



Artemisa & Mayabeque Provinces

📍 47 / POP 885,545

Includes ➔

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Best Hiking

- ➔ La Rosita (p149)
- ➔ Sendero la Serafina (p152)
- ➔ El Contento (p152)
- ➔ Parque Escaleras de Jaruco (p157)

Best Places To Stay

- ➔ Memories Jibacoa Beach (p157)
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- ➔ Hotel Moka (p153)

Why Go?

Leap-frogged by almost all international visitors, Cuba's two smallest provinces, created by dividing Havana province in half in 2010, are the reserve of more everyday concerns – like growing half of the crops that feed the nation, for example. But in amongst the patchwork of citrus and pineapple fields lie a smattering of small towns that will satisfy the curious and the brave.

The most interesting corner is Las Terrazas and Soroa, Cuba's most successful eco-project and an increasingly important nexus for trekking and bird-watching. East of Havana, Jibacoa's beaches are the domain of a trickle of Varadero-avoiding tourists who guard their secret tightly. Wander elsewhere and you'll be in mainly Cuban company (or none at all), contemplating sugar-plantation ruins, weird one-of-a-kind museums and improbably riotous festivals. For a kaleidoscope of the whole region, take the ridiculously slow Hershey train through the nation's proverbial backyard and admire the view.

When to Go

- ➔ The provinces' attractions vary considerably climate-wise. Because of their unique geographical situation, Soroa and Las Terrazas have a microclimate: more rain and minimum monthly temperatures 2°C to 3°C colder than Havana.
- ➔ The big parties around here are December for the carnival-esque frivolity of Bejucal's Las Charangas and April for the International Humor Festival in San Antonio de los Baños.
- ➔ December through April is best for the beaches at Playa Jibacoa.

Artemisa & Mayabeque Provinces Highlights

- 1 Roaming the ruins of the region's once-mighty coffee plantations at **Antiguo Cafetal Angerona** (p149) and in **Las Terrazas** (p151).
- 2 Hiking the hills above verdant **Soraa** (p149).
- 3 Going green at Cuba's primary eco-village in **Las Terrazas** (p151).
- 4 Refreshing yourself at squeaky-clean, green **Hotel Moka** (p153), the country's first and best eco-hotel.
- 5 Trying to suppress giggles at San Antonio de los Baños' **Museo del Humor** (p147).
- 6 Escaping the tourist trails on the historic **Hershey Electric Railway** (p156).
- 7 Bagging a beach retreat beside Playa Jibacoa at elegant **Superclub Breezes** (p157).
- 8 Feasting with a view and weekendend Havana folk at scenic **Parque Escaleras de Jaruco** (p157).

