

Travel company starts offering direct flight from JFK to Cuba

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Cuba, long off limits to Americans, is about to become a little more accessible to New York-area travelers.

Starting Tuesday, a tour operator will begin offering what it says are the first regularly scheduled direct charter flights from New York City to Havana since President Obama restored diplomatic relations with Cuba in December.

Cuba Travel Services will offer seats on a Boeing 737-800 flown by Sun Country Airlines from JFK Airport to José Martí International Airport on Tuesdays. The jet carries up to 145 people.

The \$849 round-trip ticket covers airfare, Cuban medical insurance and US departure taxes, all necessary fees for what is still regulated travel.

With pure tourism still officially banned, Congress must approve a US-Cuba accord and new air-service agreements must be negotiated before commercial airlines can offer flights.