

PROGRAM 5

VINALES - LEARN SPANISH & ADVENTURE - 1 WEEK

Step back in time and enjoy traditional Cuba. Viñales is a beautiful agricultural town utilising horse power to cultivate plantations including the best tobacco fields in the country. The perfect contrast to your time in Havana here we enjoy the fresh air and natural world including stunning UNESCO heritage status limestone mountains and tobacco drying houses.

This is a one week (7 night/8 day) program starting 3rd Sunday of EVERY month. Spanish lessons continue Monday to Friday but after lunch we explore; hiking, horse-riding and cycling through some of the most wonderful landscapes in Cuba. Can be taken as a standalone or 'follow on' program. The program starts and finishes in Viñales but transportation from Havana can be arranged.

Program includes 7 nights accommodation, half board, Spanish lessons each morning and an afternoon activity every day Monday to Friday to help you maximise your time.



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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Program starts and finishes in Viñales BUT transportation can be arranged from Habana Vieja direct to your Casa Particulare in Viñales departing after breakfast Sunday morning and arriving lunchtime. As usual there is a 'welcome camino' to familiarize yourself with the neighbourhood and various services. Very quickly you will sense a totally different atmosphere and pace to the chaotic energy of Habana.

This is farming country and the horse is used to get around town and used to work the rust coloured tobacco fields. The town itself is very pretty nestled in a valley surrounded by distinctive limestone mountains. The main square is lively during the evenings with an outdoor 'Casa de Musica' being the central hub for nightlife.

Accommodation is shared rooms in a family run Casa Particulare. Breakfast and lunch are provided each day and features locally grown produce – usually organic. Monday to Friday Spanish lessons continue in the usual format 3 x 45 minute lessons from 09:00-11:45. After lunch there are daily activities, listed below, to help you enjoy and explore this beautiful part of the country.

Week 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
07:00-08:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	Sunrise Hike	Breakfast	Breakfast	Free	Breakfast
09:00-11:45	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Brunch 09:00-11:00	Program End – return to Habana
12:00-14:00 14:00-17:00	Lunch Horseback Finca Tour	Lunch Trek Valley of Silence	Lunch Free	Lunch Bike tour Indian Cave	Lunch Discover Viñales	Optional Activities	Free

Spanish Lessons

Monday to Friday's intensive Spanish lessons take place shortly after breakfast. Your teacher is licensed and on day one you receive a short test followed by a discussion to establish your level and objectives (OR if doing this as a 'follow on' program, teacher in Havana will prepare continuation classes in Viñales). Lessons take the format of 3 x 45 minute lessons each morning, with 15 minute breaks to refresh, making approximately 3 hours of Spanish lessons each day - 15 hours per week. Lessons are held from 09:00 sharp, Monday to Friday at your Casa.

Activities

Each day Monday to Friday an activity has been scheduled to help you enjoy and explore the town and countryside. These include;

Horseback Finca & Tobacco Tour

The best way to explore the valley and lush plantations is as the local formers do; on horseback. This is a gentle trot through the countryside to take in the scenery and traditional farming techniques. We stop at one of the distinctive tobacco drying houses and learn more about this famous crop – and the processes involved in cultivating tobacco, drying/curing and finally how to roll a cigar. We then continue to the spectacular 'Mirador' viewing point before returning home late afternoon.

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If you prefer, this activity can be taken as a walking tour – without the horse!



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Trek Valley of Silence

This time we enjoy exploring the valley on foot. Learning more about the various crops cultivated here including sugar cane – a refreshing cane juice helps energise us along the way. As we walk your local guide will help you understand how people live here, some of the challenges and the importance of agriculture and tourism to create a balanced and sustainable economy.



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Sunrise & Prehistory Mural

This morning we have a particularly early start as we aim to catch a spectacular sunrise with a local community, Los Acuáticos. We enjoy stories about the history - and mythology - of this community. After a coffee or fruit juice we continue to the famous 'prehistory mural' – actually an art piece created in the 60's and often hyped but nonetheless a popular attraction and the location itself is very special.

Back to our Casa ready for breakfast... and Spanish classes. As the afternoon is free any sleepy heads can enjoy a well-earned siesta!



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Bicy tour to Indian Cave

This time we hop on bicycles and head out of town and explore one of the many limestone caves that make Viñales so distinctive. Some of these caves were used as shelters for indigenous peoples and used as hideouts for runaway slaves. There is also a cave that doubles as a nightclub!

Today we take a boat trip to admire one of the most extensive cave formations with distinctive mineral and limestone formations.

Viñales village & Botantical Gardens

Our final activity during this busy week is to learn more about the evolution of the town, different construction techniques and pointers to her future. We also learn more about the indigenous flora at the beautifully manicured botantical gardens.

PRICE PER WEEK

Cost of week 1 'Learn Spanish & Adventure' program* EURO 380

price includes 'welcome camino', 7 nights accommodation, breakfast & lunch plus 15 intensive Spanish lessons and activities described above.

Cost of extra night – accommodation, breakfast & lunch EURO 25

Transfer Habana to Viñales – EURO 27 each way

EXTENSION WEEKS

This program can be taken as a stand-alone program OR a 'follow on program'. For example, 1st Sunday of each month there are two 2 week program options available, based in Habana – Learn Spanish, Dance & Culture OR Learn Spanish & Volunteer. What better way to get an all round view of Cuba than a three week program starting with two weeks in Habana followed by a week in Viñales!

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