

About Our Destination

Currency

Cuba employs a dual-economy system that features one currency for foreign visitors, called Cuban Convertible Pesos (or CUCs), and another for Cubans, Cuban Pesos (or CUPs), also referred to as Moneda Nacional. Foreign visitors are expected to use CUCs for any purchases made in Cuba and are not permitted to change their CUCs into Cuban Pesos or CUPs.

U.S. dollars can be exchanged at an official exchange bureau, available in the Cuban port when you disembark. You will need to have your passport handy as an official form of ID, and the exchange rate is one U.S. dollar to one CUC. Please note that the Cuban government typically charges a 13% exchange fee for U.S. dollars, so you should expect to receive approximately 87 CUCs for 100 USD. U.S. bank-issued credit cards and debit cards are not accepted in Cuba. You will be unable to access your funds electronically and there are no ATMs.

U.S. dollars are widely accepted in Georgetown, Grand Cayman and Cozumel, Mexico.

Languages

In Cuba, although Cubans learn English in school, Spanish is the official language. Most signage is in Spanish – knowing even a few phrases goes a long way. English is widely used and spoken in Grand Cayman and in Cozumel. Cozumel's official languages are Spanish and English.

Being Gay in Cuba

Although Cuba has a history of homophobia, it is currently going through a reform led by President Raúl Castro's daughter Mariela. Whereas Cuban homosexuals may still face some discrimination, foreigners, especially in the cities, are widely welcomed.

Climate

The weather in Cuba is beautifully warm all year round. January falls in the middle of Cuba's dry season, and the day-to-day forecast throughout the month is predictably warm and dry. The average high temperature in January is 79°F. Days are often warm, but temperatures do not reach the stifling heat of some summer days. The average low temperature drops to 61°F for the month.

In Grand Cayman and Cozumel, expect temperatures ranging from the low 70s to the low 80s °F.

Itinerary

- Wednesday, January 22, 2020 — Fort Lauderdale, FL
- Thursday, January 23, 2020 — Havana, Cuba (Overnight)
- Friday, January 24, 2020 — Havana, Cuba / At Sea
- Saturday, January 25, 2020 — Cienfuegos, Cuba
- Sunday, January 26, 2020 — Georgetown, Grand Cayman Islands
- Monday, January 27, 2020 — Cozumel, Mexico
- Tuesday, January 28, 2020 — At Sea
- Wednesday, January 29, 2020 — Fort Lauderdale, FL

Before Your Trip

What's Included

- Accommodations for 8 days/7 nights on board Holland America's *ms Veendam*
- All meals while on board, including room service (specialty restaurants have a nominal charge)
- Coffee, tea, milk and juice during meals
- Gratuities, port charges/taxes, which are covered in NDA fees
- Expert naturalists
- Olivia signature programming, entertainment, and staffing throughout

What's not included?

- Airfare
- Airport transfers
- Boutique, casino, spa, photos and bingo
- Internet access, phone, and other incidentals
- Medical attention
- Optional excursions
- Soft drinks, bottled water, specialty coffees, alcohol (wine/beer/cocktails)
- Specialty restaurants

Travel documentation, identification and Excursions

All guests will be required by the U.S. Government to complete a [travel affidavit](#) identifying their approved category of travel*. This must be completed prior to boarding the vessel.

All guests (including international guests) will be required to have a passport. You cannot travel to Cuba with a driver's license, birth certificate, or passport card. Passports must be valid for six months after your travel to Cuba.

All guests are required to obtain a visa in order to enter Cuba, regardless of citizenship or residency. The type of visa that you will need will depend on certain factors, including the reason for travel to Cuba. Most guests will be able to enter Cuba utilizing a "Tarjeta Turistica" (or "tourist card") visa. Guests will purchase the "Tarjeta Turistica" from Holland America at a cost of \$75 per person. This fee will be added to your onboard account. Holland America will distribute this visa during embarkation and you will be responsible for providing your visa to the Cuban authorities upon arrival in Cuba. If you lose your visa, you will be able to purchase a new visa on board at an additional cost of \$75.

* There are 12 approved categories of travel; all cruise passengers will participate in the 5th category, called Educational activities, or People to People/P2P. For more information about each of the 12 categories, and what the U.S. Government requires with respect each category, we recommend you read the [U.S. Department of Treasury's Frequently Asked Questions Related to Cuba](#).

- **How does the people-to-people program work?**

These programs must be sponsored either by Holland America Line or a third-party U.S. sponsoring organization and include a fulltime schedule of activities that will create educational interactions between guests and the Cuban people. Activities can include shore excursions offered by Holland America Line. Guests may not opt to participate in a "self-guided" program.

Since our cruise stays in Cuba overnight and for a total of two days, you are required to engage in people-to-people activities each day you disembark the ship. You cannot rely on the prior day's people-to-people activities for the next day.

Holland America Line and Olivia will offer shore excursion programs that are designed to fully comply with all the requirements for people-to-people programs. In planning activities ashore, keep in mind that people-to-people activities must be fulfilled before you can engage in free time. Evening shore excursions offered by Holland America Line do not currently comply with the people-to-people guidelines and are not a part of the required full schedule of activities.

After completion of a full-time schedule of people-to-people activities, you are free to explore as you wish.

Exploring all our ports of call will be the highlight of your cruise. Holland America takes pride in offering the best shore excursion options for our guests. Excursions may be booked up to 30 days in advance. We will notify you via email when excursions are available for online booking.

Vaccinations

Please check with your local Public Health Department or personal physician regarding immunization requirements for all countries on your itinerary. You may also check the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website at: www.cdc.gov. Click on the Travelers' Health section, then click on the Destinations link and choose your destination in the "For Travelers" pull-down menu.

Cancellation Policy

Unexpected events can cause you to cancel your vacation. Because we are committed to this charter, we must strictly adhere to our cancellation policy as outlined in our **Olivia Terms & Conditions**.

2020 CARIBBEAN and CUBA CRUISE	Start Date	End Date	Cancel Penalty
Trip Date	1/22/2020		
Cancellation Fee 180 days or more prior to trip date		7/26/2019	\$250 per person
Cancellation Fee 90-179 days prior to trip date	7/27/2019	10/24/2019	50% of trip cost
Cancellation Fee 60-89 days prior to trip date	10/25/2019	11/23/2019	75% of trip cost
Cancellation Fee 0-59 days prior to trip date (NON-REFUNDABLE)	11/24/2019		100% of trip cost

Travel insurance

Olivia recommends that you purchase a travel protection plan to protect yourself and your trip investment. Now more than ever it's important to think about the unexpected. We recommend you purchase the travel protection within 15 days of your initial invoice date to receive the most comprehensive coverage, but it is never too late. Consider travel protection for Trip Cancellation or Interruption, Emergency Medical and Emergency Evacuation, Trip Delay, Baggage Delay and more.

For a travel insurance quote, more information or to purchase a protection plan, please call Olivia at 800-631-6277 and select option 1 to speak with a travel consultant.

Joining the Olivia.com and Facebook trip groups

If you'd like to chat with people who are going on the trip, sign up for the official [Olivia trip group](#) on our connect page. You can also join [Olivia's Cuba and Caribbean Official group page](#) on Facebook.

Travel and arrival

Air travel

Where to fly into/out of

You will need to fly into and out of **Fort Lauderdale, Florida (FLL)** which is located approximately 10 – 15 minutes from the port terminal. We encourage all passengers to arrive a day early to avoid the stress of unexpected delays. If you plan to arrive on embarkation day (January 22, 2020), we suggest you arrive in Fort Lauderdale, FLL no later than 12 pm. Return flights from Fort Lauderdale on the day of disembarkation (January 29, 2020) should be booked after 12 pm.

Airfare discounts

Please visit our [airfare discount page](#) for the most up-to-date information.

Check-in

Embarkation and check-in begins at 11:30 am and will be available until 3:30pm with all aboard at 4 pm.

Host Hotel

Olivia will offer a host hotel with a preferred group rate. More information will be available approximately 11 months prior to sailing.

Luggage allowances

While there is no luggage limit on the cruise itself, airlines often restrict (or charge) for excess baggage. Because each airline is different, and regulations change over time, please check with your airline for baggage allowances.

Parking at the Port Everglades Cruise Terminal

Parking for cruise passengers is available at the Port Everglades Port Cruise Terminal parking facility. Please [click here](#) for rates and more information.

Transfers to the ship

You can take a rideshare (such as Uber or Lyft) from the Fort Lauderdale airport (FLL) to the Port Everglades Cruise Terminal for approximately \$12, or a taxi for approximately \$20. The port address is: Port Everglades Cruise Terminal, 1850 Eller Drive, Fort Lauderdale, FL.

During your trip**Accommodations**

Holland America's recently enhanced *ms Veendam* combines 21st-century amenities and elegant spaces graced by a multi-million-dollar art and antiques collection.

- The Dining Room
- Pinnacle Grill Specialty Restaurant*
- Canaletto Restaurant*
- Lido Market
- Dive-In Grill
- Art Gallery
- Bars & Lounges
- Boutique
- Casino
- Digital Workshop
- Explorations Internet Café, powered by The New York Times
- The Mainstage Theater
- America's Test Kitchen Culinary Center / Wajang Theater Show Lounge
- Fitness Center
- Greenhouse Spa & Salon
- Launderette
- Photo Gallery
- Pools & jacuzzis

**nominal charge*

Room Amenities

- 24-hour room service
- Euro-top mattresses & finely woven cotton linens
- Elemis Aromapure "Time to Spa" bath amenities
- Deluxe bathrobes
- Salon-quality hair dryer
- Vanity with magnifying mirrors
- Egyptian cotton towels
- Massage showerheads
- Flat-screen television

- Individual thermostats
- Equipped with one standard U.S. 110v and European 220v outlet
- Personal safe
- Complimentary fresh fruit
- Complimentary shoeshine service
- International direct dial phones (extra charge)
- Laundry, pressing and dry cleaning (extra charge)
- Cell phone service (extra charge)

Dining

Onboard dining experience

If eating incredible meals is one of your favorite activities, rest assured that you will be more than satisfied. There are plenty of food and dining options available, and most are included in the cost of your cruise*.

You will be assigned a set dining time for dinner but you have the flexibility to dine at a different table each night within your assigned dining time. Guests in 1st seating will have dinner at 5:30 pm and guests in 2nd seating dinner will have dinner at 8 pm. If you do not have a medical reason to dine early, our recommendation is to select 2nd seating where you can attend your evening show and then enjoy a relaxed dinner. Guests in 1st seating sometimes hurry their dinner to line up for the show because seating in the show lounge is limited.

24-hour room service

If you would like to enjoy breakfast, lunch, dinner or a midnight snack in the comfort of your cabin, room service is available 24 hours a day. Refer to your in-cabin service guide for details.

The Dining Room

The Dining Room is the main dining restaurant serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. Tables covered in white linen and adorned with fresh flowers create a perfect setting to meet new friends.

The Lido Market

The Lido Market features an indoor, air-conditioned restaurant with a variety of buffet stations for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Enjoy make-it-yourself deli sandwiches, pasta dishes, salads, cooked-to-order entrees, stir fry, hamburgers, desserts, and the ever-popular ice cream bar.

The Terrace Grill

The Dive-In at the Terrace Grill offers grilled meat, chicken, and portabella burgers on brioche, gourmet hot dogs, crispy French fries and a taco bar with all the fixings.

New York Pizza

New York Pizza offers five Big Apple-themed thin-crust personal pizzas made to order in less than 10 minutes, as well as the option to select your own preferred toppings. After ordering, you are given a pager to alert them when their pie comes out of the oven. In the meantime, you can enjoy a salad, and afterwards the pizzeria offers a couple of sweet desserts to top off your meal.

Canaletto Restaurant* (Specialty restaurant for dinner only)

Serving classic Italian fare with tableside service. Reservations required and a nominal per-person charge will be applied to your onboard account.

The Pinnacle Grill* (Specialty restaurant for dinner only)

Spoil yourself with exquisite menus and a fine dining experience at the Pinnacle Grill. Reservations are required and a nominal per-person charge will be applied to your onboard account

****The Pinnacle Grill and Canaletto have a nominal surcharge. Approximately 30 days prior to sailing, you will receive information on how to book the specialty restaurants.***

Gratuities

Gratuities are included in the cost of the cruise. Gratuities are provided for your cabin steward, dining room steward, bus person, maitre'ds and other behind-the-scenes crew members.

Internet / Cell Phones / Mail

There is an onboard Internet Café, or you may use your own device by purchasing a minute plan. Satellite-powered wireless access is available in most public areas and all cabins. WiFi Pricing will be posted on board.

The Veendam is cell-phone friendly, and thanks to an agreement with Wireless Maritime Service, you can make and receive calls, send and receive text messages, and access emails and surf the web with your phone. Phones must be activated for international calling with your home provider, but no special codes or software are needed. Roaming fees apply.

PLEASE NOTE: You will need to check with your phone provider regarding international coverage in Cuba. You will also need to check with your mobile carrier to determine if you will have access to data/roaming while in Cuba. The access to Wi-Fi in port in Cuba is extremely limited, if available at all.

Letters and postcards may be mailed from the ship while in ports of call. You may buy stamps in port or purchase them through your onboard account.

Laundry Services

Laundry, pressing and dry cleaning services are available. Pricing is available on board. There is also a self-service launderette on the ship.

Medical services

There is an onboard infirmary. Medical services entail an additional fee.

Money: Paying for things on board

On board, the currency is \$USD. All purchases made on the ship will be charged to your onboard account, which you create when you first check-in.

Phone

Each cabin has a phone. There is an additional fee to use this phone. Cost is available on board.

Sisters at Sea & Friends

Olivia's Sisters at Sea & Friends program is dedicated to promoting and celebrating diversity on our trips. Meet your Sisters at Sea coordinators on board so that you can find out about the special events we have planned for you during the week. Everyone is welcome to join in the fun.

Smoking Policy

All staterooms (cabins) including stateroom verandahs, showrooms and all other indoor areas are designated non-smoking. Smoking is only permitted on certain designated outside decks. The designated smoking areas for the ms Veendam are as follows:

- Sea View (Retreat) Bar/Pool on starboard (right) side of the ship
- Sports Deck on starboard (right) side of ship
- Cigar and pipe smoking is only permitted on the outside decks where smoking is otherwise allowed.
- Electronic cigarettes and vaping devices are permitted in staterooms but are not permitted on stateroom verandahs. These devices may be used in all designated smoking areas listed above.

Solo Travelers

Traveling solo? Be sure to attend the Solos Welcome on the first day. Here you will meet your Olivia Solos Coordinators who will share your solos program for the week. We plan dozens of activities for our

solo travelers, including special designated solos excursions in each port of call. In addition, we organize a special solos dining area for all meals and reserve a section for the nightly shows.

Spa Services

Enjoy the luxurious Greenhouse Spa complete with massage, facials and a myriad of other spa treatments. Massages and other services are available for an additional fee.

Special Needs

If you have special medical or dietary needs, please advise us at the time of booking.

After Your Trip

Transfers to the airport

For those going directly to Fort Lauderdale Airport, you can take a rideshare from the port to the airport for approximately \$12, or a taxi for approximately \$20. The airport is about 15 minutes away. Transfers will also be available to book via the Shore Excursion office on board.

Didn't find what you are looking for? Check out our [Olivia travel FAQ](#). Or call us at 800-631-6277 (inside the U.S. & Canada) or 415-962-5700 (Outside the U.S. & Canada) and select option 2.