful long beach backed by lush vegetation. Avid divers can explore the underwater wildlife at numerous dive sites here along the reef. Northeast of Playa Larga lies a large bird sanctuary and the **International Bird Center** (Centro Internacional de Aves).

Boca de Guama is the peninsula's tourist center and its main attraction is the **Criadero de Cocodrilos**, a crocodile farm. Nearby, on **Laguna del Tesoro** (Treasure Lake) lies **Villa Guama**, a tourist resort designed as an Indian Village that is only accessible by boat

Castillo de Jagua. This is an 18th-century fortress built to protect Cienfuegos against (English) pirates. There's an abandoned nuclear power plant behind the castle, built by the Soviets but never finished. Ferry costs 5 CUP, but they often ask for a CUC when they see you are a foreigner.

Cementerio la Reina - This is a must see if you want to see a great cemetery. Some amazing stones and work, dating back to the early 1800's

Vineri- 23.02.2018 – Cienfuegos – Trinidad

8 – 12 Transport: Taxi (95 km, 35 – 45 \$) – Luăm taxi ca să oprim în drum și la cascada El Nicho să facem o baie și o poză ☺

Cazare Cienfuegos (50 km – 1 h)

Stop 1h – 2 h la El Nicho

El Nicho Waterfalls - El Nicho itself is really pretty and situated in the middle of mountains. From what I recall, there are 5 pools you can swim in. The water is absolutely freezing, but you get used to it after a while. Make sure you have insect repellent as there are lots of

mosquitos

here.

If you are going from around Cienfuegos to Trinidad, it is well worth stopping here along the way.

El Nicho – Cazare Trinidad (45 km, 1 h și 10 min)

12.00 – 13.00 Cazare: Casa Hostal Fara, Calle Encarnación # 171 entre Independencia y Antonio Maceo, Trinidad

Walk around in the old Trinidad colonial center.

Plaza Mayor, the city's main public square, is dominated by the **Iglesia de la Santísima Trinidad**, and five lively colored colonial houses. The church, also known as Parroquial Mayor, was built in 1892, with a gothic-Victorian styled interior. To the west stands the most wonderful structure in Trinidad, **Palacio Brunet**, built in 1808. It houses the Museo Romantico, filled with 18th century riches and furniture. Southwest, **Casa Padron** houses the **Museo de Arqueología y Ciencias Naturales** that has exhibits on pre-Columbian culture, flora and fauna. This used to be the house of the German explorer Alexander von Humboldt, during his stay in Cuba in 1801. Across the street is **Casa de los Sanchez-Iznaga**, today **Museo de Arquitectura Colonial**.

El Futuro district, west of Plaza Mayor, is famous for the 1813 monastery, **Antiguo Convento de San Francisco de Asis**. Its bell tower offers a great panoramic view of Trinidad.

The Museum of the War Against the Bandits (*Lucha Contra Bandidos*) is in a former convent close to the cathedral near the Plaza Mayor in the old colonial center. The War Against the Bandits was the 1961-1969 fight against U.S.-sponsored counterrevolutionaries, who hid out in the nearby mountains. If you don't read Spanish the displays may be difficult to understand, but the piece of the American U-2 spy plane shot down speaks for itself. Also well worth the entrance fee is the *mirador* (view) from the convent's tower, reached by several flights of wooden stairs, which has superb views across the whole town. The cathedral is beautiful inside.

Museo Romantico, This museum is situated by the central square in Trinidad. Museum is placed in the mansion of a wealthy family of Trinidad and tells about the atmosphere of a rich plantation-owning family living, showing furniture, porcelain, portraits etc etc. Not every exhibit was belonging to just this family, and museum is a sort of collection from whole the colonial Trinidad. Beautiful pictures can be taken from the upper floor balcony towards the well-known photogenic Tower of Trinidad, in a way a symbol of the city. Ticket for using a camera/taking photos costs 1 CUC/camera. Plan to have at least half an hour for a visit.

Casa Carlos Merlin is one of the few houses in the city where pirates and smugglers lived in the 17th and 18th century.

Also the **market in the old colonial center** which is nice to walk around and look at the handicrafts - drawn thread tableclothes and linens seem to be a speciality. The vendors are refreshingly laid back, you can look around and get virtually no hassle or pressure to buy.

The streets are cobble stones and very irregular and walking could be difficult for older folks. Wear runners for sure. Do not even think about wearing high heels. Your ankles will pay.

Sâmbătă - 24.02.2018 – Trinidad

Valle de los Ingenios - an old train still runs (original carriages but a new engine) daily out to the sugar plantations. It's very touristy, like everything in Cuba, but enjoyable to some to see the countryside. Train leaves at 9:30 am and returns at 2:00 pm from main train station walking distance south of town. Buy tickets at 9:10am on the same day (no reservations). 10 CUC [2016-01]. Alternatively you can go to the Circuito Sur, the street that leads all the way to Sancti Spiritus and grab one of the trucks or guagua busses. Most of them stop at the Cupet petrol station at the intersection of Carr. a Casilda, Paseo Ignacio Agramonte and Circuito Sur. Price for busses is 2 CUP, for the trucks 5 CUP. Get off in Manaca where you can already spot the huge slave tower. It's an excellent starting point for a hiking tour.

Valle de los Ingenios, also named Valley de los Ingenios or Valley of the Sugar Mills, is a series of three interconnected valleys about 12 kilometres (7.5 mi) outside of Trinidad, Cuba. The three valleys, San Luis, Santa Rosa, and Meyer, were a centre for sugar production from the late 18th century until the late 19th century.

Go to the beach on the Ancon peninsula: A 5-10 minute taxiride outside the city center. It is well within biking distance from Trinidad; there may also be a local bus running (check at the local bus counter at the bus terminal, located on the left as you enter before the Astro counter). The peninsula is one of the few places in Cuba where you can access a great beach without staying at a resort hotel. Make sure you have mosquito repellent, especially if you intend to stay on the beach in the evening.

Climb the hill behind the town to get a great view. To get there, continue up the hill northeast from the Plaza Mayor. As you walk up the hill you go through poorer neighbourhoods. You may be asked for clothes or trinkets by the local kids. Seems pretty safe during the day but be careful at night. A lovely older lady named Felicity sells trivets she makes herself.

There's a very **atmospheric discotheque (Disco Ayala)** in a cave near the top of this hill (Las Cuevas). There is no sign or indication that it is there, just a steps leading into a hole in the ground behind a bush. It is in a huge cave with stalagmites and stactites. More tunnels and caves can be seen near the bathrooms. This is where young Cubans go to party, the music is mainly reggaeton and techno. Fun starts after 11 pm. Very much worth checking it out. Cover charge for foreigners was 3 CUC including one drink (cocktail or beer). Beers were

overcharged for foreigners (3.0 CUC asked) but could be paid for at the price for Cubans by flatly paying 1.5 CUC at the counter.

Duminică - 25.02.2018 – Trinidad – Santa Clara - Matanzas

8.00 – 16.00 Transport Trinidad – Santa Clara - Matanzas: Taxi (300 km, 4 h, 150 CUC sau 110 – 140 \$)

8.00 – 8.35 Trinidad - Topes de Collantes (20 km, 35 min)

8.40 – 14.40 Stop 4 h pt Hiking - rent taxi and head to **Topes de Collantes**. Hike the trail to Salto del Caburni Waterfall (14 km dus - întors) and swim in the pool next to the waterfall.

14.45 – 16.00 Topes de Collantes – Santa Clara (77 km, 1h și 15 min)

Stop 1 - 2 h să vizităm Santa Clara. Visit the museum and resting place of Che Guevara. **Che Guevara Mausoleum (h 8 AM – 9 PM)** - Santa Clara contains the mausoleum for the fallen of the Revolution. Included in this mausoleum is Che Guevara himself. In order to maintain the sanctity of the place, photography inside the mausoleum is strictly prohibited. Also, there are no souvenir-sellers to be found nearby. There is also a Che Guevara museum, as well as a huge square (Plaza de la Revolucion) overlooked by a large statue of Che. Americans are, unofficially at least, **not allowed** inside the museum and mausoleum, although they don't ask for ID; just where you're from, so mention that you're Canadian, Irish, etc. if you're American

5/10 minutes east of the center is the "**Monumento a la Toma del Tren Blindado**" - the site of one of the most important battles in Cuban history, where Che Guevara and his men ripped up the railway line, derailing an armoured train, and defeated the men inside. The site shows the actual bulldozer used, and a number of the actual train carriages in situ. Inside the carriages are exhibits, with accompanying text, in Spanish only.

18.00 – 21.00 Santa Clara - Matanzas (200 km , 3 h)

21.00 Cazare: Hostal 1810 (Calle Manzano (77) #28207, Cuba, Check – in 3 PM – 12 AM - midnight)

Explore Matanzas town.

Parque Libertad with several of Matanzas' most stimulating sights, including a 'liberty' statue depicting an open-armed woman, her wrists bearing broken chains, and a bronze statue (1909) of José Martí.

Catedral de San Carlos Borromeo. If you are in the center of Matanzas, you can't miss the Catedral de San Carlos Borromeo. It's made of huge stones and the towers are each different. It is recently renovated. Walking around the area is pleasant as well, with street vendors who have everything from food, clothing and plants for sale.

Luni - 26.02.2018 – Matanzas

Coral Beach - Coral beach which is about 20 minutes' drive from **Matanzas**, has beautiful corals and fishes. You just step into the water and it is full of corals and fishes. There is a place with Snorkelling & Diving sign along Coral beach, but it costs to do activities there, for example for snorkelling there it costs 15 CUC per person, including all the snorkelling equipments, and to put on life jacket. If you go around 100m further, you come to the free area on of the coral beach, there is a place that you can buy drinks as well.

Saturno cave (h 8 am to 6 pm) - Just over 15 km northwest of **Matanzas** is one of Cuba's truly impressive natural wonders - Cueva Saturno. The warm, crystal-clear waters that flood this underground cave are ideal for swimming, snorkelling and scuba diving. And for those who dive beneath the placid surface, an underwater world of stalagmites, stalactites and impressive marine life await.

Very interesting place, remember to take your swimming suit. Entrance only 5 CUC, unless you want a life jacket, which costs a little extra. Beautiful, and not that crowded. Water is a bit chilly but that's fine. Just beware on the ladder while coming in or out of the water as it may be a bit slippery.

Bellamar Caves (h 9 am to 5 pm, daily) — Visit the oldest tourist attraction in Cuba, open to visitors since the 1860s. The caves are extensive and impressive. There are quite a few steps down into the cave and it is slightly damp and rough underfoot, and also very warm.

Tropicana Matanzas — (20 km, 10 min de la cazare – la Cultural Center Tropicana – Hotel Canimao) (Opening Hours 20:00-2:00) Visit the newest Tropicana, the most famous cabaret of Cuba. An artistic production featuring Cuban dance, music and history. At the end of the show you can continue the night dancing different types of music. The place has also a snack bar, a cafeteria and souvenirs and cigar shop. W-Su, 90 minutes of dance show, 50 CUC.

Marti - 27.02.2018 – Matanzas – Varadero

Transport Matanzas – Varadero: Taxi (40 km, 35 min, 20 \$)

Cazare: Hotel Villa Kawama, Calle O, Reparto Kawama, Varadero (Check-in 16.00 – Check-out 12.00, Mese incluse)

Varadero Beach - Well, it's gorgeous. 25 kilometers of white sand and crystal clear waters. The hotels built along the beach have managed, so far, to spare it and hopefully that will not change in the future! So far the best beach I have been to.

Parque Josone — A park in the middle of Varadero filled with birds, vendors, music and camel rides for the kids. It cannot be missed, as it is located in the very centric 1st Avenue and

56th street where almost all visitors will eventually drive or walk in their stay in the beautiful beach destination. Parque Josone is a special place with fabulous botanical gardens, miniature violets, lakes and bridges, parrots, flamingos and more. The park is fruit of the creation of a romantic couple: Jose and Onelia whose combined names give origin to the parks name Josone.

Varahicacos Ecological Reserve - This is the last bit of native forest left in Varaderos and well worth dragging yourself away from the beach to take a stroll through it. It does not take long to have a look round and it packed with lots of natural treasures: huge cacti, colourful lizards, a bat cave (**Ambrosio Cave**) and lots more. Take your time to look around and enjoy the tiny fragment of nature.

House of Rum - Nice place. where you can purchase lots of sorts of Rums. In the store you can also taste the different flavours (and colours). The store is well provided and is a museum and exhibition in itself.

Villa Du Pont Once the residence of Irénée Du Pont, the green-roofed hacienda style building built in 1928 is today the headquarters of the Varadero Golf Club. The golf course, just a few steps away, features 18 holes, the largest in Cuba. The visitor has the opportunity to admire the splendor of its mahogany furniture, floors made out the finest Italian marble, bronze candelabra and oil paintings. The basement offers Varadero's most luxurious and expensive restaurant, "Las Américas". On the first floor there are 5 finely decorated and equipped guest rooms, plus a presidential suite. A few steps higher on the second floor, an attractive bar "Mirador" (open 24 hours), product of a mixture between art deco and Moorish style, will surely keep you there sipping tasty Cuban cocktails at sunset.

Miercuri - 28.02.2018 – Varadero – Havana

Varadero Beach – short swim ☺

12.00 – 15.10 Transport Viazul: Varadero – Havana (stație bus Varadero pe Calle 36 y Autopista la 2,5 km de cazare, 30 min pe jos)

12:00	15:10	10.00 USD
-------	-------	-----------

Stație bus Havana (pe Ave. 26 y Zoológico, Nuevo Vedado, la 7 km de cazare, cu masina facem 20 minute, probabil vom lua un taxi de aici – e lângă Gradina Zoo)

15.30 Cazare: Casa Amy (Acosta 113 Apt 104 entre Cuba y San Ignacio)

Morro Castle (h 10 am – 7 pm) (Spanish: *Castillo de los Tres Reyes Magos del Morro*), named after the three biblical Magi, is a fortress guarding the entrance to Havana bay. The design was drawn up by the Italian engineer Juan Bautista Antonelli; originally under the control of Spain, the fortress was captured by the British in 1762, and was returned to the Spanish under treaty terms a year later.

Necropolis de Cristobal Colon - a large ornate cemetery west of the Plaza de la Revolución. Unfortunately they charge like everywhere in Cuba (5 CUC).

John Lennon Park in Vedado. Notable for the regularly stolen (and replaced) eyeglasses

Joi - 1.03.2018 - Vineri 2.03.2018- Havana - Bucharest

07:00 Havana José Martí Intl. (HAV), Cuba - 10:30, Toronto Pearson Intl. (YYZ), Terminal 1

17:05 Toronto, Pearson Intl. (YYZ), Terminal 1 - 06:30 Frankfurt Frankfurt Intl. (FRA), Terminal 1

2.03.2018

09:45 Frankfurt - Frankfurt Intl. (FRA), Terminal 1 - 13:05 Bucharest Henri Coandă Intl. (OTP),

Romania