



Sancti Spíritus Province

☎041 / POP 465,468

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Best Places to Eat

- » Paladar Sol y Son (p282)
- » Mesón de la Plaza (p272)
- » Restaurante Hostal del Rijo (p273)
- » Paladar Estela (p282)

Best Places to Stay

- » Hostal del Rijo (p271)
- » Casa Muñoz – Julio & Rosa (p280)
- » Iberostar Grand Hotel (p280)
- » Hotel Plaza (p271)
- » ‘Hospedaje Yolanda’ – Yolanda María Alvarez (p281)

Why Go?

Sancti Spíritus is the province of good fortune; there's more of everything here, and it's all squeezed into an area half the size of Camagüey or Pinar del Río.

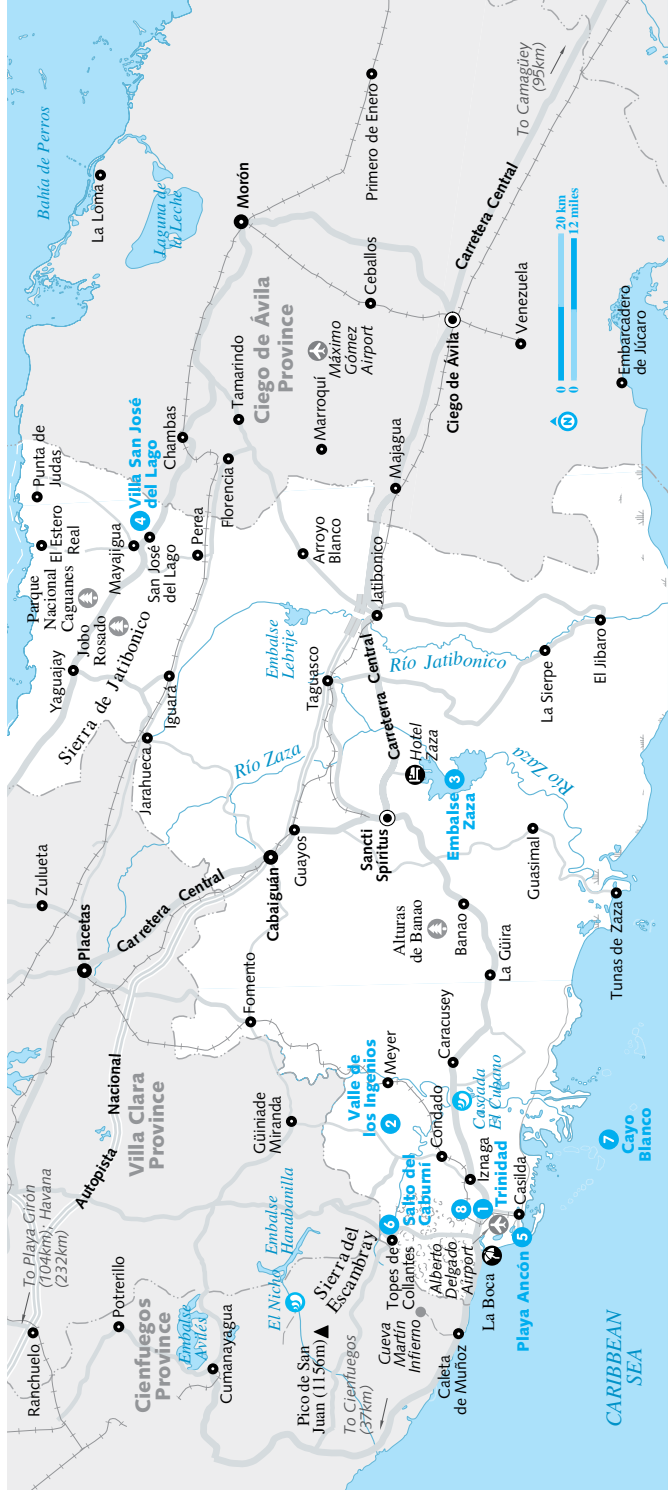
The cities are a perennial highlight. In the east is the understated provincial capital, a soporific mix of weather-beaten buildings and bruised Ladas. South, and within sight of the coast, is ethereal Trinidad, Cuba's time-warped colonial jewel.

Unlike other colonial belles, Trinidad has beaches – nearby Ancón is a stunner, easily the best on Cuba's southern coast – and mountains. Within mirror-glinting distance of the city's colonial core lies the haunting Escambray, which, with a network of decent trails, is Cuba's best hiking area.

The rest of the province hides a surprisingly varied cache of oft-overlooked curiosities, including fishing at Lake Zaza, a seminal museum to Cuba's guerrilla icon Camilo Cienfuegos in Yaguajay, and the beautiful Bahía de Buenavista.

When to Go

Trinidadians don't wait long after Christmas to rediscover their celebratory style. The Semana de la Cultura Trinitaria (Trinidad Culture Week) takes place during the second week of January and coincides with the city's anniversary. The quiet month of May is a good time to visit this province, as you can avoid both crowds and bad weather during the off-season. Stick around until June and you'll witness Trinidad's second big annual shindig, the Fiestas Sanjuaneras, a local Carnival where rum-fueled horsemen gallop through the streets. Take cover!



Sancti Spiritus Province Highlights

- 1** Sway to the hypnotic rumba drums in Trinidad's **Palenque de los Congos Reales** (p283)
- 2** Climb the tower at the Manaca Iznaga for a killer view of the Unesco-listed **Valle de los Ingenios** (p288)
- 3** Fish for largemouth bass in **Embalse Zaza** (p272)
- 4** Soak in the mineral springs at **Villa San José del Lago** (p292)
- 5** Rent a house in La Boca and stroll the sands of **Playa Ancón** (p286)
- 6** Hike down to the **Salto del Caburri** (p289) and jump into a frigid natural bathing pool
- 7** Commission a boat to take you snorkeling off **Cayo Blanco** (p286)
- 8** Visit one of half-a-dozen museums in time-warped **Trinidad** (p277)