



Granma Province

23 / POP 836,000

Includes ➔

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Meson La Cuchipapa (p379)
- ➔ Restaurante San Salvador de Bayamo (p378)
- ➔ Fiesta de la Cubanía (p379)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Villa La Paz (p378)
- ➔ Adrián & Tonia (p385)
- ➔ Villa Santo Domingo (p383)

Why Go?

Few parts of the world get named after yachts, which helps explain why in Granma (christened for the boat that delivered Fidel Castro and his bedraggled revolutionaries ashore to kick-start a guerrilla war in 1956) Cuba's *viva la Revolución* spirit burns most fiercely. This is the land where José Martí died and where Granma native Carlos Manuel de Céspedes freed his slaves and formally declared Cuban independence for the first time in 1868.

The alluringly isolated countryside helped the revolutionary cause. Road-scarce Granma is one of Cuba's remotest regions, with lofty tropical mountains dense enough to harbor fugitive Fidel Castro for more than two years in the 1950s.

Its isolation has bred a special brand of Cuban identity. Granma's settlements are esoteric places enlivened with weekly street parties (with outdoor barbecues and archaic hand-operated street organs), and provincial capital Bayamo is among the most tranquil and cleanest places in the archipelago.

When to Go

- ➔ Pockets of Granma already have a balmy climate, but from January to February the beach area of Marea del Portillo becomes the warmest place in Cuba.
- ➔ To see provincial traditions at their finest, don't miss Bayamo's biggest celebration, the Incendio de Bayamo on January 12.
- ➔ In the far wetter Sierra Maestra mountains, March and April are the driest times for hiking the trails, with bearable nighttime temperatures.
- ➔ December 2 is the anniversary of the historic Granma landing, which put the Revolution in motion; it's celebrated with festivities and a ceremony at Las Coloradas.

Granma Province Highlights

1 Marea del Portillo

(p390) Enjoying one of Cuba's balmiest climates in this secluded beach resort.

2 Comandancia de la Plata

(p381) Trekking up to Fidel's

wartime headquarters in

Gran Parque Nacional Sierra Maestra.

3 Parque Nacional Desembarco del Granma

(p388) Exploring marine

terraces and archaeological remains.

4 Santo Domingo

(p382) Getting a dose of fresh mountain air at the bucolic Gran Parque Nacional Sierra

Maestra with horseback riding or a stroll to a swimming hole.

5 Fiesta de la Cubanía

(p379) Immersing yourself in the inimitable Bayamo party spirit with pork roast, street

organs and a chess game.

6 Museo Histórico la Demajagua

(p385) Visiting the site where the Cubans uttered their first cry of independence.

