



ZAPATA, CUBA

A pristine, protected Caribbean fly-fishing only destination





ZAPATA PENINSULA REPUBLIC OF CUBA, CARIBBEAN

WHERE

Located on the Zapata Peninsula in the southern Matanzas Province of Cuba, Zapata is located less than 150 Kilometres (93 Mi) southeast of Havana and is some of the best-preserved wetlands system in the entire Caribbean.

It is a place of such environmental significance that in 2000 UNESCO declared the wetlands which occupy the entire Cuban Zapata Peninsula and surrounding areas a biosphere reserve. A year later, it was declared a wetland of international importance and was ultimately submitted to UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

With less than 9,500 inhabitants across the vast expanse of forestry and wetlands covering some 6,500 square miles of wildness, the area supports 175 different species of birds, 31 species of reptiles and over 1000 species of invertebrates.

Today, its waters are also reserved exclusively for catch-and-release fly fishing only anglers, with a strict limit to 8 rods per week throughout the season.

WHAT

Your 6 day / 7 night trip is completed aboard a spacious 100ft Mothership - 'Georgiana' along with 6 skiffs – 2 double skiffs / 4 single skiffs. We have partnered with The Fly Fishing The Run (FFTR) family who have operated exclusively in these waters since 2016 and will ensure your fly-fishing trip is a memorable one, both on and off the flats.

Join us for an incredible adventure in one of the Caribbeans' truly most remote fly-fishing destinations.



GENERAL PROGRAM

- 6 FULL DAYS GUIDED FISHING
- KEY SPORT TARGETS
 - PERMIT (*T. Falcatus*)
 - BONEFISH
 - TARPON
 - TREVALLY (JACK CREVALLE)
 - BARRACUDA



During their 6 days of fishing, anglers will fish West Las Salinas, locally known as San Lazaro, and the massive fishing grounds in and around the Gulf of Canarreos.

Both inner flats support very healthy populations of bonefish in the 3-5 pound range. The outer flats, with their proximity to deeper water channels and cuts, are the *T. Falcatus* permit and tarpon fishing grounds. This is also a great place to target oceanic barracuda and other sport species including jack crevalle, Cubera Snapper and countless other species.

A portion of the fishing grounds of Zapata are comprised of water that is extremely shallow - conventional flats fishing skiffs with two anglers and one guide draw too much water and limit access. The outfitter utilizes four custom "single-angler" skiffs - smaller, skinny-water boats designed for one angler and one guide.

Each day, four fishermen will be assigned to the single boats, while the other four anglers fish from more traditional Dolphin flats skiffs, two anglers and one guide. The fishing skiffs are powered by 60- and 70-horsepower outboard motors and are perfectly designed with fly fishers in mind. The single angler flats skiffs navigate the shallow back country while the double Dolphin Skiffs are more suited for open water and the longer runs to the fishing grounds further West.

The weekly fishing schedule will have anglers rotating between the single and double skiffs - fishing solo for three days, and sharing a skiff and guide with a buddy for the others. This is a unique fishing program and guarantees anglers at least half of their week will be in a single skiff with a private guide at no additional cost to the angler.

Each morning, guests will step from the custom yacht directly onto the skiffs and be fishing a short time later. With the use of the live-aboard vessel MV "Georgiana" and its ability to be moored right in the heart of the exclusive fishing area, long run times to the fishing grounds are virtually eliminated.

The central zone of Zapata features long expanses of large, white, shallow flats with great populations of bonefish, though they are often frequented by permit that hug the deep-water edges of the flats and lagoons. In addition, it's not uncommon to encounter juvenile tarpon and the occasional snook, making grand slams an everyday possibility.

In the eastern region we have classic permit fishing grounds - large flats and bays with hard and stony bottoms. It is not uncommon to see permit here swimming on their sides in very shallow water, desperate to access the fertile feeding grounds. Between the shallow flats we have deep, separating troughs that are home to tarpon, snook and other hard fighting species like blue runners, yellow tail and snapper.

This is truly a fly fishers paradise.





GEORGIANA'S FACILITIES

Think of MV Georgiana as a 100ft mobile lodge, providing everything you need for a relaxing and first-class experience:

- Air conditioning throughout
- 6 skiffs / 4 single / 2 double skiffs with electric motors
- 2 x Twin Share rooms with ensuite in every room.
- 4 x Single Room with ensuite
- Food is prepared fresh and is traditionally international Cuban and seafood oriented cuisine. Fresh fish and vegetables are incorporated into most dinners with salads and a variety of fruits on offer.

In addition, excellent pork and chicken entrees, fresh sashimi and Italian-style pizzas for appetizers are available with non-alcoholic beverages.

- An "Open Bar" supplement is available at USD\$200.00 per angler for the week, offering some of the best frozen daiquiris, Cuba Libre and mojitos you'll ever have.

Note: given the nature of the remote location, guests are advised there is limited / no wi-fi / telephone reception on departure from the Port, for the duration of the trip until returning prior to departure on the final day.





ITINERARY

May 13, 2023: Havana, Cuba

Arrive at Habana Airport. We recommend arriving the night prior to your scheduled pre-arranged transfer date and spending the night in vivid Havana to avoid any delays or disappointment. Your host will meet you once you have cleared immigration and customs, where we will exchange cash to obtain CUCs (Cuban Convertible Pesos) and work our way to our hotel for the night.

May 14, 2023: Zapata, Cuba : Transfer Day / Half Day Fishing

Once the sun comes up, the MV Georgiana will depart the dock to motor out to the fishing grounds at Zapata. It takes approximately 2.5-3.5 hours (depending on the weather) to motor to the anchor point in Las Salinas. Reaching the first mooring, everyone will head out in the skiffs for the first day of fishing, until dark.

May 15 - 19, 2023: Zapata, Cuba

Breakfast is typically served from 7.00am each day. The fishing boats aim to leave the mothership around 8.00am. Guests are typically provided a packed lunch to maximise time on the water. Each fishing day runs to around 4.00pm-5.30pm depending on fishing.

At the end of each day you can then retire to the back deck or air conditioned lounge, enjoying a choice of canapés until dinner is served at your groups preferred time.

May 20, 2023: Departure Day

There is an early wake-up call and breakfast on your last morning aboard MV Georgiana. The mothership will then head back to port in order to meet the bus that will transfer you to Habana International Airport. You should not book a flight departing Havana until sometime after 5:00 pm on this day.





GEAR LIST

Fishing Gear / Terminal Tackle

- 1 x 8 weight Rod / Reel for bonefish. Tropical Floating line will be the most used line, however an F/I line is typically a great option to have on hand. Minimum of 250m of 30lb backing loaded on reels. Recommended lines: Scientific Anglers Infinity Saltwater Taper, SA Bonefish, SA Grand Slam Clear Tip
- 2 x 9 or 10 Weight Rod/Reel For Permit, Snapper, Jacks etc. Tropical Floating line on one option and F/I line on the other option. Minimum of 250m of 30lb backing loaded on reels. Recommended lines: Scientific Anglers Infinity Saltwater Taper, SA Sonar Titan Clear Tip, SA Grand Slam Clear Tip
- 1 x 12 Weight Rod/Reel for Tarpon and larger species like barracuda – Floating, F/I lines are recommended.
- Leader Material – 12lb, 16lb, 20lb, 25lb, 40lb, 60lb and 100lb fluorocarbon leader will cover all applications.
- Tapered leaders in 16lb and 20lb can be handy for Permit & Bonefish.
- Pliers/clippers/Hook Sharpener
- Day pack or Bum bag (Waterproof is recommended)
- Waterproof Fly Boxes





FLIES

Having the right flies for the trip is important and we suggest you discuss options with us directly. Below is a basic suggestion.

Permit and bonefish:

Bring a range of shrimp and crab patterns, but we recommend:

- Alphlexo Crab in Clear/White Barred Legs, Clear/White Legs, Clear/Pink Legs, Tan/Yellow Legs. Bring Alphlexo Crabs with double weighted orange hotspot, and single weighted, size 2 and 1/0.
- Shrimp Patterns ranging from 1/0 to 2. Tie lightly weighted through to very heavy. Typically, any trigger fish or bonefish style shrimp flies work well on the the available species.

Tarpon / Snook:

- Tarpon Toads, EP Baitfish, Lefty's Deceiver, Tarpon Bunny, The Cockroach and worm flies in 1/0, 2/0 and if possible, size 2 options.

Note: It is not uncommon to catch 25+ new species in a week. The above flies will sufficiently cover the range of fishing options.





CLOTHING & OTHER ITEMS TO BRING

The Caribbean has a warm tropical year-round climate. With temperatures in cooler months averaging around 28C or 82F to the low 30's C (mid 80's F) in warmer months. Whilst the weather is very comfortable, we recommend bringing specific clothing to maximise your comfort when out fishing in whether it be in the sun, rain or whilst wet wading.

- Waterproof Shell Jacket – Goretex, Patagonia H2NO or similar
- 2 x “quick dry” long pants
- 2 x “quick dry” shorts
- 3 x “quick dry” long sleeve collared /hooded shirt
- Bike shorts (or alternative) - helps avoid chaffing on flats
- Long ‘skins’ pants/tights for wading the flats
- T-shirts, casual clothing for mothership & travel
- Flats wading boots and neoprene wading socks
- Thongs/crocs/sandals/jandles/flip flops
- Water bottle, toiletries & sunscreen /skin protection.
- Travel size bug repellent and sunscreen to take out fishing. NB: Repellent & Sunscreen are provided on the mothership.
- Camera, head torch & spare batteries
- Passport





FLIGHTS AND TRAVEL

Flights are booked to **Havana Aeropuerto Internacional Jose Marti (HAV)**.

Travelling to Cuba is surprisingly simple, though every airline handles some aspects of booking your flights slightly differently. A passport with a minimum 6 month validity period is required.

For Australians, there are no direct flight from Australia or New Zealand, however there are many flights traveling to Cuba through Mexico, Canada, and many other International Ports. Currently, there are also options to travel directly from the United States to Cuba, from several US-based hubs including: Los Angeles, Houston, Atlanta, Miami, Charlotte, and New York. Regarding your flights, these can be either booked directly, or by contacting us and we can help make the necessary arrangements for you.

The next step is to obtain your Cuban Visa, or Tourist Card. You can order the Tourist Card in advance online, although most people just get the Tourist Card at the departure gate en route to Cuba. The price varies depending on where you get the Tourist Card, ranging from USD\$50-\$100. At every departing gate, before boarding the plane, regardless of airline, there is a small desk or kiosk where you need to check in. If you have your Tourist Card, they ask to see it and stamp your boarding pass, indicating you are all set to travel to Cuba. Once you arrive in Cuba with your Tourist Card in hand, clearing Immigrations and Customs is easy.

We recommend arriving a day early to avoid any issues. This ensures that any delays to your first flight don't impact your ability to make the transfer to your final destination.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with your proposed travel plans so we can assist in any way.



PRICING

USD \$6,250 per angler

Price includes

- 6 days guided fly fishing – 3 days single flat bottom skiff, 3 days double skiff.
- 7 nights accommodation aboard Georgiana – twin share, with 4 Single Rooms available
- All ground transfers in Cuba
- All meals and non-alcoholic beverages
- **AFF CUBA GIFT PACK** – Patagonia /AFF Sun Shirt, AFF Cap, Zapata Fly Pack.

Not included

- Return flights to Havana, Cuba
- One Nights' accommodation recommended in Havana on the arrival night prior to your scheduled trip
- Travel & medical insurance (compulsory)
- Fly fishing equipment, flies, fly lines & terminal tackle
- USD\$120.00 Mandatory Conservation Fee
- Travel Visa / Tourist Card
- All inclusive Open Bar available at USD\$200.00 per person
- Guide tips – Tips are welcome for the guides and crew, but not compulsory.
- Travel insurance with cancellation cover is compulsory.





BOOKING CONDITIONS

Deposit to confirm booking: 30% of Total Cost or USD\$1,875. A further 40% (USD \$2,500) is required by end of November, 2022. Final balance will be due in February 2023, approximately 90 days out from your trip date.

For all Cuba trips less than 90 days out, full payment is required to secure reservations.

Because of the operator's strict cancellation policies, we highly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance. Please note that credit card payments cannot be accepted for any incidentals or expenses once in Cuba. Once again, AFF strongly recommends that anglers and guests purchase travel insurance with cancellation cover.





CONTACT US

CUSTOMER ENQUIRIES

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