



Marazul Charters Inc.

1 Marine Plaza, Suite 302, North Bergen NJ 07047

Tel (800-223-5334 or (201) 319-1054

Fax (201) 319-8970

Email: info@marazul.com

www.marazul.com

Cuba Travel Advice

2016

DOCUMENTS: Under revised U.S. restrictions as published March 17, 2016, only persons whose travel falls into certain categories covered by a General License (no application necessary) or a Specific License (by application) are authorized to travel to, from, or within Cuba.

A. General License (no application to Office of Foreign Assets Control necessary)

□ 515.561 Family Visits (including family members of persons traveling in other authorized categories except People to People) ; □ 515.562 Official business of the U.S. government, foreign governments, and certain intergovernmental organizations ; □ 515.563 Journalistic activities in Cuba ; □ 515.564 Professional research and professional meetings in Cuba ; □ 515.564 Attending Professional Meetings ; □ 515.565 (a) Educational Activities by persons at academic institutions ; □ 515.565 (b) People to People Travel by individuals or by sponsoring organizations ; □ 515.566 Religious activities in Cuba ; □ 515.567 Public Performances, clinics, workshops, athletic & other competitions & exhibitions ; □ 515.572 Authorization to provide travel services, carrier services, and remittance forwarding services ; □ 515.574 Support for the Cuban People ; □ 515.575 Humanitarian Projects ; □ 515.576 Activities of private foundations or research or educational institutes ; □ 515.533 (d) and □ 515.559 (d) Travel related to the exportation of authorized or licensed goods

B. Specific License

□ Specific License issued by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (we must receive a copy of your license):

INOCULATIONS: While there are no required shots, we recommend checking the website of the Center for Disease Control at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/cuba> for recommended immunizations for Cuba.

BAGGAGE: There are varying charges for checked baggage and overweight charges depending on the airline you are using.

GIFT PARCELS: [As amended Oct 17, 2016] Gift parcels may be brought to Cuba by any licensed traveler and given to any individual (excluding only members of the Political Bureau or M) or to a charitable, educational or religious organization. In addition to foods (including vitamins), medicine, medical supplies and equipment (including hospital supplies and equipment for the handicapped), gift parcels may now include clothing, personal hygiene items, consumer communication devices, and many other items. The total value of non-food items is limited to \$800. There are no limitations on bringing informational materials. Cuban customs will not charge duty or overweight charges for medicines and/or medical supplies if packed in a separate bag weighing 10 kilos or less.

WHAT TO TAKE: Be prepared for hot weather, with a chance of brief periods of rain. However, bring a light jacket or sweater for cool evenings (and sometimes very cool air-conditioning!). From November to April the temperature averages 75-80 F.; from May to October, about 85-90 F (with very high humidity throughout the year). The warmest weather is in the eastern part of the island (Santiago). Rainy season is May-October. In general, clothing should be on the informal side. If you bring prescription drugs, be sure the druggist's identification label is on the container and be sure you have at least a few days' supply in your carry-on luggage. Other items to remember when packing:

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| - Sun screen / Sunglasses / Sun hat | - Alarm clock | - Soap |
| - Extra pair of glasses | - Tissues / Tampons | - Camera, film, memory cards |
| - Mosquito repellent/Anti-Itch Medication | - OTC medications/Band Aids | - Detergent for personal laundry |
| - Spanish-English dictionary | - Bathing suit | - Plastic bag for soiled clothes |

TIPPING: Tipping is expected (in Convertible Cuban Pesos) by your tour guides, drivers, hotel porters and cleaning personnel and/or other specialized guides (museum docents, for example), as well as at restaurants and for special services rendered

MONEY: Only Convertible Cuban Pesos (CUC) are accepted as payments for goods and services in Cuba. US Dollars (USD) can be exchanged upon entry at the airport or at hotels or banks or Exchange Offices (CADECA). The exchange rate is approximately 1 USD = 0.87 CUC. Travelers Checks must be exchanged into CUC as well.

CREDIT CARDS: The use of credit cards and debit cards in Cuba has now been authorized by the U.S. but must wait until the organizations, banks, credit card companies in the U.S. which issue credit or debit cards have agreements with vendors in Cuba. Check with Marazul for updates. Credit cards issued by non-US banks (third country) can be used.

CELL PHONES: Sprint, Verizon, and T-Mobile serviced cell phones should work in Cuba (with roaming charges). An unlocked quad band GSM cell phone will work in Cuba if you buy a CUBACEL SIM card at 30 CUC. time cards (minutes) are sold in 10 CUC amounts. (Rental Cell phones in Cuba are in very short supply, so bring an unlocked phone if you plan to use CUBACEL)

EMAIL AND INTERNET: Access and services are available at increasing numbers of hotels, post offices, and cybernet cafes

RELIGIOUS SERVICES: Visitors are free to attend the services of their choice.

CAR RENTAL: Rental cars or chauffeur-driven cars are available at the airport, and at many hotels in Havana and in major cities and resorts, although rental cars have recently been in short supply and are expensive (75 CUC and up per day).

SHOPPING: Persons are now authorized to buy unlimited amounts of goods in Cuba to bring back for personal use (including rum and/or cigars). U.S. customs allows (from any country) 1 liter of alcohol and 100 cigars duty-free. Above that amount, you are subject to Federal taxes.

MEDICAL CARE: All travelers to Cuba are required to have medical insurance coverage for the time of your stay. For travelers on the charter flights from the U.S. the cost for this coverage is included within the airfare charge. **The return ticket is the proof of medical coverage.** While there are no required shots, we recommend checking the website of the Center for Disease Control at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/cuba> for recommended immunizations. We strongly recommend drinking **bottled water** only. The most common afflictions for visitors are mild diarrhea, heatstroke and sunstroke. We also recommend drinking plenty of non-caffeinated, non-alcoholic drinks, using sunscreen, and getting enough rest.

ELECTRICAL CURRENT: In general, your electric razor, hairdryer, or other small appliance will operate in the standard electrical current in Cuba which is 110 V. However, most of the newer or recently renovated hotels have converted to 220 V, and you will need a converter (which is difficult to come by in Cuba, so best to bring your own).

SECURITY: Many hotels have lock boxes at the front desk and may also have them in each room which you may want to use for your valuables and perhaps for your passport. There is usually an extra charge for the use of lock boxes. Other than in the room safe, do not leave valuables (e.g. passport, money, or camera) in your room.

TIME: Cuba is in the Eastern Standard Time zone (including daylight savings time).

COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE: There is direct dialing between the U.S. and Cuba (Cuba's country-code is 53; Havana's city-code is 7). You can obtain your hotel telephone number from Marazul. Collect calls may not be available. Postal service between the U.S. and Cuba can take weeks, so you should not expect to receive any mail while you are there.

IN AN EMERGENCY: If you are a member of a group which has made its arrangements in Cuba through Marazul, family or friends can contact us (during business hours) in case of emergency at 201-319-1054 or at 800-223-5334 and we will attempt to contact Cuba and have a message passed on to you.

READING SUGGESTIONS: Available from www.powells.com or www.amazon.com, We recommend **Cuba** (8th Edition 2015) from Lonely Planet, **Cuba and Its Music** By Ned Sublette (2007) **National Geographic Traveler: Cuba** by Christopher Baker (2007), **Cuban Revelations: Behind the Scenes in Havana** (2013) by Marc Frank, **Cuba, What Everyone Needs to Know** (2012) by Julia Sweig, **A Contemporary Cuba Reader** (2015) edited by Philip Brenner et al, **Havana** (2007), and **Cuba and the U.S. Empire: A Chronological History** (2016) by Jane Franklin from Monthly Review Press. Also, **Moon's Cuba** (2010). Information on Cuba can be obtained from the **Center for Cuban Studies**, 231 W 29 St, #401, New York, NY 10001 www.cubaupdate.org (212-242-0559). **For MAPS** of Cuba and Havana: www.barnesandnoble.com or www.mapseasy.com

HELPFUL ADDRESSES:

Havanatur-Celimar / Dept. USA Ave Paseo #451 e/ 19 y 21, Vedado Tel: 842-8700

Banco Financiero Internacional, Calle Linea 1, Vedado, Havana; tel: 833-3423,833-3424

Individual Tourism Office, Habana Libre Hotel, L y 23, Vedado, Havana tel: 832-6245, 832-6634

U.S. Embassy, Calzada e/ L y M, Vedado, Havana tel: (53-7) 834-4400, Fax (53-7) 833-1084

Cuban Embassy, 2639 16th St NW, Washington DC 20009 tel; 202-797-8518/Fax 202-797-8521

Office of Foreign Assets Control, 1500 Penn Ave. NW, 2nd Fl. AX, Wash DC 20220 <tel:202-622-2480>/[fax:202-622-1657](tel:202-622-1657)