

CUBA



A Girl Under the Palm Trees



Typical Beach Scene

-This One About 100 Yards From Their Villa



NOTE: Mike Merrithew and Fraser Cutler travelled to Cuba on a Sunflight Charter during March Break. It was a seven night package and cost \$399.00. This price included flight, accommodation, three meals a day and beer or wine with meals as well as meals and bar service on the flights. They were so pleased with their holiday that we have decided to inform everyone on what they consider to be a PERFECT STUDENT HOLIDAY due to its price, luxuries, climate and excellence in hospitality. I have used their notes and pictures in an attempt to present the island in its true colour. My thanks to Mike and Fraser for their time and co-operation in making this information available.

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It was a typical wintery Saturday morning as they anxiously awaited for their escape to their sunshine island of Cuba. Passports and tickets were tucked in safe compartments next to bathing suits and suntan oil. All seemed well as they boarded their Cubana Flight at 9:00 a.m. . . . what . . . a two hour delay . . . *?&!/. . . however the candy, cigars, cigarettes and rum and coke. . . ALL FREE . . . made the delay almost pleasant. Before they knew it they were enroute to Cuba with still free drinks all the way. A hot meal of tenderloin in green peppers and tomatoes was served. . . delicious . . . Before they knew it it was fasten your seatbelt time and prepare for landing.

Early afternoon they arrived at the Jose Marti Airport where they were quickly and efficiently whisked through customs already having filled out the necessary papers which were passed out during the flight. The tour guide from Cubatours boarded everyone on the air conditioned bus and headed out for a twenty minute guided tour to Los Pinos. Enroute she advised everyone on what to do once they go to Los Pinos and how to do it. Within five minutes of arriving at the resort area Mike and Fraser could be found decked out in shorts and suntan oil sipping a cool one at the beach bar.

A note here on Los Pinos as it is described in the Sunflight brochure . . . "Located in the resort area of Santa Maria some twenty minutes from Havana, Los Pinos comprises 27 handsome villas set amidst whispering pines, none more than 100 yards from the beach. Built in Spanish-colonial design, no two villas appear the same. All have two floors with upstairs bedrooms, the ground floor area comprising livingroom and kitchen. Some villas have three bedrooms whilst others four, and all come with twin beds and are air conditioned, some having private bathroom, others sharing bathrooms between no more than two bedrooms.



The first villa Mike and Fraser stayed in used to be the Japanese Embassy but due to their generous nature they gave it to another couple who wanted to be next to their friends. Their second villa was near to Castros villa and equally comfortable. All the necessities were provided with complete kitchen facilities, living room with two terraces on the lower floor and one on the roof.

The first night's dinner was an indication of the good selection of food. At the Hotel Atlantico a full buffet was served outside with tables surrounding the dance floor. There was lobster, crab, sturgeon, tuna, fresh tropical fruit, cake, beer, and coffee. Before dinner they were served Saoco which is a coconut cut open with rum and sugar and coconut milk inside. (Cost about \$1.20) One of the great things about Cuba is that you take Canadian money and change it at your hotel. This is the only place you can change your money. \$1.00 equals approximately 68 centavos and 100 centavos equals one peso. You must remember to carry your money tabulation sheet so that you can make purchases at tourist prices . . . unlike most places . . . tourist prices are cheaper. There are tourist boutiques at each hotel where you can purchase liquor, trinkets, posters, shirts, cigarettes. Due to the high cost of cigarettes it is very advisable to take your own.

There was a movie every night of the week, in an outdoor theatre which somewhat resembled an outdoor amphitheatre. Beer runs from 55 to 65 centavos and you can drink it any where you like as well as at the outdoor theatre.

After three days of beautiful weather soaking up the sun on some of the world's finest beaches and cooling off in the clear waters, Mike and Fraser had made friends with other tourists as well as some of the local Cubans and it would not be surprising to find them playing the very common dice-poker game at the beach bars.

Monday afternoon they rented bicycles (50 centavos/hour) and biked around and picked coconuts off trees along the side of the road. Monday night was CUBAN NIGHT at the Cabaret with free drinks for the first hour. Again a great spread of food with lots of pork, manioc root, (something like a potato), rice, pineapple, papaya and java (fruit something like an apple). Three different bands provided entertainment and there was plenty of dancing. This was all outside and during one part of the show there was a horse presentation. Mike and Fraser (after a few drinks . . . remember the free ones during the first hour) at this point 'hough' they would like a little jaunt on the horses so they charmed the original riders to let them borrow them for a while. Horsemanship being one of their claims to fame, they proceeded to ride them through the outdoor cabaret and successfully upset a few tables and at the same time providing unscheduled entertainment for all. Remember that except for drinks after the first hour this is ALL FREE.

After a few hours faced Tuesday and flexible and the boat centavos per hour f abounds everywhere outdone by the Cuban that evening. A great

After a morning on and friends had a base much to my surprise C not guess who were coconuts were on han

Wednesday night th which was about 20 kil 13 pesos and this inclu two free drinks. This v compete with stage sh This is a two hour non s not be missed. You can dinner as well if you

I notice that the no holiday are rather skin assume they were bus and nightly visits to th

The flight back was equalled the excellent Baked chicken and rice the return with free cigarettes. The Sun Cubatours people di everything was very v

After a few days of r to the Travel Office in fun; I shared in his st more green with envy. ventured back with th with the same reactio

It is quite obvious th one of the number one well as any one els hospitality, sun, and g yet to get a complaint went to Cuba and Mike the excellent reports on opened new doors in t

Again my thanx for Fraser . . . you als students make my job

Cuba is not expensive meals are paid for . . . it what do you say????? s .you would look great