

Revolutionary Trails (CU 2014)

Catholic Committee and the



TOUR **DURATION**







Tour Style: Classic

Tour Comfort: Standard

Tour Type: Small Groups

Trek Grade: Moderate

Tour Code: CU

- Havana Experience the faded colonial splendour and vibrancy of Cuba's capital
- Trinidad Enjoy the laidback atmosphere of this colonial town. Dance at Casa de la Musica or sip a rum cocktail under the stars
- Topes de Collantes Walk through the forests of the Escambray Mountains, swim in freshwater pools and camp out at haciendas
- Comandancia de la Plata Trek through the jungle of the Sierra Maestra Mountains to Fidel's 1950's rebel headquarters
- Pico Turquino Enjoy a 3 day trek across the Sierra Maestra to the summit of Cuba's highest peak (1972m)

Tour Essentials

Accommodation: 10 nights Standard

Hotel

2 nights Basic Camping 2 nights Basic Hut

Included Meals: 14 breakfasts, 6

lunches, 5 dinners Join tour: Havana

Start Point: End Point: Tour ends: Havana

Bus, Truck **Transport: Countries:** Cuba

Revolutionary Trails

Join us in Cuba as we uncover the island's revolutionary history. We explore the colonial cities of Havana and Trinidad. We discover Fidel Castro's headquarters in the Sierra Maestra Mountains and visit Che Guevara's mausoleum in Santa Clara. We swim under waterfalls, climb forest trails and trek to the summit of Pico Turquino - Cuba's highest peak.





We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

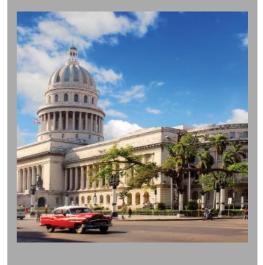
₹ 1 Join tour Havana

Arrive Havana, the capital of Cuba, and check-in at our hotel. Built around a deep natural harbour, Havana is one of the most impressive surviving colonial cities in the Americas.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel Single Rooms Available**









['] In Havana

A tour of this most fascinating of cities this morning takes in some of the highlights of Havana's Vieja district and the art deco architecture along the coastal Malecon and through the Vedado and Miramar suburbs, where kids play baseball below rusting street lights. On foot we'll investigate the Vieja district with its beautiful neoclassical buildings at the Plaza de Armas and its sumptuous baroque Cathedral. Havana truly is a city in which to immerse yourself fully and after our brief orientation tour this morning, the afternoon has been left free to continue exploring at your leisure. You may wish to visit the City Museum, or the captivating Museum of the Revolution, where you can find the revered hull of the Granma, the boat that brought Castro back from exile and onto the world stage in 1956. You may wish to return to old Havana and enjoy a stroll through its cobbled streets, stopping to enjoy a mojito at a local bar, or perhaps wander through the stalls of the street markets in search of a bargain or two. Cooling breezes blowing in from the Caribbean freshen a lively sunset stroll along the Malecon, where fishermen and locals take in the magical setting before the imposing ramparts of its old Spanish forts.

Overnight: Standard Hotel Single Rooms Available



Drive to Trinidad

Today we head east across Cuba, we drive through giant citrus and sugar plantations and out into the Zapata Peninsula. Further on cenotes or pools created by the ceiling collapse of the underground rivers dot the landscape and provide wonderful swimming opportunities. Later we visit the Playa Giron and the nearby museum dedicated to the infamous Bay of Pigs invasion, where a US supported attack by Cuban exiles failed to overthrow the Communist regime. Our journey then skirts the edge of the wooded Escambray mountains, hugging the coastline with views over the sparkling turquoise waters and arrive, where we will stay outside of the beautiful Spanish colonial town of Trinidad.

Overnight: Standard Hotel **Single Rooms Available**



In Trinidad

This morning we wander through the old centre of Trinidad. In the early 19th century French settlers, fleeing a slave revolt in Haiti, landed and started to grow sugar cane in the Valle de Los Ingenios. This crop generated considerable wealth and consequently the town had to be regularly defended from pirates. The street layout is said to be deliberately complicated so as to confuse them. This afternoon is free to relax on nearby Playa Ancon, or continue to wander through Trinidad's lovely colonial streets: a paradise for photographers.

Overnight: Standard Hotel Single Rooms Available



Drive and trek to Topes de Collantes

This morning we skirt the edge of the wooded Escambray Mountains with the turquoise waters of the Caribbean on our right, we then take a short drive on steep, switch-back roads which leads us into the densely wooded Escambray Mountains, to the Topes de Collantes nature reserve. We transfer onto an open-sided 4WD truck which takes us deeper into the reserve, then set off on foot through the forests with our naturalist guide. Our trail takes us along a ridge with panoramic views on all sides, then into a valley cut deep by the Guayanara River. Our guide will point out the rich and varied flora and fauna along the way, including the rare Cuban trogon, Cuba's national bird, whose red, white and blue plumage mirrors the national flag. After a walk of around 3 to 4 hours we arrive at our hacienda, set in a beautiful valley. Lying alongside a river with bathing pools, Hacienda de Gallega is a converted farmstead with a dining area, a bar, simple toilet and shower facilities and some flat terraces where our tents will be set up. Surrounded by beautifully tended flowerbeds and the forests of Topes de Collantes, this is a wonderfully relaxing and peaceful place to stay. After lunch there's the chance to walk along the river to the Salto de Rocio waterfall, a 3 hour round trip, through an area rich with trogons, hummingbirds and woodpeckers. Close to the waterfall there are rockpools where we can swim and - for the intrepid - swing out Tarzan-style on a liana overhanging the deepest pool. In the evening we eat a wholesome dinner at the hacienda then settle down to sleep overnight in our tents. Generous 2-man tents are provided along with foam mattresses and blankets, but we recommend you bring your own sleeping bag or at least a sleeping sheet in addition. If you prefer you can sleep out on the verandahs at the hacienda, under the eaves, rather than in a tent. Please note you can travel by truck to the hacienda if you prefer not to walk today.

Overnight: Basic Camping



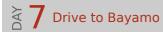
In Topes de Collantes

A full day in the Escambray Mountains, exploring more of the Topes de Collantes nature reserve. In the morning we drive by truck to the start of our 3 to 4 hour walk. We follow a trail through forests and valleys, past streams and glades with flowers, butterflies and darting hummingbirds. Further on we reach La Batata, a cave through which an underground river gurgles, gently carving out rock pools. The water rarely exceeds 20°C so the swimming is exhilarating here! We walk on until we reach the beautiful, isolated Hacienda Codina, set in a green valley with manicured gardens all around. The traditional hacienda has a pleasant bar and verandah, with rocking chairs to sit back and enjoy the view. We enjoy a leisurely lunch in the dining area, surrounded by colourful flowers and



birds, then rest through the heat of the day. Later in the afternoon we explore a short nature trail close to the hacienda, with rare orchids and unusual medicinal plants. At one point the trail actually passes through a cave (Cueva del Altar), emerging on the other side of the hill to beautiful views over the distant Caribbean. Later we have dinner, enjoying another traditional home-cooked meal, before settling down for the night in our tents or again you can choose to sleep on the verandahs of the hacienda. Once again you can skip the walk today and travel to the hacienda by truck if you prefer.

Overnight: Basic Camping



Today after a sort ride to the entrance we have a full days drive to Bayamo in South East Cuba. En route we will have a brief stop in Sancti Spiritus for lunch before we continue to Camaguey. We continue towards the beautiful mountains landscapes of the Sierra Maestra to Bayamo. Lying in the Granma Province, this is a region infused with the revolutionary zeal that has been such an integral part of Cuban life since the late 19th century. It was on the beaches of Granma that Fidel landed in December 1956 to start his journey on the long road to freedom, and the mountains inland are scattered with reminders of its revolutionary heritage.

Overnight: Standard Hotel **Single Rooms Available**



Drive up Alto de Naranjo; walk to Comandancia de la plata

This morning we will continue further into the Sierra Maestra to Bartolome Maso, a small village lying besides the Rio Yara, amongst the cloud forest landscapes of the Gran Parque Nacional Sierra Maestra, and provides us with an ideal base from which to explore these captivating mountains. On arrival we can either take an invigorating walk or jeeps up the steep asphalt road to Alto de Naranjo from where we start todays walk (950mts). We follow in the famous footsteps of Che, Fidel and the rest of the revolutionary heroes, who for two years fought a protracted guerrilla war amongst these beautiful highlands. For much of 1957 the guerrillas kept on the move, playing a dangerous game of cat and mouse with Batista's troops, as they tried to gain a foothold after the unsuccessful uprising against Batista the previous year. Then in 1958 they set up a permanent base in the foothills of Pico Turquino, Cuba's highest peak. This base of operations came to be known as La Comandancia de La Plata (1000mts) and its location deep in the heart of this lush jungle landscape makes it one of the country's most fascinating and authentic experiences. A remarkable testament to the resolve and spirit of the revolutionaries, it captures a snapshot in time of one of the most pivotal periods in Cuba's history, one that was to have worldwide repercussions in later years. It was here that Fidel Castro began to formulate his plans for the future of the country and the site presents us with a captivating glimpse of life during those dangerous and heady days of the late '50s. There is a small museum and press office, a field kitchen and the command centre itself, complete with a fridge with bullet holes. From here we trek back to Alto de Narango where you can walk or drive down depending on your energy levels to our accommodation. Total walking time: approx 4 hours.

Overnight: Standard Hotel **Single Rooms Available**



Trekking across the Sierra Maestra

Today we start with an early drive to Alto de Naranjo where we begin our trek up Pico Turquino (1972m), across the Sierra Maestra. Over the coming days we trek through landscapes that take us from high mountain ridges and through rain forest. Our first day sees us heading east, following the La Plata trail up towards Pico Turquino, crossing landscapes blanketed in pines and mosses, giant ferns and wild orchids to our overnight stop at the Aguada do Joaquim. Please note tonights accomodation is in basic dorm style rooms. Your main luggage will be stored at the hotel you will only need to carry the necessary for the trek.

Overnight: Basic Hut



Climb Pico Turquino

This morning we start our ascent to Pico Turquino (1972m) the highest peak in the country, we will have several rest stops on this climb. If the weather conditions are favourable the views along this section are truly outstanding and at the top of Pico Turquino we can see the bronze bust of Jose Marti, dragged up here by Castro's charismatic mistress, Celia Sanchez in 1952. Marti was the 19th century hero of the Cuban independence movements and a man who to many is little short of a saint. From here we will return to the Aguada do Joaquim where we will spend the night our second night at the refugio.

Overnight: Basic Hut

Descent to Alto de Naranjo; drive to Santiago; city tour

This morning we will continue our descent to Alto de Naranjo (8km) from where we will meet our vehicles which will drive us to Bartolome Maso form where we will re join our bus and set out to Santiago which has been at the epicentre of revolutionary ideals since the time of Cespedes. Founded by Diego Velazquez de Cuellar in 1514 the city has been at the heart of Cuban culture and history since its inception. Briefly the country's capital, it rose to prominence during the 17th and 18th centuries, with first the arrival of Spanish settlers from Jamaica, then French plantation owners from Haiti. The region saw much of the fighting in both wars for independence and it was in Santiago that success against Batista's forces was finally, and very publicly, acknowledged by Fidel Castro on January 1st 1959. Little wonder then that the city has earned itself the moniker of Hero City of the Republic of Cuba. The city itself is an eclectic mix of all the best and worst of Cuban life. Its colonial architecture glimmers in attractive shades of pastel, whilst its Afro-Caribbean mix affords it the unmistakable vibrancy of a true city of the revolution. This afternoon we will take a tour of Santiago city, taking in the Plaza de la Revolucion with it's fine monument to the heroes of the Independence wars and the remarkable cemetery where independence hero José Martí is buried we will also visit the Sta Ifigenia cemetry. At the Moncada Barracks we visit the site of Castro's unsuccessful attempt to instigate a general uprising against Batista, an attempt that saw him tried and imprisoned.

Overnight: Standard Hotel Single Rooms Available

Drive Camaguey

This Morning we set heading back North to the city of Camaguey, on arrival you may wish to take a city tour on one of the local bicitaxi's and we also recommend a visit to the bustling farmers market.

Overnight: Standard Hotel Single Rooms Available

Drive to Havana

This morning we will start on a full days drive to Havana, stopping on route at Santa Clara to visit Che's Mausoleum, one of Cuba's most revolutionary landmarks. We will then continue to Havana where we will enjoy a free evening to enjoy the vibrant night life of Havana Vieja.

Overnight: Standard Hotel Single Rooms Available

Visit Las Terrazas

This morning we transfer to Las Terrazas perched on the edge of the Unesco Reserva Biosphera Sierra del Rossario. This entire region is a testament to reforestation, taking an area that has been ravaged by fire and agricultural incompetence and turning it into a bio reserve of staggering diversity. In Las Terrazas we discover some of Cuba's most diverse and verdant natural landscapes, where we have time to wander through tropical forest and swim in jungle waterfalls. We will have an included lunch here before a free afternoon to relax and explore further.

Overnight: Standard Hotel Single Rooms Available

Tour ends Havana

Our tour ends in Havana after breakfast, although clients travelling back on the group flight to London will have the day free before transferring to the airport later this afternoon.

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Rating

Accommodation and service levels in Cuba have improved in recent years but with the ongoing trade embargo and lack of investment in infrastructure, acommodation can be basic, particularly in rural some areas, with the occasional unreliable water and electricity supply. Of course, this is all part of seeing the real Cuba and whilst we think you'll be pleasantly surprised by the majority of hotels we use, you should be prepared for simply furnished rooms, some out-dated furniture and varying levels of service. Almost every hotel we stay in has airconditioning in the rooms.

Due to the increasing number of visitors to Cuba and the way tourism there is managed, occasionally there some last-minute changes to the accommodation which we are unable to prevent. We will however endeavour to ensure it is of the same standard in a similar location.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 14 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 5 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

International Departure Taxes

Airport departure tax is approximately CUC25 Convertible peso (approx. £20).

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Havana - Museo de la Ciudad CUC3, CUC8 with guide; Museo de la Revolucion & Arte Colonial CUC5 each, CUC7 with guide; Rum museum CUC5, CUC7 with guide.

Trinidad - Cayo Blanco Boat Excursion CUC45 (this is a full day so will shorten your time for Trinidad tour) plus transport 10CUC per taxi each way; Excursion to Playa Ancon CUC10 per taxi each way; Salsa classes CUC10. Santiago de Cuba - Visit to fort CUC12, CUC14 inc transport.

Comandancia - Use of camera CUC5 and video CUC10.

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive. Accordingly you should allow approx. CUC40 for gratuities for local staff. 10% is expected in restaurants.

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Foreign Exchange

Cuba

ATM Availability: There are ATM's in all major cities however do not totally rely on the use of your card as these sometimes do not work.

Credit Card Acceptance: Please note credit cards drawn on American Banks are not accepted. Please do not rely on using your credit card.

Travellers Cheques: We do not recommend Travellers cheques. Places to exchange Travellers cheques are very limited. Amex Travellers cheques are not accepted.

Local Currency: Cuban Convertible Peso (CUC).

Recommended Currency for Exchange: US dollars are no longer accepted in shops and other businesses, tourists and Cubans exchanging dollars will have to pay a 20% commission. We recommend you take clean Euro, Canadian dollars or Sterling cash as these are easier to exchange. Please note that Scottish Pounds are not accepted in Cuba.

Where to Exchange: Havana, Trinidad, Santiago.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

For passengers making their own travel arrangements, please ensure you join the group as described on day one of the tour itinerary. If you are considering purchasing your own airline tickets, you can book these through any travel agent, directly with an airline or through an online flight consolidator. In all cases, we would be happy to arrange transfers to and from the joining point of your tour if required.



Joining Tour Abroad

Clients booked on 'Land Only' arrangements should make their own way to the joining point. Please refer to separate 'Joining Instructions' for time and place of rendezvous with tour leader

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable.

If you require travel insurance for your tour, Explore Worldwide is an appointed representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services authority. Our travel insurance policy is specially tailored to the needs of the adventure traveller and will cover you for any included activity on any Explore trip. You can either purchase this at the time of booking or call us on 0844 499 0903 after you have booked.

Visa Information

Cuba: Visas are required by all nationalities travelling to Cuba. Explore can arrange a Cuban visa for UK residents when making a booking with us, this currently costs £15. Please contact Explore or your Travel Agent to arrange this service and we will send your tourist card with your final documentation. Alternatively they can be obtained through Cuban embassies and consulates.

Due to US Treasury Department Regulations we are unable to accept bookings from US passport holders.

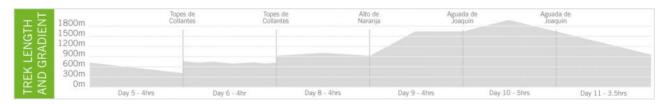
All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Vaccinations & Protection

Cuba

Nothing compulsory, although we recommend vaccination against tetanus, infectious hepatitis, typhoid and polio. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider.

Preparing for your Tour



Trekking Details

The walking is mainly moderate with one challenging day ascending Pico Turquino. Although walking distances are not particularly far, heat is a factor to consider, especially in the summer.

Climate

Cuba

The dry season is from November to April. Average temperatures are 22-26C. Though the sky is often cloudless during the dry season, cold wet snaps do come in from North America especially in Dec and Jan, when the temperatures can drop to as low as 5C at night. From May to October there are normally fine mornings and clear evenings, afternoon rains tend to be short & heavy. Temperatures are hot and humid.

Clothing

Include light cotton clothing plus something warmer for the evenings in the hills when it can get cool. A light fleece would be useful except Dec-lan when a heavier fleece and waterproof are recommended. An umbrella is useful in the rainy season. Please note it can be a lot cooler in the mountains particularly at night so also bring some warmer clothes for trekking.

Equipment

A torch, water bottle, good quality sunglasses, insect repellent and high factor sunscreen are all essential. A 2-season (temperature 0°C to 5°C) sleeping bag and liner are recommended for the stay in the refugios and the cabins (mattresses are provided). You may also wish to bring a pocketknife and walking pole with you. Don't forget to bring a towel, wet wipes, tissues and plastic bags to protect yuor belonging in case it rains on the trek.

In Cuba, food is still rationed. Many food products are controlled so therefore it can be quite difficult for restaurants to offer a varied menu. Vegetarian meals can be quite basic. We recommend you take out with you energy bars and snacks as these are hard to find in Cuba.

Footwear

Comfortable walking boots. Shoes and trainers or sandals for relaxing. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them. Should your luggage be lost or delayed, your well broken-in boots are the one thing that are irreplaceable.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of luggage, a soft holdall for the trek and a good-sized daypack for the trek (at least 25-30 litres). On the trek mules will carry the food and cooking equipment for our overnight on the mountain. Normally there will be enough mules to carry your sleeping bags but in the event that not enough mules are available it may be necessary for members of the group to carry their own overnight kit (including sleeping bag). So please make sure your daypack is large enough to carry your sleeping bag, a lightweight waterproof, water, fleece and a toothbrush. Your main luggage will stay with the driver whilst you do the treks.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Food

The prices for meals and drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive. The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Cuba

Lunch f: 9 00 Dinner £: 15.00

Drink

Cuha

Bottle of Beer £: 2.00 Water £: 1.00

Country details

Population: 11.241.894

Size of Country: 109,884 sq km Major Language: Spanish Religion: 60% Catholic Time Difference to GMT: -5

Electric Supply & Plugs

Cuba

2 Pin Flat



Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to - and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: The Sunshine Orphanage (which cares for abandoned children in Luxor, Egypt), Education for All (sponsoring children through their secondary education in Morocco), The Hope Foundation (helping an Indian Village to recover from the 2004 Tsunami) and the Mufindi Orphanage, which support AIDS orphans in Tanzania.

We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation, Travel Operators for Tigers (helping save the Bengal Tiger from extinction) and Friends for Conservation. We have also adopted a beautiful Sri Lankan Elephant called 'Serendip'.

We are delighted to have received a Five Star sustainable tourism status from the Association of Independent Tour Operators in recognition of our on-going commitment to sustainable tourism.

Cool Earth

Explore are delighted to support Cool Earth to reduce carbon emissions through preventing the illegal deforestation of the South America rainforest. One of the top sources of global carbon emissions, rainforest deforestation equivalent to the USA's annual emissions, it also destroys flora and fauna, sometimes to the point of extinction. It also degrades the lives and communities of the 350 million residents of the rainforest.

Cool Earth prevents the deforestation through its support of local communities as forest guardians and by focussing on areas in immediate danger of deforestation. It has so far protected over 350,000 acres of rainforest, with each acre saving an emission of 260 tons of CO2, as well as protecting rare animals and plants. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year. In addition to mitigating emissions, when you travel with Explore, you are helping to protect the source of 20% of the world's fresh water and oxygen, as well as the livelihoods of the 1.6 billion people who are reliant on the rainforest. www.coolearth.org

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation
 - Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern
 - Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at http://www.explore.co.uk/essential-travel-information/travel-resources/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.



The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% nonrefundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2013 and 31st December 2014.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2014 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2014. 2015/16 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2015.

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