

## Ferocious Hurricane Paloma

Contributed by Shaun Robinson  
Sunday, 09 November 2008  
Last Updated Sunday, 09 November 2008

FEROCIOUS Hurricane Paloma roared across Cuba, Sunday, downing power lines, flooding the coast and forcing hundreds of thousands of people to evacuate on an island still recovering from two other devastating storms.

Early reports of damage were limited, but AP Newswire said the late-season storm toppled a major communications tower on the southern coast, interrupted electricity and phone service, and sent sea surges of up to 700 meters along the coast.

Paloma made landfall near Santa Cruz del Sur late Saturday as an extremely dangerous Category 4 storm on Saturday evening, but quickly weakened into a Category 2 storm with torrential rains and winds of 100 mph (155 kph), according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami.

It was expected to continue to lose strength as it moved across Cuba and was forecast to hit the central Bahamas by Sunday night or Monday.

At 1 a.m. EST Sunday, Paloma was located about 25 miles (45 kilometers) southeast of Camaguey. Once packing winds of 145 mph, the storm had slowed over land and was moving northeast at about 5 mph (7 kph).

Hurricane force winds reached up to 30 miles (45 km) from the storm's center and 5 to 10 inches of rainfall was predicted in central and eastern Cuba, with isolated totals of 20 inches possible.

The hurricane center said Paloma could bring parts of the island battering waves and a life-threatening storm surge of up to 23 feet (7 meters).

Elsewhere, Paloma knocked out power across much of Grand Cayman island, downing trees, flooding low-lying areas and ripping off roofs. But residents appeared unscathed as businesses reopened and electricity and water service were restored Saturday.

Paloma's fierce winds ripped the roofs off some buildings on Cayman Brac, to the east.

Your cruise is too big an investment to make without shopping around--prices can vary by 100's of pounds. CruiseCompete has over 300+ independent travel agents competing to offer you the best deal. It's quick, easy, and free!

Worried about paying too much for your next cruise, our US partner website CruiseCompete aims to eliminate that fear for your next cruise. Holidayinsiders.com's new web site helps you find the cruise you want, and then delivers competing quotes from multiple independent travel agencies. You then choose which agency you want to contact to book.

Royal Caribbean told Holidayinsiders.com that its ship the Grandeur of the Seas, which departed 30th October from Baltimore, will now not stop in Grand Cayman. Crystal Cruises altered its ship the Symphony called at the Turks rather than visit Cayman and Disney Magic, as late as yesterday revised its ports of call. Disney Magic left the US yesterday, 8th November is now calling twice at its own private island - Castaway Cay - rather than hurricane affected ports.