

CUBA: travel, fake news and clickbait

written by Cheryl LaBash
July 14, 2025



Travel from the U.S. to Cuba is legal for many purposes that are not 'tourism.'

July 12 - It was not that long ago that the shiny new internet and social media world dangled before us visions of instant communications with friends and the possibility

of international collaboration for a better world.

Increasingly, it seems harder to sort through all the layers of ads and fake news. An example of how far the online world has become a political battleground can be seen in the topic of travel to Cuba.

Suddenly, previously unknown online travel sites are popping up with blaring and alarming false headlines that travel to Cuba could result in exorbitant fines. Not true!

The reality is that travel to Cuba is legal for many purposes that are not “tourism.” Every day, many regularly scheduled flights depart from U.S. airports carrying hundreds of travelers to Havana and other Cuban cities, just like anywhere else.

Check out this thorough YouTube video for details on the many ways YOU can travel



to Cuba:

Yes You Can Travel to Cuba.

But, in the online world, the headline often is the story. That false headline may be all a reader digests to scare them away.

Was the travel site just trying to get people to make their online publication look popular with clicks to find out the details? Maybe their online advertisers will pay more. There is also a very good chance that those scary headlines aren't clickbait to boost web viewers – they could be part of the media war against Cuba.

The media war is high on the State Department agenda, as demonstrated in a March

19 [Resumen article](#) about how news outlets squealed at USAID's initial budget cuts. (Funding has since been restored.) The article states:

"The Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) had an active grant approved in 2023 and valid until September 2025, for \$2 million, for 'democracy programs in Cuba for independent media and free flow of information.'

"According to USAID's own statistical sources, in 2023 the agency dedicated a budget of \$9.5 million to programs on Cuba. While in 2024, USAID graciously handed over a total of \$2.9 million to these dependent media outlets alone."

For fiscal year 2024, the U.S. government's Office of Cuba Broadcasting alone had a \$25 million budget.

Like all Caribbean islands, the tourism industry provides critical income for Cuba. Tourism underwrites the free healthcare, education, and other rights that Cuba guarantees to all its people, thereby maximizing human development to the best of its ability.

It isn't far-fetched to conclude that false headlines predicting astronomical fines for exercising the statutory right to travel to Cuba are another weapon in the media war.

