



Ciego de Ávila Province

📍 033 / POP 422,576

Includes »

Ciego de Ávila.....	295
Morón	299
Florencia	302
Cayo Coco.....	303
Cayo Guillermo	307

Best Places to Eat

- » Ranchón Playa Pilar (p308)
- » La Atarraya (p302)
- » Don Ávila (p297)
- » Restaurante Maité la Qbana (p300)

Best Places to Stay

- » Meliá Cayo Coco (p305)
- » Alojamiento Vista al Parque (p300)
- » Alojamiento Maité (p300)
- » Iberostar Daiquirí (p307)

Why Go?

For centuries Ciego de Ávila was little more than an overnight stop on Cuba's arterial east-west highway. Then came Cuba's ambitious post-Special Period tourist project and the resort development of Cayo Coco and Cayo Guillermo, the bright tropical pearls that had once seduced Hemingway, laced with glorious beaches and bedizened with nearly a dozen exclusive tourist resorts. Within 10 years, the boring former drive-by had become a potentially exciting drive-in.

Chopped off the western flank of Camagüey province in 1975, Ciego de Ávila has – in reality – been harboring intriguing secrets for over a century. Various non-Spanish immigrants first arrived here in the 19th century from Haiti, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and Barbados, bringing with them myriad cultural quirks, including cricket in Baraguá, voodoo in Venezuela, country dancing in Majagua and explosive fireworks in Chambas. Thanks to their traditions and cultural ambiguities, they have made Ciego one of the most offbeat provinces in the nation.

When to Go

The weather is pretty constant in Ciego de Ávila. Take to the field on August 1st in Baraguá, where people celebrate Slave Emancipation Day with music, dancing and a game of cricket. In September there's Morón's Aquatic Carnival, which kicks off in the channel leading to the Laguna de Leche. Finally in November the citizens of Majagua dance in the streets during the Fiesta de los Bandas Rojo y Azul.



Ciego de Ávila Province Highlights

1 Eat fresh fish for ridiculously cheap prices at the **Laguna de la Leche** (p305)

2 Dive from a liveaboard in the almost-virgin waters of the secluded **Jardines de la Reina archipelago** (p307)

3 See how an old airport has been made into a successful

nature reserve at **Parque Natural el Bagá** (p303) on Cayo Coco

4 Browse through the best municipal museum in Cuba, **Museo Provincial Simón Reyes** (p295) in Ciego de Ávila

5 Follow in the wake of Papa Hemingway while deep-sea

fishing off **Cayo Guillermo** (p307)

6 Dig your toes in the sand at the beach paradise of **Playa Pilar** (p306)

7 Escape the resorts and immerse yourself in the rustic simplicity of the **Loma de Cunagua** (p302)