

# JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT CUBA TREK

January 26 – February 5 2026

Trek through central Cuba's incredible landscape



Ultimate Challenges

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# **Junior Achievement Cuba Trek**

## **An incredible 5-day trek through central Cuba's stunning landscape**



Cuba is the Caribbean's largest island, only 90 miles from Florida and yet politically and economically it couldn't be further from the USA.

This incredible challenge starts in the vibrant city of Havana a UNESCO World Heritage Site and finishes in the colonial old town of Trinidad also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. You will spend 5-days trekking through Cuba's spectacular countryside and rural villages.

This challenge is an incredible journey learning about the history of this stunning island.



At the end of the trek, we have time to explore the beautiful town of Trinidad.

# Detailed itinerary

## Day 1: Departure for Havana

We depart London on our flight landing at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Havana – Cuba's capital. On arrival we transfer to the hotel. Hotel Memories Miramar or similar.

## Day 2: Havana to Hanabanilla Lake

After breakfast we will experience city life in Havana before the hard work begins. Including a panoramic tour of Havana, with stops in Revolution Square and the Capitolio this is something not to be missed before we continue East towards the centre of the island. Lunch will take place in a typical Cuban roadside restaurant. We then continue to Hanabanilla Lake, where we stay overnight in a hotel. If time permits, we'll make a stop at Che's Mausoleum in Santa Clara. Hotel Hanabanilla. After dinner there will be a briefing about the trek.



## Day 3: Hanabanilla Lake circuit (9km)

After breakfast we set off from the hotel for our trek around Hanabanilla Reservoir. The hotel and reservoir are set high in the Escambray Mountains, and this was formerly a favourite spot for high level Cuban leaders to come to rest, walk and fish. The hotel is basic, but the surroundings are spectacular and provide a wonderful introduction to Cuban endemic flora and fauna. Expect to see the Cuban National Bird, the Toco-ro-ro, and many others who make their habitat in the lush tropical vegetation. Lunch Rio Negro's Restaurant. We then return to the hotel by boat and, if there's time, you can enjoy the swimming pool before heading out to a local paladar for dinner. Hotel Hanabanilla.

## Day 4: Lake Hanabanilla to Casa de la Gallega (12km +5km optional)

We take a boat across the lake and trek to Casa de la Gallega, an old hacienda. A further hour's walk gets us to Salto de Rocio a 25m high waterfall, perfect for a late afternoon swim. Here is a great place to see Cuban trogons, hummingbirds, and woodpeckers. Tonight, we stay at Casa de la Gallega, sleeping under the eaves of the hacienda on foam mattresses or in 2-man tents.

## Day 5: Casa de la Gallega (Guanayara) to Codina (7km)

Our trek takes us into the Escambray Mountains, Cuba's second largest range. The highest peak is Pico San Juan at 1,140m. After the revolution opponents of Fidel Castro used these hills to hide and attack the new government's officials. The slopes are swathed in Caribbean pines and an abundance of ancient tree-ferns, bamboo, and eucalyptus. This morning after breakfast we set off by truck to the starting point at La Casa del Café. After learning all about coffee production in the area, we set off by foot to la Codina walking through beautiful virgin forests, until you reach Hacienda La Codina where we have our lunch. From here we transfer by truck to Topes de Collante and Los Helechos hotel for dinner and overnight.



# Detailed itinerary

## Day 6: Caburní to Vegas Grandes (8km)

After breakfast we descend the main hill and through the village of Topes de Collante. After 1km or so we step into the forest following a quiet trail until we reach Julio's Farm where we can stop for a coffee or juice. From here the trail takes us through dense vegetation deep into the heart of the Escambray Mountains until an astonishing waterfall and natural pond Vegas Grandes. After a swim and time to relax in this beautiful place we retrace our steps up the hill to reach "Mi Retiro" Hacienda for a late lunch before returning to the hotel for a second night.

## Day 7: Mangos Pelones to Trinidad (13km)

The final day of our epic Cuban challenge! After breakfast drive to Mangos Pelones, to trek to the final beautiful waterfall Javira with a lovely swimming spot. We continue along the path to the end to celebrate the completion of the challenge with a Cuban cocktail before heading to our hotel for a light lunch and the afternoon at the beach. This evening, we enjoy a Celebration Dinner in our All-Inclusive hotel!

## Day 8: Free day

Today we get to experience this delightful all-inclusive resort, located near the beautiful Trinidad, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The resort is a stone throws from the beach - a vision of white sand and astonishingly blue waters.

## Day 9: Trinidad to Havana

After breakfast we check out and take a walking tour of Trinidad, the town is a living museum, with cobbled streets and colonial housing. It has changed little in the last 150 years and is a wonderful place to wander around and soak up the atmosphere of Cuba. Free time for an early lunch (not included) before setting off for Havana. This evening, we enjoy dinner in an Old Havana Restaurant. Overnight hotel.

## Day 10: Depart Havana

Today will depend on the flight times (day or overnight flight back to the UK). TBC

## Day 11: Arrive UK TBC

If overnight flight arrive London.

## Challenge grade

We grade each trek as a guide based on the level of terrain, length, altitude and climate. All our challenges require a certain level of base fitness, lust for adventure, new culture and a positive attitude. This trek is mostly moderate if you have trained well with some tough sections.

## Moderate

You are likely to walk for 5-7 hours each day on good paths and low altitude (below 2,500m), with the occasional more demanding ascents and descents.

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*This itinerary is complex and subject to change*

## 26th Jan – 5 Feb 2026

£300 registration fee (non-refundable)

Trek Cost £2,699 (£2,199 for the trek and £500 fuel duty)

Balance of the trek to be paid by November 2025

### Included

- Scheduled international return flights from London to Havana
- All in country land transfers
- Local English-speaking guides
- Entrance fees as per itinerary
- 1 water-to-go filter bottle per person (can be filled from a tap and will filter the water)
- Full board throughout (except lunch day 9)
- Celebration dinner
- Airport taxes and fuel surcharges up to £500
- Twin shared hotel accommodation (camping on one night)
- Local trek doctor
- UK leader (20+ participants)

### Not Included

- Visas (if applicable) approx. \$25/£20
- Gratuities
- Single room supplement
- Personal expenses
- Personal travel insurance
- Travel from IOM to London and return

### Additional information

Due to the unique relationship between the USA and Cuba, if you plan to visit the USA in the future, you'll need to apply for a Visa instead of an ESTA. Declaring that you have visited Cuba does not prevent you from travelling to the US. It just requires a different application process.

### Challenge Company

Junior Achievement has used Ultimate Challenges for all our previous charity treks.

You are safe in the knowledge that they are ABTA and ATOL protected.

They have been organising treks since 1996 and are a small dedicated team whose aim is to inspire people to do something extraordinary and make a difference to an incredible cause.

Junior Achievement Isle of Man  
Manx registered charity No665



### How to sign up

For more information contact Sue Cook at Junior Achievement who will be happy to assist you.

Sue has participated in a couple of charity treks herself and would be happy to meet for a coffee and a chat to answer any questions you might have.

**Telephone: 01624 6662666**

**Email: [suecook@jaiom.im](mailto:suecook@jaiom.im)**

To secure your place you will need to pay a £300 registration fee (non-refundable). The remaining balance of £2,699 is to be paid by early November 2025 or you can pay 10 monthly installments of £269.99 starting February 1<sup>st</sup>.