

Notes:

15 CUC Departure Tax

44lbs for both checked & carry-on

Tips to Cuban guides, Cuban drivers, Expedition Leader

A Few Top Brands

Some popular Cuban cigars, \$10 to \$20 each.

Partagás Serie D No. 4 A full-bodied robusto with a woody and spicy aroma.

H. Upmann Royal Robusto Known for its full coffee bean flavor and oak finish.

Montecristo No. 2 Medium to full with creamy and spicy notes.

Bolivar Royal Corona Richly complex with hints of chocolate and coffee.

Cohiba Siglo III Vanilla, leathery flavored and best paired with sweet desserts.

Vegas Robaina Don Alejandro Medium bodied with sweet and woody undertones.

Where to Eat

Café Laurent (Calle M No. 257, between 19 and 21, Vedado, Havana, cafelaurent.ueuo.com) is a stylish family-run paladar popular for its penthouse views and Spanish-themed menu. Expect to pay about 20 American dollars per person for dinner.

Siá Kará Café (Calle Industria No. 502, www.siakaracafe.com) offers reasonably priced Cuban cuisine in the heart of Old Havana. It is also known for live music.

Nazdarovie (No. 25 Malecón, nazdarovie-havana.com) is a retro-styled Soviet restaurant and bar with live music; overlooks the sea.

Mamaine (Calle L No. 206, between 15 and 17, Havana) is an artsy, intimate cafe known for a breakfast menu that includes tortillas and fresh mango juice.

Where to Go

Alejandro Robaina Tobacco Plantation in the Vuelta Abajo region, southwest of the city of Pinar del Río. The farm offers daily tours, but it is best to have your hotel arrange a guide for this all-day trip into a rural area: 53-48-79-74-70.

Old Partagás Factory and Cigar Shop (Calle Industria No. 520, Havana) is 170 years old and perhaps the island's best-known factory. Its production recently moved to the El Rey del Mundo Factory nearby but the retail store is still open, and sells a variety of brands made at the factory, from Bolivar to La Gloria Cubana.

La Casa del Habano (5ta Avenida y Calle 16, Miramar, Playa, Havana, lacasadelhabano.com) is among the premium cigar stores and lounges in Cuba and several other countries authorized to sell Habanos S.A. brands. The United States is the only country to which Habanos S.A. does not sell cigars.

Where to Stay

Hotel Capri (Calle 21 between calle N and O, Vedado, nh-hotels.com/hotel/nh-capri-la-habana), a modern high-rise in the heart of central Havana, offers easy access to popular restaurants, nightclubs and cultural sights, including the famous Hotel Nacional, a block away. Single rooms run about \$130.

From MK's friend:

- Food
 - The food is generally crummy everywhere in Havana but here are a few exceptions:
 - [Paladar Los Mercaderes](#) (Calle Mercaderes #207). (537) 861-2437 Intimate, old-school setting on the second floor of a spanish-style townhouse. Very fancy for Cuban standards but perfect setting for dinner. I had the tenderloin tips in a blue cheese gravy which was spectacular. The other highlight was the musical entertainment which was couple that played "I will Survive" on a keyboard from the early 90s. It was dessert and many cocktails so most of the guests including me broke out singing and clapping.
 - [La Fontana](#) Calle 46 esq 3ra A, No. 305, Miramar, Playa +53 7 2028337 (I can't find the address but it's out of the way in Miramar so find the right address - the one I had was Ave 3A No. 305 but it moved - and take a cab. You need to either make a reservation or arrive very early ~4pm but the food is absolutely worth it). I had the octopus in pesto and rabbit in roasted garlic and rosemary gravy. Both out-of-this world good
 - I didn't go to this one but I hear the chicken (pollo) at El Aljibe is very good (spicy orange sauce) Calle 7ma, entre la 24y 26, Miramar +53 7 2041583
 - I went to Le Chansonnier which was unmemorable. It's a French-inspired restaurant with an elegant atmosphere. It felt out-of-place. Decent food but not spectacular. The only thing authentic in the whole restaurant were the people in the kitchen preparing the food
- Flag down a cab (an old Chevy from the 1950s). Tell them where you want to go and tell them \$3, which is what a Cuban Doctor makes [Mon-Wed](#) - if you don't know what you're doing they'll say \$10 a person then when you say yes try to sell you weed and prostitutes.