

Solidarity Brigade to Cuba
Find out about the real Cuba
Summer Brigade: 15 December 2024 – 2 January 2025

Solidarity Brigades to Cuba are holidays with a difference: as well as volunteering you get to mix with people of different ages and backgrounds from all over the world, and learn about a fascinating country.

The Brigade provides a unique opportunity find out about the real Cuba away from the usual tourist trails. You can learn first hand about the achievements of the Cuban Revolution and gain an insight to the difficulties caused by the illegal US economic blockade. It is a practical way of showing solidarity with the Cuban people as well as building meaningful exchanges.



"It was a life-changing experience, a really wonderful, rich time in every sense. Humbling in the face of the blockade and its consequences – I will definitely go again, and encourage others to do so!"
—previous Brigadista

Part of the Brigade involves undertaking voluntary work in agricultural projects. Previous skills and experience are not required for the work and each person is expected to do only what they feel capable of.

The Brigade is arranged in conjunction with the Cuban international friendship organisation (ICAP) and consists of groups from European countries. Members of the Brigade (Brigadistas) stay at a purpose-built centre in the countryside, about 25 miles south west of Havana. The centre provides basic dormitory accommodation, meals, a bar and shop, basic sports facilities and lecture spaces.

As well as your voluntary work, your time in Cuba will contain a wide range of other activities.

Past Brigade programmes have included:

- Visits to community projects, projects for people with disabilities, health and education facilities
- Meetings with representatives from the Student Unions, the Federation of Cuban Women and Trade Unions
- Visits to historical and cultural museums and centres
- Meeting top Cuban sportspeople and taking part in football and other sport activities
- Workshops and presentations on Cuban politics, health, education, internationalism, economics and more
- Film showings and meeting Cuban film-makers
- Meeting veterans of the revolutionary war
- Cuban and international cultural evenings and performances, dance classes and the chance to learn or practice Spanish
- A 3-4 night hotel stay (2*) in another part of the island for rest and relaxation, visits to beaches and nature reserves. Recent brigades have visited Vinales, Pinar del Rio, Matanzas, Santa Clara, Santiago de Cuba.

The full cost of this Solidarity Brigade not including flights is £850.00 per person.



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Who can apply: You will need to be 18 by the date of departure from the UK. You do not need to speak Spanish but it helps. You need to agree with the aims of CSC. You will need to have reasonable health and fitness to participate in the programme. The camp is not fully accessible or adapted for all disabilities. Contact us to discuss your needs.

Join CSC: The cost includes membership of CSC for a year, if you are not already a member. You will receive a new members' pack plus our quarterly magazine CubaSí. Membership costs £20 waged/£8 unwaged.

What is included:

The price includes:

- A Cuban Tourist Card (where possible) – lasts for up to 30 days.
- Transfer from Havana International Airport to the camp or from a pick up point in the city (where possible)
- Accommodation for the period of the brigade plus 3 meals per day whilst at the camp PLUS most visits
- Brigade preparation session (if possible) plus Preparation Pack, schedule, advice on travel arrangements
- CSC T-shirt PLUS a year's membership of CSC if you are not already a member
- Administrative costs of CSC

What is not included: Costs of flights, optional extra visits/travel, drinks and snacks, travel & health insurance, any other costs not listed above.

Flights:

We can help with your options for flights to and from Cuba - the cost is likely to be from £800. Please contact us.

To apply:

- Complete and send the Application Form with your deposit of £100 to Cuba Solidarity Campaign, c/o Unite, 33-37 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8BB or office@cuba-solidarity.org.uk
- Make your cheque payable to 'Cuba Solidarity Campaign' or call the office on 020 7490 5715 to pay by credit/debit card or bank transfer.
- **Full payment will be required by 15 November 2024.**

Preparation

Before leaving for Cuba, we help you to make contact with other members of the brigade to prepare for the trip together. Usually this may be a group preparation session at the CSC office in London, with background on Cuban history and contemporary Cuba, day to day life on the Brigade, individual and group responsibilities and the work. You will also get to meet other Brigadistas. Alternatively you can come and chat through your preparation at our office on an individual basis.



Conditions on the brigade – sharing and sanitation

Beds are basic wooden bunkbeds in single sex dormitories shared with up to 3 others. We advise you to take your own sleeping bag or liner, pillow, towels and mosquito net. Bathrooms are also shared and basic – with no hot water. Please note that the camp has suffered from water supply issues (drought, lack of materials) in recent times so we advise you to drink bottled water where possible, take antiseptic hand wash, water purification tablets, and take precautions when using shared facilities to avoid the spread of illness. There are occasional power cuts.

Insurance

The Cuban Ministry of Tourism requires all visitors to Cuba to have a valid travel insurance policy, including comprehensive medical cover. You must check with your insurance provider that the policy is recognised and valid in Cuba. You must take an insurance cover note to Cuba to be shown to immigration authorities if requested.

To discuss the **Solidarity Brigades to Cuba**, contact us 020 7490 5715 e-mail tours@cuba-solidarity.org.uk For info on previous brigades see <https://cuba-solidarity.org.uk/tours/article/8/volunteer---brigade-opportunities-all-year-round>