



# JOURNEY -TO- CUBA



SAN DIEGO  
DIPLOMACY  
COUNCIL

A People-to-People Educational  
Exchange & Cultural Diplomacy Tour  
March 1-8, 2019

Organized by Cuba Cultural Travel CST 2060914-40



# ITINERARY

(Subject to Change)

## DAY 1 (D)

## FRIDAY, MARCH 1

Participants will fly to Havana International Airport (HAV) utilizing their choice of commercial airline/route and return to the United States via Santa Clara International Airport (SNU). All airport transfers will be provided.

**TBD** Arrive HAV. Clear immigration and customs and claim baggage, a process that takes about an hour. You will be greeted by your tour leader, local Cuban guide and driver.

**Afternoon** Check-in to your **Casas Particulares** in the *Vedado* neighborhood. Private Bed & Breakfasts (*Casas Particulares*) are a new form of private enterprise in Cuba affording homeowners and individuals new employment opportunities, higher wages, increased Independence from the state, as well new ways to exchange with foreigners.

After check-in, you may explore the surrounding neighborhood of Vedado. During your stay you may consider a stroll along the *Malecón* or **La Rampa**. Vedado is home to the most iconic buildings of Havana's modernist movement including the **Habana Libre Hotel**, the **Coppelia Ice Cream Parlor**, the **Pabellon Cuba**, and the **Riviera Hotel**.

**6:00 pm** Our evening begins with a **Welcome Reception** and private musical performance. The band leader is **Professor Alberto Faya** who has been working as a musician, professor and researcher within the Cuban musical world since 1973, winning national awards in music and musicology. He will be joined by several young musicians who will treat us to a lively journey through the history of Cuban music.

**7:30 pm** Welcome dinner at **Paladar Atelier** in Vedado. Unlike State-run restaurants, Paladares are privately-owned and operated. This restaurant and the other paladares we will enjoy during our visit provide a window into the lifestyle of entrepreneurs who have converted their homes into restaurants under loosening governmental restrictions.

## DAY 2 (B,L,D)

## SATURDAY, MARCH 2

Breakfast and coffee is served every day by your Cuban hosts.

**9:30 am** **CUBA IN TRANSITION, THE EVOLVING SOCIALIST MODEL: Lecture by Rafael M. Hernandez.**

Rafael is a historian, author, and editor of *Temas*, a Cuban quarterly in the field of social sciences and humanities. *Temas* is considered the leading intellectual publication in Cuba and an important source of independent thought. Rafael has taught as a visiting professor at Harvard, Columbia, the University of Texas, the University of Puerto Rico; CIDE and ITAM in Mexico, and served as visiting scholar at the Wilson Center (Washington, DC) and other US and Latin American academic institutions. Rafael has published widely on Cuban and U.S. policies, inter-American relations, international security, migration, as well on Cuban culture and civil society.



**11:00 am** Depart for our walking tour of **UNESCO World Heritage Site of Havana Vieja**. Our Cuban guide will explain the history of the city as we view prominent buildings and plazas that played a prominent role in the development of Havana as one of the most important cities in the New World.

We see the **Plaza de la Catedral** and the **Plaza de Armas**, a scenic tree-lined plaza formerly at the center of influence in Cuba. It is surrounded by many of the most historic structures in Havana as well as important monuments.

We stroll through the **Plaza de San Francisco**, a cobbled plaza surrounded by buildings dating from the 18th century, dominated by the baroque **Iglesia and Convento de San Francisco** dating from 1719.

Interactive tour of **Escuela de Taller**, a teaching facility dedicated to the restoration of Havana Vieja. This project is preserving the architectural history and cultural heritage of the city by training young builders, woodworkers, and metal workers the skills needed to restore and preserve the authenticity of important buildings and landmarks. Our technical specialist, **Juan Jesús Gesen Musa**, will guide us through the facilities. We will be introduced to students and afforded time for dialogue with the apprentices.

Finally, we visit the **Plaza Vieja** to learn about the massive historic preservation program which began in this Plaza under the leadership of City Historian, Eusebio Leal.

**1:00 pm** Lunch at **Paladar Los Mercaderes**. This impeccably restored mansion is a welcome retreat from the bustling streets of the old city. Enjoy delightful tapas and a selection of seasonal specialties.

After lunch, time to connect with alumni of U.S. Department of State sponsored Exchange Programs.

**4:00 pm** Optional Salsa Class/demonstration at **Casa del Son**.

**8:00 pm** Tonight we visit the popular **Fabrica de Arte Cubano (FAC)** and enjoy dinner at **Arte Tierra** inside FAC's VIP Lounge. Once an old oil factory, this repurposed complex at FAC is without doubt the hippest place in Havana. Part Miami Art Basel, part Williamsburg warehouse party, the FAC is taking the Cuban arts scene by storm hosting viewings, performances and exhibitions of cinema, theatre, dance, music, literature, fashion, architecture, graphic design, photography, and the visual arts.

## DAY 3 (B,L)

## SUNDAY, MARCH 3

**9:30 am** **US-CUBA RELATIONS: Presentation by Camilo Garcia Lopez Trigo.**  
Camilo is a former diplomat and professor of International Relations at the **University of Havana**. In addition to his experience at the **Ministry of Foreign Relations** (*Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores*, or *MINREX*) and foreign diplomatic missions, Camilo has served leadership roles at the **Cuban Writers and Artists Union** (*Union de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba*, or *UNEAC*) as well the **National Center for Sex Education** (*Centro Nacional de Educación Sexual*, or *CENESEX*). Camilo will address the most current status of U.S.-Cuba relations. Tough questions are encouraged for a free and open dialogue.

**11:00 am** Depart for a private dance performance at the **Habana Compas** dance company in **Marianao**. This unique company fuses contemporary dance with a variety of percussive instruments.

**12:30 pm** **Lunch & Lectures** at **La Bonita** in Miramar.

### HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN CUBA

**Discussion** with **Cristina Escobar**, Cuban TV broadcaster and journalist. Cristina is an international commentator and one of the most recognized and respected journalists of her generation. She hosts a weekly Cuban television talk show "Once a Week" that focuses on a variety of topics including the arts, science, economics, politics and popular culture. Cristina has

extensively covered the recent changes in U.S.-Cuba relations from both sides of the Florida Straits. A very astute social and political observer, Christina shares her insights and thoughtful analysis of important current issues and Cuban society.

### **GENDER & SEX RELATIONS IN CUBA**

**Discussion** with professor **Martha Nuñez**, professor and researcher at the **University of Havana**. Martha was a visiting scholar at the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard in 2010, and her research has concentrated on women's employment in Cuba. She'll discuss with us many fascinating and unique aspects of Cuban society, the challenges faced by young families in Cuba, and issues of domestic rights, gender and socio-economic class.

### **3:00 pm RELIGION IN CUBA: Field Trip with religious scholar Elias Asef.**

For those interested, we visit the home of a **Babalao** priest and learn more about the distinctive **Santería** religious tradition from local scholar **Elias**. Time permitting, we see the **Callejon de Hamel**, a street full of shrines, diverse sculptural pieces, and colorful murals. This famous alleyway has been considered a public temple to the religion and African influences in Cuban culture.

*Dinner on your own. Suitable recommendations will be provided.*



## **DAY 4** (B,L)

## **MONDAY, MARCH 4**

- 9:00 am ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** - We visit the **Fundación Antonio Núñez Jiménez de la Naturaleza y el Hombre** (the "Nature Foundation"), a multi-disciplinary NGO focused on issues of the environment and sustainable development in Cuba. We will be hosted to a thought-provoking discussion by **Yociel Marrero**, Director of the Foundation's **Economic & Environmental Responsibility and Consumption** program, to learn about Cuba's environmental priorities and the activities of this unique environmental NGO.
- 10:30 am** Depart for **La Finca Marta** in the **Artemisa Province**. We will be greeted by scientist and farmer **Fernando Funes-Monzote**. This experimental farm embraces a movement to cultivate "agroecology" in Cuba, a method of sustainable farming. Without access to chemical fertilizers or pesticides, sustaining farming methods were born in the 1990's following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Previously, Cuba was dependent on a monoculture of sugar production and was able to exchange sugar, rum and tobacco with the Soviet bloc for consumer goods, food and farming materials including pesticides and fertilizers. As the Cuban government eased restrictions on private ownership and management of farmland, Fernando purchased his farmhouse in 2011 and through tremendous effort and inspiration has created a model sustainable farm ('La Finca Marta') attracting attention world-wide. La Finca Marta, having a reputation for producing the highest quality organic vegetables, now supplies produce to more than 20 of Havana's best paladares. We tour the farm and enjoy lunch with Fernando and his family.
- 3:00 pm** After lunch at Finca Marta, we continue to the pioneering eco-community of **Las Terrazas** in Sierra del Rosario. We will be greeted by a local guide who will educate us on the significance as well economic landscape of this revolutionary "green" project.
- In 1968, President **Fidel Castro** founded the green revolution. Architect **Osmany Cienfuegos** mobilized work brigades that created over 1300km of terraces of timber, fruits, ornamentals and vegetables. They carved 170km of roads through the mountains to build homes, schools, playgrounds, and clinics all surrounding the lake of San Juan.
- This biosphere came under UNESCO protection in 1984 due to the success of the reforestation project. It is now home to 117 bird species, including 12 that are endemic. During our visit, we see the ruins of a French **Coffee Plantation** built in 1801 by the French who escaped Haiti after the 1791 Haitian revolution.
- Next we stop at the famous **Café Maria's** for delightfully rich Cuban coffee.

We continue to **Hotel La Moka**, an ecological hotel with trees growing up through the balconies and ceiling. The income generated from tourism has funded the community library, the new Aire Libre café, a museum and the expansion of the Hotel with a second hotel in the pipeline. Cuba's recent economic reforms haven't yet reached Las Terrazas as private businesses such as Casas and restaurants are prohibited. We will learn about the budding private ownership laws that exist in Havana and the contrast with the laws and policies in Las Terrazas.

Time permitting, visit **Banos del San Juan** river for a swim and/or photo opportunity, or enjoy an optional **Zip Line Canopy tour** through the village of Las Terrazas.

**6:00pm** Return to Havana.

*Dinner on your own. Suitable recommendations will be provided.*

## DAY 5 (B,L,D)

## TUESDAY, MARCH 5

**9:00 am** **THE NEW CUBAN ECONOMY: Lecture by Juan Alejandro Triana.**

Juan is a faculty member of the Department of Economics at the **University of Havana**. His research and publications have focused on micro-financing in Cuba and Cuba-U.S. economic relations. Juan will explain the changing government policies regarding privately owned businesses, the changing public perception about making money and the growing interest in entrepreneurship. Other topics will include a short history of the Cuban economic model over the last 50 years and Cuba's present and future economic priorities.

**10:30 am** We visit the **Museum of Cuban Art**. We will be greeted by art historian **Aylet Ojeda**. The museum is dedicated exclusively to Cuban Art from the earliest days of colonialism to the latest generation of Cuban artists.

**12:00 pm** **Lecture & Lunch at Nazdarovie**, a Cuban-Soviet inspired restaurant on the Malécon. We will be greeted by **Gregory Biniowsky**, an attorney and political scientist from Canada who moved to Cuba over 20 years ago. In 2014, Gregory and his business partners opened Nazdarovie as a way to pay homage to the Soviet women who settled and established families in Cuba. They have created a space of nostalgia and memories for the thousands of Cubans who spent 'the best years of their youth' studying at universities in the USSR, a nostalgia which transcends politics and ideology.

Gregory has a diverse background involving a multitude of for-profit and nonprofit endeavors, including teaching at the **University of Havana**, doing consulting work for foreign companies exploring or setting up ventures in Cuba, and working as a consultant for the **Canadian Embassy** in Havana and the **United Nations** in Havana. Gregory presently works for the international law firm **Gowlings WLG** focusing on offering strategic advice, business intelligence, and venture options to prospective investors and companies, from around the world, who are looking at the Cuban market. Gregory is also the founding partner of **Havanada Consulting Inc.**, which is a non-profit consulting firm, specializing on giving advice to philanthropists, charitable foundations, and development NGOs who want to undertake or fund non-profit projects in Cuba. Gregory will share his personal insights into Cuban society, the evolving political landscape and the fast changing business and investment environment.

**2:30 pm** After lunch, you may choose between two activities.

**(A) HAVANA ART STUDIOS TOUR** - On this track we visit some of Cuba's most contemporary **private art studios** in Western Havana including the **cooperative 3/31** featuring contemporary visual arts in three different mediums (photography, painting, and drawing) and the collaborative artist studio: **The Merger**. The Merger recreates ubiquitous and mundane objects on a grand scale, presenting palatable socio-political metaphors to their viewers.



We also visit the whimsical fishing village of **Jaímanitas**, home of artist **José Fuster**, who has made a major contribution to rebuilding and decorating the neighborhood. Jaímanitas is now a unique work of public art where Fuster and his neighbors have decorated over 80 houses with colorful ornate murals and domes.

**(B) HEALTHCARE IN CUBA - Field Trip** with **Dr. Marcelino Feal**. Dr. Feal is Professor of General Surgery at the **University Hospital Calixto García**. We will learn about the history and current status of healthcare in Cuba and Cuba's role in providing healthcare services abroad as well the training of visiting physicians. In Cuba, healthcare is considered a basic human right and all medical services are provided free of charge to citizens. On this track we visit a local neighborhood *policlinico* which is the primary point of urgent and preventative care for Cubans, and a hospital, to learn about the delivery of emergency care services.

**5:30 pm** Return to Casas.

**7:00 pm** Havana farewell dinner at the famous **La Guarida** restaurant. One of the best restaurants in Havana and famous not only for its delectable dining, but also as the location for the film "Strawberry and Chocolate." It is housed on the third floor of a large, old town house carrying the charming ambience of the 1920's.

## DAY 6 (B,L,D)

## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6

**7:30 am** Check-out and depart for **Cienfuegos** and **Trinidad** via the **Bay of Pigs**. After an hour and a half, the scenery changes as we enter the **Zapata National Park** – Cuba's most important wetland area. The crystal clear waters of the Caribbean Sea will escort us a good part of the way. This is also where the famous "Bay of Pigs" invasion took place.

**9:30 am** Visit **Guamá's resort**, in the **Tesoro Lagoon** of the Zapata's Peninsula Nature Park, where we will find this successful crocodile colony run by Ministry of Fishing Industries, **Guamá Crocodile Colony**.

**10:30 am** Visit the **Playa Giron Museum**. The Museum showcases machine guns, mortars, rocket launchers, as well as a tank and airplane complimented by displays of information about the failed invasion of Cuba by Cuban exiles and the CIA.

Visit to Playa Giron and one of Cuba's best spots for snorkeling and scuba diving, **Punta Perdiz** or **Caleta Buena**. We enjoy lunch and a bit of free time before we depart for Cienfuegos.

**1:00 pm** Depart for **Cienfuegos** or **La Perla del Sur** (the Pearl of the South), a villa settled by French immigrants from Bordeaux and Louisiana in the early 1800s and named after José Cienfuegos, Captain General of Cuba (1816-19).

**2:30 pm** Visit downtown **Cienfuegos**, the main square, **Paseo del Prado** and the **Terry Thomas Theatre**.

Before continuing our drive to Trinidad, we visit the **Palacio Del Valle**, the former home of trader Celestino Caceres. This architectural jewel originated as a private residence and later passed into the Valle family who added to it in a Mughal style with carved floral motifs, a stunning Carrara marble staircase, cupped arches, bulbous domes and delicate arabesques.

**5:30 pm** Check-in to your **B&B** in **Trinidad**.

**8:00 pm** Tonight we enjoy dinner with our Cuban hosts in Trinidad.

*Optional: After dinner, enjoy live music performed every night in Trinidad's Main Square.*

## DAY 7 (B,L,D)

## THURSDAY, MARCH 7

**9:00 am** Today, make sure to wear comfortable walking shoes! This morning we head for the Guanayara Park that hosts the **Centinelas del Río Melodioso Trail**. Visit a coffee plantation along the **Río Melodioso** (Melodic River) and the **El Rocío waterfall**. Time permitting, you can swim in a cool natural pool if you feel inclined!

Before returning to old town Trinidad, we visit el **Valle de los Ingenios** (valley of the sugar mills), the most important sugar producing region during colonial times and now declared a UNESCO Cultural Heritage Site.





We continue to **Manaca Iznaga** sugar plantation, a quaint village hacienda famous for its splendid tower, built in 1835-45 by Alejo Maria del Carmen e Iznaga, once one of the wealthiest sugar barons in Cuba.

**1:00 pm** Group lunch at **Restaurant Cubita Santander**.

After lunch, brief walking tour of Trinidad's Historical Center. On this walk we visit the **Casa de los Sanchez Iznaga**.

This afternoon enjoy free time to explore the crafts markets in Trinidad and the many individual shops where the artisans of this area show their wares. Trinidad is particularly known for its beautiful linens and guayabera shirts.

Optional visit to the artist studio of **Alejandro Lopez Bastida** and well-known landscaper **Carlos Mata**.

**5:30 pm** Return to your B&B.

**8:00 pm** Farewell dinner at **Sol Ananda** in a beautifully restored 18th Century mansion on the Plaza Mayor.

## DAY 8 (B)

## FRIDAY, MARCH 8

**7:30 am** Check-out and depart for **Santa Clara**.

**10:00 am** We visit the **Che Guevara Mausoleum** and Ernesto Guevara Sculptural Complex. The popular revolutionary was buried here with full military honors in 1997 after his remains were discovered in Bolivia and returned to Cuba. We visit the museum dedicated to Che's life and the eternal flame lit by Fidel Castro in his memory.

**11:30 am** Check-in at **Santa Clara Abel Santamaria International Airport (SNU)**. \*

**1:30 pm** **jetBlue 388** departs SNU for Fort Lauderdale (FLL).

**2:50 pm** Arrive FLL. Catch connecting flights home.

\* Tips may be given to your guide and driver at this time. Recommended amount is 7-10CUC per person per day for guide; and 5-7CUC per person per day for driver.

**BE SURE TO COLLECT YOUR BELONGINGS FROM THE SAFE DEPOSIT BOX IN YOUR ROOM**

- ✓ **PASSPORT**
- ✓ **VISA**
- ✓ **OFAC LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION**

\* Please note: This is a "working" itinerary. There may be some changes, additions and/or subtractions to the final itinerary. All venues and artist's studios are subject to final confirmations. Be assured any changes made will be done to enhance the total program as well as to promote smooth operation of the tour.



# TRIP COST

## 8 DAYS AND 7 NIGHTS

### UPSCALE-LUXURY CASA PARTICULAR (B&B)

DOUBLE, PER PERSON: \$3,625

SINGLE OCCUPANCY: \$4,185

### STANDARD CASA PARTICULAR (B&B)

DOUBLE, PER PERSON: \$3,095

SINGLE OCCUPANCY: \$3,395

## CUSTOM DESIGNED PROGRAM INCLUDES

- Itinerary design and coordination
- Compliance with US Treasury Department
- Accommodations as selected
- All ground transportation
- Full time private tour escort
- Daily breakfast in Cuba
- Meals as listed in itinerary (including tips)
- Entrance fees to museums etc.
- Bottled water on bus and in room
- Gratuities for restaurants, porters
- Cuban Tourist Card/Visa

## EXCLUDES

- Airfare to/from Cuba and associated fees
- Airline baggage fees
- Gratuities for guide and driver
- Individualized hotel expenses (mini bar, room service, laundry fees, etc)
- Trip cancellation insurance