



# HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES

**COVID-19 SAFE TRAVEL**

*Updated Nov 2020*

**Safe  
travels**

by

WORLD  
TRAVEL &  
TOURISM  
COUNCIL

**CATO**  
Council of Australian  
Tour Operators

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## BACKGROUND ON COVID-19

- ⇒ On the 7 Jan 2020 the Authorities in China identified a new type of corona virus 2019 (n-CoV).
- ⇒ On 30 Jan 2020 the Emergency Committee for International Health Regulations (IHR 2005) declared all countries should be prepared for containment, including active surveillance, early detection, isolation and case management, contact tracing and prevention of onward spread of 2019-nCoV infection
- ⇒ As of 28th May 2020, less than 6 months from the first reported case of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China, there have been 5.69 million reported cases of COVID-19 infection worldwide and over 356, 000 fatalities.
- ⇒ As of 01 Nov 2020, Cuba has had 35 new cases, bringing the total number of cases in the country to 6970. Of that number there have been 129 deaths in total, and currently 518 stable cases, 970 people still hospitalized, with 2 people evacuated. 6318 people have recuperated.

## WHAT IS COVID-19?

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

- ⇒ Symptoms:
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fever
  - Chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Sore throat
  - New loss of taste or smell

## IMPACT ON OUR LOCAL OPERATIONS IN CUBA

- ⇒ **All trips suspended & evacuation for all travellers:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic we suspended all our Cuban Adventures operations on the ground in Cuba by 18 March 2020 and assisted all our customers to safely exit Cuba and return home.
- ⇒ **Our emergency response:** Emergency response was managed by our local office in Havana which included rerouting trips to exit points, organising emergency accommodation, evacuating remote groups, liaising with consulates, insurance companies and airlines, providing translation and support to customers. During this period of evacuation Cuban Adventures had no transmission of COVID-19 to customers, staff, leaders, local suppliers or local communities.
- ⇒ **Tours postponed:** All 2020 Cuban Adventures tours were postponed up until October 2020 initially, and then extended until the end of 2020. While we strongly recommended “Postpone don’t cancel” to

⇒ **Assistance to local staff & Leaders:** Throughout 2020 we have continued to assist our local staff & leaders. We have provided assistance financial packages and ongoing support as well as paid incentives such as writing blogs about life in Cuba.

**The Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR)** in Cuba has created a Plan to Reactivate Tourist Services post COVID-19. This plan includes procedures to reduce hygiene risks in establishments, guesthouses, venues, while participating in activities and when visiting touristic installations. These measures have been implemented under the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Ministry of Health (MINSAP). MINTUR has strict measure in place throughout Cuba and have designated brigades responsible for daily checks of all tourism sectors. A new national certification program has been designed for all sectors of the tourism industry within the country called **“Turismo mas Higiénico y Seguro” (T+HS)**.



**On arrival in Cuba visitors are required to:**

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- ⇒ If you are joining a Cuban Adventures Tour you will be required to complete an additional Health Questionnaire

## OUR OBJECTIVE

To establish the following guidelines for the reopening and continuation of touristic services in Cuba in the new post COVID-19 era, to guarantee the safety and hygiene for both local Cubans residents and our international visitors, and the fulfillment of these minimum standards as set down by [The World Health Organization](#), [Ministry of Health](#), [Ministry of Tourism](#), and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) – WHO, MINSAP, MINTUR & CDC

Cuba Adventures adheres to the **World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)** four pillars of protocol

- ⇒ Operational and Staff Preparedness
- ⇒ Delivering a Safe Experience
- ⇒ Rebuilding Trust & Confidence
- ⇒ Implementing Enabling Policies

## STAFF & COMPANY PREPAREDNESS

- ⇒ Obtain the '**Turismo mas Higiénico y Seguro**' National Certification for return to operations in Cuba.
- ⇒ We have implemented a COVID-19 prevention plan for our offices and staff
- ⇒ As required by MINSAP & MINTUR regular health checks for staff are required and we will regularly monitor staff well-being.
- ⇒ Reflected physical distance in office layout and limiting the number of staff in common back-of-house areas as required by MINTUR & MINSAP.
- ⇒ Protocols to minimise physical contact.
- ⇒ Personal protection equipment (PPE) available to staff, such as masks
- ⇒ Integrated technologies to enable automation such as contactless payment where possible.
- ⇒ Follow protocols with suppliers and partners including restaurants, hotels, parks, transport partners and venues as per WTTC guidelines, WHO, MINTUR & MINSAP.
- ⇒ An appropriate cleanliness and disinfection best practices validated by MINTUR
- ⇒ Maintaining our smaller group numbers for safety
- ⇒ Trained all staff in COVID-19 Health and Safety protocols and guidelines, including tour guide, coach/drivers and local specialists, and operations such as Q&A.
- ⇒ Will ensure all staff have access to Medical Kits that include masks, disinfectant & gloves.

### Your Tour Leader

- ⇒ Is trained in COVID-19 Health and Safety protocols and guidelines
- ⇒ Is guaranteed to use correct methods of protection recommended by Health Authorities (MINSAP) and at all times will carry an updated **Medical Kit** including disinfectant, masks and gloves
- ⇒ Is capable of implementing COVID-19 protocols in the case that any customer within a group shows signs compatible with COVID-19 and will follow the directives of MINSAP.
- ⇒ Is responsible for checking that all activities, local suppliers and local guesthouses comply with the COVID-19 protocols

- ⇒ Is informed and able to answer questions to customers and assist in other services that may be required such as locating Medical Services or a Pharmacy in any particular zone.
- ⇒ Will regularly wash their hands with soap and water, or where not possible will use disinfectant and hand sanitizer.
- ⇒ Will frequently disinfect personal objects (glasses, mobile phone, microphone etc)
- ⇒ Will avoid where possible, the sharing of kits or items with other tour guides/leaders. In the case where sharing an item is absolutely necessary the tour leader must guarantee the cleaning and disinfecting before and after use.
- ⇒ Will use discretion to avoid small or crowded zones at all times
- ⇒ Avoid coinciding with other groups while leading a tour & will avoid socializing with other tour leaders during your tour
- ⇒ Avoid sharing maps, notes or any material or only use laminated material and will always be disinfected before and after use
- ⇒ Maintain 1.5 metres distance at all times between self and group
- ⇒ Use a mask when and where required as per government requirements
- ⇒ Try to avoid the use of cash as much as possible. If cash is used, always wash or disinfect hands before and after use.

## DELIVERING YOU A SAFE EXPERIENCE IN CUBA

**Masks** - The World Health Organisation (WHO) states that masks should only be used as part of a comprehensive prevention strategy to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene must also form part of the strategy. On arrival in Cuba all visitors must wear a mask.

### **Masks on Tour**

- ⇒ Fabric masks will be used by all our tour leaders and have been educated on the proper use and cleanliness.
- ⇒ Once the group has completed the initial health questionnaire, this group will effectively become a closed circle and use of masks within the group when alone (between Tour Leader, Tour group and Tour driver [if permanent for the entire trip]) will be at your discretion unless otherwise indicated by your tour leader, venues or government officials..
- ⇒ We require all customers, leaders and staff comply with any MINTUR & MINSAP regulations or requirements that require the use of a mask in public or in certain places.
- ⇒ We will provide masks as part of the First Aid Kits carried by leaders.
- ⇒ Handmade fabric masks may be purchased from local industry and may be available around Cuba.
- ⇒ These masks should cover the nose, mouth, and chin, be secured with elastic loops or ties, include multiple layers & be washable and reusable.

### **Hand Hygiene**

- ⇒ Handwashing is one of the most important safety measures to prevent the spread of disease. We will have a protocol in place for all staff, leaders and crew on tour and promote the importance of hand hygiene to customers
- ⇒ All local suppliers that have hand hygiene protocols in place as per MINTUR guidelines



**Sanitation** - MINTUR guidelines require all suppliers to detail their cleaning and sanitation protocols, which is reviewed regularly by MINSAP. Guests may also have their temperature taken during a guesthouse health & sanitation check. Under guidance from MINTUR & MINSAP we will monitor all suppliers on their cleanliness and sanitation.

### **Accommodation**

- ⇒ All rooms must be thoroughly cleaned between guests with all high touch surfaces in shared areas regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- ⇒ Hand sanitizer should be available in foyers & any other public areas.
- ⇒ Guesthouse license holders (owners) are required by law to keep a log, observe the health of all travellers and advise local Cuban authorities of any individual showing symptoms of COVID-19, be trained in COVID-19 safety protocols to be able to answer questions on this
- ⇒ Any share or public bathrooms are well stocked with hand soap and paper towels and regularly cleaned.
- ⇒ Bathrooms must have hand sanitizer with a minimum of 70% alcohol available, minimum decorations, covered bin with pedal lid.
- ⇒ There must be toilet paper in each cubicle
- ⇒ Physical distancing must be adhered to in all guesthouses, especially share rooms
- ⇒ Single rooms are available for those travellers who choose the single supplement.

### **Camping**

- ⇒ All tents must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between use.
- ⇒ Public bathrooms are well stocked with hand soap and paper towels and regularly cleaned. They must have hand sanitizer with a minimum of 70% alcohol available.
- ⇒ Local guides must be trained in COVID-19 safety protocols to be able to answer questions on this
- ⇒ Single tents may be provided where necessary to adhere to physical distancing
- ⇒ Local guides must have a COVID-19 Kit or have access to one (through your tour leader)

### **Transport**

- ⇒ Transport staff must be trained in COVID-19 safety protocols to be able to answer questions on this
- ⇒ Before the beginning of any service a thorough cleaning with all high touch surfaces in shared areas regularly cleaned and disinfected of all transport
- ⇒ **Transtur** will wash curtains & head rests of all buses supplied to our groups as per MINTUR requirements
- ⇒ During a tour, a thorough cleaning and disinfecting of the bus at each different destination.
- ⇒ Hand sanitizer and updated medical kits including masks be made available
- ⇒ Close top bins must be used and regularly emptied and disinfected.
- ⇒ Physical distancing as required by MINTUR will be adhered to. This may include hiring larger buses for small groups. Recommendations from MINTUR will be taken into account on transport hire.
- ⇒ We will use designated seats on the bus for all travellers
- ⇒ Set aircon to external flow every 15 minutes or open windows
- ⇒ Amend itineraries to include more stops to reduce the duration of travel periods

### **Restaurants**

- ⇒ Staff must be trained in COVID-19 safety protocols to be able to answer questions on this
- ⇒ Restaurants must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected regularly

- ⇒ Signs to maintain social distancing must be clearly displayed and adhered to.
- ⇒ No use of individual menus.
- ⇒ Hand sanitizer with a minimum of 70% alcohol must be available in various zones
- ⇒ Tables and chairs must be disinfected after each guest use and remove all use of tablecloths etc
- ⇒ Encourage take away services for the group over any eat in services
- ⇒ No share plates or buffet services and discourage consumption of raw food

#### Activities

- ⇒ Staff must be trained in COVID-19 safety protocols to be able to answer questions on this
- ⇒ All equipment must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between guest us
- ⇒ Local guides must have a COVID-19 Kit or have access to one (through your tour leader)

#### In Public

- ⇒ Maintain the recommended 1.5 metre distance in public areas and avoid large crowds where possible.
- ⇒ We will endeavour to amend tour itineraries to make social/physical distancing possible which may include removing or altering some included activities for the tour group's safety.

## REBUILDING TRUST & CONFIDENCE

Cuban Adventures has been operating as a Tour Operator in Cuba since 2005 and we constantly work on improving our operations. We aim to enhance trust and confidence through transparency and communication with our tour customers, our team and our local suppliers.

#### During COVID-19 our promise is to

- ⇒ Provide clear, consistent and up-to-date communication to customers on new health & hygiene protocols as they occur.
- ⇒ Provide up-to-date communication to customers and staff on COVID-19 statistics for Cuba on a daily basis.
- ⇒ Provide more **Flexible Booking Conditions** for customers and support you when you decide to stay home if you display any COVID-19 symptoms or are feeling unwell
- ⇒ Provide flexible work conditions to support our Tour Leaders, local staff & suppliers and encourage them to stay home if they are feeling unwell or display symptoms of COVID-19 or if a family member is unwell or displaying symptoms.
- ⇒ Take action if any customer, tour leader, or local staff & supplier displays signs of COVID-19 and remove them from a tour or from any interactions with others. In this case, and by Cuban law, we are also obliged to advise MINSAP who will ensure **rapid COVID-19 tests**. Our priority is your health and safety & to prevent any risk of contamination and spread to other customers or local staff & suppliers.
- ⇒ **Cuban Adventures** together with our local partner **Ecotur** will assist the Cuban government health department MINSAP in tracking and tracing any customers, tour leaders, staff & suppliers at risk of contracting COVID-19.
- ⇒ Although at this point Cuba does not have a COVID-19 tracking app, Cuban Adventures strongly recommends that customers travelling through a third country download a COVID tracking apps if available to assist in reducing the spread of disease.