Cubana launches online sales of flight tickets: This is how booking works!

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The new Cubana airline website (Source: Cubana)

The Cuban state airline Cubana started online ticket sales last week with the launch of its new website. Travelers interested in domestic flights can now avoid queues and buy their tickets conveniently from home (or online in Cuba itself). We have tested the service.

First of all: the ticket sales work! For a long time, Cubana's website was only good for flight information, while you still had to go somewhere to reserve and pay for tickets. However, there are a few things to bear in mind if you want to buy tickets on <u>https://www.cubana.cu</u>:

- **Ignore the warning**: Your browser may report an outdated security certificate when you open the website. This is the case with many Cuban websites and is partly due to US sanctions. The missing certificate has no effect on functionality. If you are working from a secure network (not a public hotspot), experience has shown that nothing should go wrong. In this case, you should simply ignore the warning in order to reach your destination.
- Solve the language barrier: At the moment, the website is only available in Spanish. However, it is structured very similarly to any other airline website and in some cases more simply. Thanks to Google Translate, you can now buy tickets without knowing Spanish; the individual steps are described in detail below.
- Have your credit card ready: Just like on the <u>Víazul long-distance bus line website</u>, tickets can only be paid for with an international credit card (Visa or Mastercard not issued by a US bank). You should definitely have one anyway if you are traveling to Cuba.

How to buy flight tickets from Cubana

 In order for your booking to be paid for at the end, you have to register on the website and create an account. We only realized this afterwards (there is no corresponding note) and therefore had to search for our flight all over again. Fortunately, this is done quickly: You register by clicking on the user symbol in the top right-hand corner, then click on "Registrarse", enter your name, date of birth, country of origin, email address and set a password. The account must then be confirmed.



• After registering, log in in the same corner via "Iniciar sesión". Now you can start your flight search.

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- For this example, we have chosen a flight from Havana to Santiago with a return flight probably the most frequently booked connection, which shortens a 20-hour bus journey to an hour and a half (yes, long-distance buses and the like are of course cheaper and better for the climate than a domestic flight!). In addition to the national connections, you can also book the few international flights from Cubana via the website, e.g. from Havana to the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince, Panama City or Buenos Aires.
- The quickest way to find your airport is to use the abbreviation: e.g. HAV for Havana or SCU for Santiago de Cuba. On the right, under "Tipo de vuela" (flight type), you can choose between a one-way ("Solo Ida") or return flight ("Ida Vuelta"). Under "Moneda" you should select Euro. In addition, you must of course define the dates for the outward flight ("Salida"), return flight ("Retorno") and the number of tickets ("Pasajeros"). If your credit card operates in a different currency, you can also leave USD set, the conversion will still work for the final billing.

A 1 aviso					SU RESERVA	+
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G Seleccione un vuelo en	la lista siguiente; el precio se mosti	rará en un segundo paso.			Jue 25 Jul 2024	
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VUELO DE SALIDA		VUELO DE VUELTA			Detalles de reserva	
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• If no flight was found for the date in question, a note appears in red and alternative dates are automatically presented at the next possible time. Click on the red arrows to change the date for the outbound and return flight. Confirm your selection by clicking on the boxes containing the flight times. If you are satisfied, click on "Continue" in the middle right.

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Información personal			
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Apellidos: *	Nombre: *		Duración total 01h40m, Vuelo directo
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• The website will now display a confirmation page with the exact amount. Click on "Continuar" again and you will land on the above page where you have to enter the

personal details of each passenger: Name, gender, date of birth, country of origin. Then select the type of your travel document (usually "Pasaporte"), enter your passport number and country of issue as well as the expiration date ("Fecha de caducidad") of your passport. Enter your name and surname again at the bottom, you can leave the last field empty if you only have one surname.

- Scroll further down. At the bottom of the page you now have to enter your e-mail address and two telephone numbers. First the mobile number, then the landline. If you only have one of the two, simply enter the same number twice or the number of your casa in Cuba. You can also enter this as an emergency contact in the last fields. Enter the country code in the pattern +53 (Cuba) or +49 (Germany) in the first, smaller field. Then click on "Continuar" as usual.
- Next, a window will appear where you can enter seat reservations, food and special requirements. As a rule, simply click on "Continuar" (if you take too long to book, you will have to start the process again from the beginning, the limits currently set may be a little tight for some people).

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• We're almost done! Confirm the terms and conditions below with a tick and click on "Continuar" again. Your address and e-mail address should already be entered on the payment page. Now click on "Continuar" again and you will finally land on the payment page, which is operated by the Spanish bank Unicaja (part of Santander).

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 At the end you have to enter your credit card number, its expiration date ("Caducidad") and the security code (CVV). Contrary to the information on the previous page, payment can only be made by credit card and not with PayPal however, both Visa and Mastercard are accepted (although you could only select Visa before, just take it for granted ^(a)). Then click on "Pagar" (pay) - and you're done. After successful payment, you will receive your eTicket within a few seconds as an email in plain text format in English. In addition to the connection, it also contains your 13-digit ticket number. The six-digit reservation code will be sent in a second email. Print out the e-mails or save them as a PDF. (<u>Cubaheute</u>)