Havana and Trinidad - 14 nights

The ultimate Salsa experience, a wonderful week of Cuban music and culture in the company of our local Cuban dance team. Let us show you how to dance Cuban style with professional tuition by day and nights out in Havana's best Salsa clubs.

Dates and Prices

29 October to 12 November - £1,989.00

Unique Features

A team of professional Cuban dancers all supplied by us: What makes our Cuban Salsa trips different to the rest of our Salsa programme is our team of Cuban dancers who we supply to come out with you at night to the dance venues in Havana. This means that there are more dance partners to go round and enables you to dance with not just Cubans but Cuban trained dancers! Cuban Salsa is about truly "inhabiting" your body, really dancing WITH your partner and feeling the music in your soul. You will find that there is more fluidity and body movement compared to LA, New York and UK Salsa due to Cuban Salsa being at one with Salsa's ancestors - Son, Rumba, Afro-Cuban dance, Cha Cha Cha and Mambo. Our team of Cuban instructors truly want to see you dance like a Cuban, and will work with you on the "feel" of the fluid Cuban body movement, as well as on the moves and the footwork.

Your Holiday

Salsa in Cuba - what more could you ask for? This holiday is designed to completely immerse you in Cuban culture and the Cuban dance scene, both of which are energetic, very real and spontaneous. Its all about forgetting who you are, where you come from and living in the moment!

Havana (first 7 nights and last 3 nights): Enjoy 10 hours of Salsa classes with some of the most exciting Cuban Salsa teachers and dancers in Havana. We have a whole team dedicated to assist you in the classes in the mornings, take you to the best Salsa matinee afternoon dance sessions in the afternoons and accompany you at night dancing with you until late in intimate clubs, where the dancing is often energized by bands.

Trinidad (middle 4 nights): Chill out at the all-inclusive four star resort hotel located on the front line of Ancon Beach, eight kilometres from Trinidad city. Scuba dive, dance on the beach, enjoy a cocktail round the pool, take an afternoon trip into the city of Trinidad to sightsee and marvel at the tropical green mountains of the Escambray Mountain Range all around you.

What's Included

- A thorough and entertaining syllabus in salsa (Minimum fifteen hours - see Classes and Workshops)
- A beautifully organised programme of nights out with our team of Cuban dancers who really spice it up (Club entry and drinks extra)
- Full hosting our team on the ground who are experts in salsa and in Cuba.
- Return direct flights with Virgin Atlantic Gatwick / Havana.
- Meet and Greet upon arrival and return hotel transfers.
- 7 nights accommodation and breakfast in the luxurious 5* Hotel National - the best in Havana.
- A well thought out programme including parties, soirees, restaurants, nights out dancing as well sight seeing suggestions.
- A full Orientation Pack containing information on where to eat, where to party, tourist spots and attractions for independent sight-seeing.
- A Welcome party and drink.
- A choice of optional extras.

What previous Customers Have Said about this Holiday

"I would like to say that the holiday was absolutely smashing - I expecially enjoyed the Havana parts of the holiday - the hotel was wonderful, the dance troupe absolutely super (gold stars all around) and Ramon, our guide, exceeded all expectations being informative, friendly and looking out for us at busy social functions"

'We are not normally given to writing thank you letters, or using superlatives, but we have just returned from your Salsa dancing holiday in Cuba, and feel compelled to write and say that this was just an amazing experience, and one of the very best holidays ever!'.

'We were able to see so many different aspects of Cuba that as a sole tourist we would never have seen! Fantastic'.

'It was a brilliant experience, especially since we had the chance to go out with Cubans'

'Brilliant. Partied for 2 weeks. Cubans are all 'locos'! and good company.'

'Real eye-opening experience on Cuban society and culture.'

'Classes were excellent with professional dancers who were fun and friendly'

	'I cannot think of a better introduction to Cuban culture, music and dance!' 'An exhilirating blend of dance and experience of Cuban life. Wonderful'
Is this holiday for me?	If you love to have a good time and enjoy meeting new people in the setting of a fascinating, friendly country with year-round sunshine then yes! Our Cuban Salsa holidays are suitable for dancers of all abilities and ages - from complete beginners to advanced we can guarantee that you will enjoy our expertly organised programme of dance classes and evening entertainment, all in the company of a great group of like-minded people and professionally trained Cuban dancers who inject a real sense of fun into the entire trip.
Your Destination, includes sightseeing	Havana, the first grand city built by Europeans in the New World, retains the grandeur and charm of a history that spans nearly 500 years. When New York was still a collection of huts Havana was a cosmopolitan city with palaces and squares, with a high society already famous for its dances. Admire the famous Cathedral in Old Havana built in 1748. Visit the Palacio de los Capitaines Generales, the residence of the Spanish Captain General who ruled Cuba from 1791-1898 and the Castillo Real de la Fuerza, built between 1558-77, one of the oldest surviving colonial fortresses in the Americas and home to Giralda, the symbol of Cuba, as seen on the label of Havana Club rum. See the Capitolio Nacional, a huge marble building modelled on the Capitol building in Washington and visit the Museo de la Revolucion, formerly the presidential palace. Wander along El Malecon, the famous waterfront of Havana. Pay a literary pilgrimage to the Hotel Ambos Mundos where Ernest Hemingway wrote the novel "For Whom the Bell Tolls". When you're cultured out stroll along the Malecon and sample an ice cream from the famous Coppelia ice cream parlour, watch the strutting peacocks in the Hotel Nacional's garden, drink a mojito in La bodeguita and a daiquiri in La Floridita and take a cab ride in a 1950s Cadillac. And, of course, dance salsa. Visit Havana's nightclubs to learn to dance like a Cuban, with uninhibited passion. As Graham Greene said of Havana "Anything is possible".
Climate and weather	Weather: The Cuban climate is mild subtropical. East to west oriented it receives plenty of sunshine, warm temperatures and refreshing sea breezes. No wonder that Columbus thought that he had discovered the earthly paradise! Don't forget that humidity is relatively high - in august it can be at 80%! Average Temperatures: Jan 16/25 Feb 16/26 March 17/27 April 19/29 May 21/30 June 22/31 July 22/31 Aug 22/31 Sept 22/30 Oct 17/27 Nov 17/27 Dec 17/27
Your Accommodation	Brisas Trinidad del Mar - Hotel**** (Full Board) (Included)

The Brisas Trinidad del Mar Hotel is located on a beautiful white sand beach just eight kilometres from the city centre and is the perfect spot for a relaxing few days by the Caribbean sea.

All-inclusive meals can be taken at buffet and a la carte restaurants and there are unlimited drinks all day. All rooms are air-conditioned and have satellite TV, telephone, radio and safety deposit box. Within the hotel complex you can enjoy the swimming pool, jacuzzi, sauna, masseurs, gym and tennis courts. There are also shops, a chemist and travel agency which can organise car, moped and bicycle hire.

The hotel offers day and night-time entertainment as well as watersports - windsurfing, pedalos, kayaks, snorkeling and scuba diving courses for beginners.

Nacional de Cuba - Hotel***** (Bed & Breakfast) (Included)

You will be staying at the five star **Hotel Nacional de Cuba,** renowned for its refined elegance and classic splendour, as Havana's best hotel. Since 1930 it has attracted a large number of personalities from the arts, sciences and politics including Winston Churchill, Frank Sinatra, Ava Gardner, Naomi Campbell, Errol Flynn, and Alexander Fleming. Built in the 1930s and combining Art Deco features with modernist influences, the Nacional's image still appears on much of Cuba's tourist promotion literature and evokes the glamour of a bygone era. A full refurbishment in 1992 remained sympathetic to the original architecture, preserving the hotel's 1930s splendour.

With its privileged location in Vedado, the centre of Havana, the Nacional stands on a promontory just a few metres from the sea and offers fabulous views of Havana Bay, the Malecón promenade and the city. There are two swimming pools, a choice of restaurants and beautiful gardens complete with strutting peacocks.

Twin, single and triple rooms are available and Executive Suites are on request.

Casa particular in Havana - Host Family* (Bed & Breakfast) (Included)

A wonderful way to experience the "real" Cuba, staying in the home of a Cuban family. We use Cuban homes in convenient locations and of a good standard and we highly recommend this option to really immerse yourself in daily Cuban life. All "Casas" have clean and comfortable double accommodation with private facilities.

Classes and Workshops

Classes: Fifteen hours Salsa dance tuition is included in your holiday. You will receive expert dance tuition in Salsa from our native Cuban salsa teachers. Beginners will learn how to dance to the hot Latin rhythms of Salsa and learn enough moves to enjoy themselves dancing with the Cubans in local nightclubs. Intermediate and Advanced dancers will receive expert tuition on movement and technique designed to improve their style and will come home with some great new moves and loads of fluid Cuban style. The salsa classes will take place in a dance space within the Hotel Nacional.

Dance Levels: There will be at least two levels of Salsa tuition so that the classes will cater for all abilities, from beginner through to advanced. The dance teachers will be able to advise you on the first day of classes and suggest the level that is most appropriate to your ability and experience.

Daily Itinerary

Sample Itinerary

This is a provisional itinerary aiming to give you an idea of what your holiday will look like. There will be some elements which will change: (OP) indicates an optional extra for which a charge will be made in advance. Please note that nights out are all inclusive (transport to the club, club entry, drink, accompaniment by tour host and our team of dancers) and payable locally at the beginning of the week. Each night out works out at approximately £25 per person.

DAY 1
Arrival and transfer to hotel.
Evening - Welcome Drink and snacks. Salsa-ing all night with your Salsa Teachers!

DAY 2
Morning - Overview of the week and Salsa classes
Afternoon - Visit the Callejon de Hammel for a dance performance of Street Rumba, African Rhythms bands and Guaguanco (OP). Lunch in a picturesque Cuban restaurant in Old Havana.
Evening - Salsa-ing with your Salsa Teachers in the open air overlooking the fanous fortress at Havana port.
DAY 3
Morning - Salsa lessons. (OP) Tembleke Class - learn to move like a Cuban!
Afternoon and evening - Salsa your way through the afternoon and evening at this hot matinee Salsa club.

DAY 4
Morning - Salsa lessons.
Afternoon - (OP) Visit the Rum Museum and the Tobacco Factory.
Evening - Salsa-ing in another of the most famous and lively dance venues in Cuba with your teachers.
DAY 5
Morning - Salsa lessons. Afternoon - Chill out and sleep off your hangover around the pool enjoying the Salsa music and sun. Evening -Salsa-ing with your teachers in a fantastic club just outside Havana in the upmarket Marina Hemmingway

neighbourhood.

DAY 6
Morning - Salsa lessons
Afternoon - (OP) Cuban Style Salsa class: tembleke.
Evening - (OP) Dinner at a seafood restaurant with the option to sample local lobster. Later - Salsa-ing all night with your Salsa teachers.

DAY 7
Morning - Salsa lessons
Afternoon - Chill out and sleep off your hangover around the pool enjoying the salsa music and sun. Evening - Salsa-ing with your teachers in one of the best dance venues in Cuba.

DAY 8
Depart by coach to Trinidad (five hours). Arrival and chill out at the All-Inclusive Brisas Trinidad del Mar.

DAY 9
Morning and afternoon- At leisure: chill out around the pool or sunbathe on the hotel private beach. Or try out the scuba diving course (OP)
Evening - Salsa-ing in the hotel beach bar.

DAY 10
Morning and afternoon- Sightseeing suggestion: take a taxi into Trinidad and wander through the streets of this lovely colonial town.
Evening - Salsa-ing in the hotel beach bar.

DAY 11
Morning and afternoon - Sightseeing suggestion: hire a car and drive through this beautiful green, tropical countryside. Evening - Salsa-ing in the hotel beach bar.

DAY 12
Morning - Coach departs Trinidad to return to Havana (five hours).
Afternoon- For the Salsa die-hards, Salsa-ing at a Salsa Matinee.
Evening - Salsa-ing with the Cuban dance team in Havana. DAY 13
Morning - Salsa lessons. Afternoon - Chill out and sleep off your hangover around the pool enjoying the salsa music and sun. Evening - last night out Salsa-ing in Havana with the Cuban dance team! DAY 14 Morning - Salsa lessons.
Lunchtime - (OP) Last day lunch at famous Havana Restaurant in one of the most sought after districts. Late afternoon - Flight departs to return to UK.
DAY 15 Arrive in the UK.

Nightlife

The Cuban dance scene: Dance and music penetrates much of Cuba life. Cubans are surrounded in their daily life by an eclectic mix music of Son, Rumba, Afrocuban, Danzon, Cha Cha Cha, Dancehall, Rap and Hip Hop. The dance scene is fantastic fun, playful and provocative. Partners dance close and the style is creative and carefree. The latest dance craze is 'Tembleke' which is a rapid, sassy body movement involving the shoulders, chest, torso and hips danced solo at your partner.

Clubs and venues in Havana: Using the inside information of our Cuban teaching team, we will take you to the most happening venues. These may include concerts of world famous Salsa bands (such as Los Van Van), Salsa-ing by the sea just across from the Malecon, a Salsa Matinee (hot Cuban salsa and lots of Rueda between 4.30pm and 10pm! - the cubans come here after work), traditional 'Casas de las Trovas' where you can dance on the balcony, smart clubs with drink-as-much-as-you-like bars, hot late night venues (from 2.30am onwards) where you will find the djs mixing Salsa with Hip Hop and rap. Most clubs cost between $10-25. You are expected to pay your own way into the nightclubs and the transport there and back unless it is included as part of an excursion. We may walk, take taxis or organise private coach transport (about $2) to the best clubs. Cuban taxi dancers: Included in your holiday are Cuban taxi dancers who we supply to come out with you at night to the dance venues in Havana. This means that there are more dance partners to go round and enables you to dance with not just Cubans but Cuban trained dancers!

Your Teachers

In Havana you will be taught by a team of Cuban instructors headed by Alexis González Valdez. He and his Cuban team (who have professional dance training) will introduce you to Cuban Salsa and thus introduce you to life in Cuba – a life which pulsates with energy, wildness and sensuality. Alexis was born in Havana. He graduated from the Escuela Nacional de Arte in Havana specializing in Show dance. He has toured Europe performing with different Cuban dance troupes. He is an active member of UNEAC – the Cuban Association of Artists and Writers and performs with the Cuban Television Ballet.

Food and Meals

Please remember that Cuba is a poor country. Sometimes the food is plain and simple, and there is a limited selection of dishes by European standards. This is just one of the unavoidable aspects of being in Cuba. Although Cuban food can sometimes be uninspiring we think that you will usually be pleasantly surprised at the quality of the food you get. We shall naturally do our best to ensure that the restaurants we take you to serve food of an acceptable quality. The quality of the food may vary but the food is generally cheap and wholesome, with lots of rice and beans, fried fish and plantains. A typical Cuban menu might include Frijoles (a kind of stew with beans and ham), rice and black beans (moros

y cristianos), cucumbers and tomatoes, cassava or malanga (local root vegetables), roast pork, fried chicken, plantains, corn fritters, bread, fried fish, pizza, followed by coconut pudding or ice cream.

Vegetarians: Vegetarianism is not understood in Cuba, where meat is a rare treat. So please be patient with locals who do not understand your needs. Please be aware that vegetarian choices can sometimes be very limited. On the other hand the staple diet of Cubans includes a lot of beans, rice and plantains, all suitable for vegetarians.

Optional Extras

What are optional extras? In addition to your holiday we also offer you a variety of optional extras to make your holiday even richer and add some local colour. You can buy your optional extras at the welcome meeting at the beginning of your holiday. We will ask you to pay in cash and fill out a form. These are the optional extras that we anticipate running – actual details and prices will be confirmed on arrival. Some may require minimum numbers.

* Second week options in Varadero, Trinidad or Santiago de Cuba Stay on for a second week in Cuba in either Varadero, Santiago de Cuba or Trinidad to chill out on the beach and soak up some of those warm rays of sun. Please ask our Reservations Team for more information at the time of booking.
* Lunch in an Art Deco restaurant in Havana with live music and beautiful gardens complete with peacocks (approx 12GBP).
* Dinner at elegant restaurant in Havana with fresh seafood and lobster options (approx 15GBP).
* Visit to the Rum museum and Tobacco Factory in Havana, with guided tours around both (approx 16GBP includig transfers). * Tembleke Class with your Salsa Teachers Learn how the Cubans move and add this new skill to your Salsa repetoire! (approx. 8GBP). Optional Extra 'Going Out' Package. We can take the whole process of getting transport to the venue, paying for the entrance to the clubs, and organising the dancers' drinks off your hands by asking you to give us the money at the beginning of the week. All you have to do is turn up. If you would like to take advantage of this, Amanda will organise it. She may even be able to negotiate better rates or music, if she is speaking on behalf of a group of 15 or 20, than you would be able to by turning up as individuals. It is not an arrangement for profit, purely for convenience, simplicity, and hopefully, your enjoyment. In a couple of venues we receive a complimentary rum cocktail because we are a group.

If you would like to do this, the estimated cost is 140.00 cuc's for the 5 nights out in the week or 180 cuc's for 7 nights. The arithmetic is as follows. The average club cover is between 5.00 - 25.00 cuc's and transportation is about 10 per guest. So if you opt into this, Amanda will organise your entrance, transport, and in the case of some venues, a complimentary cocktail drink. We balance the cheaper nights and the more expensive nights out so that the average price covers the weekly expenses.

Single Room Supplements, Upgrades and Budget Options

Option 1 - Included

Nacional de Cuba - Hotel***** Bed & Breakfast - (29/10/2012 to 05/11/2012 - 7 nights)

Single Room (1 Person)	175.00 GBP
Triple Room (Based on 3 sharing)	Included
Twin Room (Based on 2 sharing)	Included

Extra Nights

One Bed Suite Executive Floor (Per Room)	0 GBP per night
Single Room (Based on 1 sharing)	83 GBP per night
Triple Room (Based on 3 sharing)	180 GBP per night
Twin Room (Based on 2 sharing)	104 GBP per night

Brisas Trinidad del Mar - Hotel**** Full Board - (05/11/2012 to 09/11/2012 - 4 nights)

Twin Room (Based on 2 sharing)	Included
Twin Room (Single Occupation) (1 Person)	20.00 GBP

Extra Nights

Suite for single occupancy (Per Room)	0 GBP per night
Twin Room (Based on 2 sharing)	84 GBP per night
Twin Room (Single Occupation) (Based on 1 sharing)	64 GBP per night

Nacional de Cuba - Hotel***** Bed & Breakfast - (09/11/2012 to 12/11/2012 - 3 nights)

Single Room (1 Person)	75.00 GBP

Triple Room (Based on 3 sharing)	Included
Twin Room (Based on 2 sharing)	Included

Extra Nights

One Bed Suite Executive Floor (Per Room)	0 GBP per night
Single Room (Based on 1 sharing)	83 GBP per night
Triple Room (Based on 3 sharing)	180 GBP per night
Twin Room (Based on 2 sharing)	104 GBP per night

Option 2 - Included

Casa particular in Havana - Host Family* Bed & Breakfast - (29/10/2012 to 05/11/2012 - 7 nights)

Double Room (Per Room)	Included
Single Room (Per Room)	Included

Extra Nights

Double Room (Per Room)	50 GBP per night
Single Room (Per Room)	42 GBP per night

Brisas Trinidad del Mar - Hotel**** Bed & Breakfast - (05/11/2012 to 09/11/2012 - 4 nights)

Twin Room (Based on 2 sharing)	Included
Twin Room (Single Occupation) (1 Person)	20.00 GBP

Extra Nights

Suite for single occupancy (Per Room)	0 GBP per night
Twin Room (Based on 2 sharing)	84 GBP per night
Twin Room (Single Occupation) (Based on 1 sharing)	64 GBP per night

Nacional de Cuba - Hotel***** Bed & Breakfast - (09/11/2012 to 12/11/2012 - 3 nights)

Single Room (1 Person)	75.00 GBP
Triple Room (Based on 3 sharing)	Included
Twin Room (Based on 2 sharing)	Included

Extra Nights

One Bed Suite Executive Floor (Per Room)	0 GBP per night
Single Room (Based on 1 sharing)	83 GBP per night
Triple Room (Based on 3 sharing)	180 GBP per night
Twin Room (Based on 2 sharing)	104 GBP per night

Flights and Transfers

Flights: Almost all our published prices include return flights from selected UK airports. If you are travelling from outside the UK we can offer you a holiday price without a flight included. Please ring us to find out which UK departure flights are offered on each holiday.Our client care team are happy to price you a flight from any UK airport. Supplements may apply for certain regional UK airports or if you are buying close to the time of departure. If you buy well in advance you will be able to take advantage of our Early Bird Discounts and promotions which apply on many holidays.

Transfers: We offer airport transfers at our chosen arrival destination airports to meet flights from a variety of selected UK airports. In addition, if you are on a different flight which coincides with our arrival times at our chosen airport, we

	can also offer you a place on the transfer. Our client care team can advise you on selected flights for your chosen holiday. Sometimes you may have to wait a short while at the airport to connect with our transfer. If you are not coming from our selected UK airports or are flying to a different arrival airport, we can happily arrange a transfer for you at an extra cost - please ask us for details. You may wish to make your own way to your hotel. To do this we will give you easy to follow instructions.
Making you own way to the hotel for ground only package	Making your own way there: For those whose flights don't coincide with our Airport coach transfer, you can make your own way to the Hotel in Havana. The distance between the José Martí International Airport and the city of Havana is approximately 20 km (12 miles). There are no public buses that pass by the airport en route to Havana, so you must either take a personal taxi or tourist bus. The taxi charges approximately $30 CUC, and the tourist bus charges approximately $15 CUC. Journey time: about 30 minutes.
What to Expect in terms of Organisation	On Arrival: You will receive a detailed itinerary and any other important information, including an overview of the local sights, recommended restaurants and other helpful tips. Club Dance Holidays Host: Your holiday tour host is there to make your holiday as enjoyable as possible. Club Dance Holidays Tour Hosts are a cut above your typical Holiday Rep with a lightness of touch that enables you to get the best out of your holiday without being in the least bit interfering. We make sure you get the best out of the destination even though you are there for a relatively short time and we do this through our local knowledge and our knowledge of dance. Club Dance Holidays Tour Hosts normally offer much more of themselves than you would expect including making sure your nights are sociable and fun often well into the small hours if that is your whim. During the daytime the level of participation and presence of Club Dance Holidays tour hosts varies according to the nature of each holiday and its destination. Overview of the Week and Welcome Drink: At the beginning of your holiday there is an Overview of the Week where your tour host will tell you about all details of your holiday and answer any questions you might have. At the Overview of the Week you can buy your optional extras and Dance Holidays will invite you to be our guest to a drink. Getting Around: You are responsible for making your own way to the dance classes and meeting points on the itinerary. We give you a detailed, annotated map and itinerary which make this easy. Nearly all of the activities we plan are within walking distance of the hotel. On one or two occasions it may be wise to get a taxi, and we will let you know when and how.
Before Your Go	Books on Cuba: Of the books we have read about Cuba or set in Cuba these are the ones we would recommend. "Enduring Cuba" by Zoe Bran - Recommended travel book written in 2002. Honest and inquisitive look into Cuban life. “Land of Miracles” by Stephen Smith – An excellent recent travel book written about Cuba, witty clever and informative. Strongly recommended. “Waking up in Cuba” by Steven Foehr – An honest, entertaining account of what you can expect to find in Cuba. Especially informative about the music and cultural history. “Cuba” - The Lonely Planet Guide - by David Stanley, one of the most detailed guide books on Cuba. The dual economy: Cuba’s economy has been distorted by the American blockade and by the withdrawal of subsidies by the former Soviet Union. There are two economies running side by side in Cuba. One is in Cuban pesos and is for Cubans. The other is in CUC, Convertible Cuban Pesos and is for tourists. The dual economy is to cater for the difference between the average Cuban wage and the wage that a visiting tourist will earn back home. It’s worth bearing in mind that the average monthly wage of a Cuban is $12 - $15. In a nightclub a tourist might be asked to pay between $5 - $20. A Cuban will pay 30 pesos which is about 600 times less. The concept of a dual economy may seem strange to you but to Cubans it is as natural as your economy is to you. Money: Until recently, the second economy was the American dollar. However, Castro eliminated the dollar from circulation in November 2004. You can no longer use US Dollars or any other foreign currency in Cuba, and if you bring american dollars a tax of 10% will be applied to you at the exchange of them for Cuban Convertible Pesos (this tax will not be applied to other currencies). So our strong recommendation is to bring cash Euros, UK Pounds or Canadian Dollars and change them on arrival in Cuba to the CUC. Additionally you will be able to exchange back the remaining CUC at the end of your travel. The CUC has an exchange rate equivalent to the American dollar and for this reason its sign is a ‘$’. Whilst bringing your money in cash may seem a bit alarming, it is from our personal experience, the most practical way of buying. Cheques, credit cards that are related to US banks and American Express travellers cheques are not accepted. There a very few (if any) cashpoints. You can take cash out by showing your credit card and passport at a till within a bank but you will probably have to queue for a long time. Tipping: Tourism is the most important industry in Cuba and those who are able to work with tourists, even as room cleaners or barmen, earn more money than doctors and other professionals. Tips therefore often constitute the main source of income for many of the Cubans who you will meet. We feel our tour hosts work hard to give you an exceptional holiday and sometimes you may find that they add some special touches which are beyond the call of duty. If you agree with us, you might wish to show your appreciation by way of a tip. You can do this by putting money in an envelope on your own or by getting together with other guests. All tipping is evidently entirely at your discretion.

Budgeting for your holiday: Here are some guidelines on prices, to help you do your own calculations. Please refer to the optional extra section of the fact sheet for the prices of the optional extras.
Three course meal with drinks: 15 Euros
Tipping per day: 2 Euros
Nightclub entrance: 5-20 Euros
Rum and coke in nightclub: 4 Euros
Beer in a bar/cafe: 2 euros
Coffee in a bar/cafe: 1.50 euros
Airport tax on leaving Cuba: 25 Euros

Gifts for Cubans: Cuba is without many of the essential things that we take for granted. Things that are particularly difficult to get hold in Cuba include toiletries (shampoo, moisturiser, razors, soap, toothpaste, etc), perfumes and aftershaves, pens and paper, books in English or Spanish, clothes, and shoes. In the past some visitors have taken small gifts to give to the Cubans they meet or have left some of their own things behind them when they travel back to the UK.

Passports: These must be valid for at least six months beyond the length of stay. Please check your passport now.

Tourist Visa Card: You require a Tourist Visa Card to enter Cuba. We as a tour operator can issue Tourist Visa Cards to our clients who come from Britain, Australia, Canada, USA, other EU countries and Japan. (If you live in another part of the world, please arrange your own visa to enter Cuba). Cuban Tourist Visa Cards are valid for one single trip of up to 30 days, although the stay can be extended in Cuba. The card must be bought in the country where the trip has been arranged (through us!). All passengers must hold tickets and other documentation required for their onward or return journey unless holding special annotation issued by a Cuban Consulate. You will be sent your Cuban Tourist Visa Card with your tickets a few days before you go. You will need to keep your Tourist Visa Card safe as you will need it to get in to Cuba and to get back out of the country. So look after it carefully during your trip.

Health and Fitness: There are no particular health requirements for a dance holiday. However you should be able to dance for at least two hours a day in order to be able to enjoy the dance classes. Please inform us if you have any medical conditions that we need to be aware of.

Luggage Labels and Lost Luggage: We strongly recommend that you secure your luggage before flying by all means possible – tape and locks. You should attach large and clear labels to your luggage with your name, flight number and destination. Do not put travellers cheques, jewellery or money in your suitcase. In the unlikely event that your luggage is lost during the journey you need to independently take the matter up directly with the airline at the airport in Havana.

Vaccinations: We are informed by the Cuban Embassy that no special vaccinations are required for travel to Cuba. However, the following vaccinations are recommended by NHS Direct: tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A, polio, diphtheria, BCG and hepatitis B. Please consult your own GP in respect of which vaccinations you should have.

Insurance: This is a condition of booking please refer to the information supplement for details.

Travel Documents: You receive these (which include a detailed Information Pack, your flight tickets and your Cuban Tourist Visa Card) when you have paid for your holiday in full and as soon as we have received your airline tickets. In some cases the airlines do not release the tickets until five days before the departure date. We also confirm the address and phone number of the hotel and the emergency contact numbers.

Essential equipment and clothing to bring

Useful Things to Bring: It's worth remembering that due to the US embargo you will not find as much availability in the shops (especially chemists and clothes shops) so its a good idea to come well prepared:

Shoes suitable for walking around the streets
Broad brimmed sun hat/sunglasses
High factor sun cream
Insect repellent/anti-mosquito spray
Antiseptic cream in case of bites
Elastoplasts for sore feet
Aspirin/Nurofen for hangovers!
Immodium for stomach upsets
Shampoo, soap, toothpaste and other toiletries (hard to obtain and expensive in Cuba)
Condoms (local condoms are of low quality)
Travel washing powder (although the hotel may provide a laundry service)
Paper tissues/toilet paper
Swimming costume essential/beach towel
Money belt
Money, plane ticket, full valid passport, visa
This fact sheet

What to wear for dancing: It is probable that you may get through quite a few clothes in the classes and dancing at night (you can get quite hot!) so bring a variety of outfits. In the clubs, the local dress code is quite casual and 'streety' as opposed to elegant and smart. Cuban women tend to wear jeans/tight trousers or mini skirts with sassy little tops

whilst men tend to wear trousers with tshirts. Trainers are allowed at most venues. Shorts are not permitted. A useful tip for women is in that some salsa clubs you have to leave your handbag in the cloakroom. Therefore its a good idea to bring a wrist/ankle purse or a purse that clips on to your trousers/skirt.

At Your Destination

The following are a few tips for the new traveller to Cuba.

The Cuba Factor: Be aware that Cuba is a place where things do not always go according to plan. Sometimes the most carefully constructed plans just don't happen. At other times new and exciting opportunities arise to, for instance, see a famous Cuban band playing live, or to experience some exciting aspect of life in Cuba that no one could have possibly predicted. Turn every problem into an opportunity and you will experience the best of Cuba.

Making friends with the locals and people not on the holiday: Cuba is a great place to make friends with the locals, and should you do so and would like them to come along to the activities organised by us, then just ask your Tour Host and except for the dance classes and provided you pay their way there should not be a problem. However, we discourage Non-Cubans who have not paid for the holiday from coming out with us more than once or from joining in activities arranged specially for the group. We would be grateful for your assistance and cooperation is this respect.

Buying drinks and meals for Cubans: Often Cubans will ask you to buy them a drink or food. They are often unable to afford to buy their own. At your own discretion you may wish to occasionally buy drinks and or a meal for the Cuban friends that you make. This is usually only a matter of a few dollars and is another feature of the peculiar circumstances that prevail in Cuba.

Attention in public places: Visitors from the West should be aware that they are likely to get a much higher level of physical attention in Cuba than they are used to back home. This applies to men as well as women! In nightclubs, Cubans dance close and often in a very sensual way. Sometimes they may try to push their luck. This is always done with a smile, is usually just playful and can be great fun. You should exercise common sense and, if you find that you are feeling hassled you should be firm and disengage from your partner with a polite and friendly smile. One of the team will normally be on hand to provide moral support, or escape, should you need it!

Keeping your valuables safe: Although crime rates in Cuba are very low, it is a poor country and you represent to them a rich foreign tourist whose pockets are stuffed with unimaginable wealth. So please be careful. Our advice is to leave expensive jewellery and unnecessary valuables at home. It is best not to put temptation in peoples' way. Do not leave your luggage unattended at any time and ensure that there is some way of locking or padlocking your suitcase or travel bag on the occasions where the luggage needs to be left in the bus or in the reception of the hotel. It is not unheard of for unlocked bags to be tampered with. When travelling we suggest that you keep your passport, travellers cheques, dollars and other important valuables about your person, in secure money belts or pockets. Although your possessions should be reasonably safe in your hotel rooms please ensure that your traveller's cheques, dollars and other important valuables are always locked in your suitcase or in your safe when you go out.