
The Best All-Inclusive Resort in the World Is in ... Cuba

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When President Obama announced last week that the U.S. would restore full diplomatic relations with Cuba, the reaction across the country was strong and varied. While some American businessmen immediately focused on goods that they may soon be able to export, wanderlust-filled travelers began searching for where to spend their next holiday.

To wit, U.S. website traffic on TripAdvisor about travel to Cuba spiked 293 percent on Wednesday, Dec. 17, compared to the previous day, according to company data. Additionally, in an opt-in online poll that TripAdvisor hosted, 54 percent of more than 1,500 respondents said “eased travel restrictions will increase their interest in visiting Cuba in 2015.”

“Among the global TripAdvisor community, Cuba is already a hot destination, with Havana being named the #1 Destination on the Rise in the 2013 TripAdvisor Travelers’ Choice awards,” Erin Millard, a spokesperson for TripAdvisor, said in a statement to ABC News. “Since the White House’s announcement last Wednesday, we’ve already seen several discussions sprout up on the TripAdvisor Forums about what this means for U.S. travelers.”

The site also released a list of the best and most popular hotel and dining destinations in the Caribbean country among its reviewers.

“Four of the five top-rated attractions in Cuba on TripAdvisor are beaches, with travelers frequently praising the soft, white sands and calm, crystal blue waters,” said Millard. “Cuba’s many cultural attractions also rate highly with TripAdvisor reviewers, from theaters and

museums to town plazas where travelers can soak in the island country's vibrant atmosphere."

Perhaps most notable among all of the attractions highlighted was Royalton Cayo Santa Maria, located in Cayo Santa Maria, Cuba.

With 1,305 reviews from travelers, the adults-only beachfront property was named the No. 1 All-Inclusive Resort in the World in the 2014 TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice awards.

"The experience started the minute we got there, we were greeted with ice cold face towels, fruit juice and fresh fruit on skewers while our cases were taken to our room," wrote one visitor from the U.K. in a TripAdvisor review. "From then on the service was wonderful, all the staff could not do enough to help, they always had a smile and were always very friendly."

Another traveler from Ontario, Canada, sung the hotel's praises on a return trip, saying it was even better than the previous time.

"I cannot say enough about the service and the staff at this resort," wrote the reviewer. "From our very first visit I knew we had found a gem. The number of returning guests speaks volumes to the quality of this new resort and its staff. If you are looking for peace, quiet and beauty this may be the spot for you."
