



***Cuba Educational Travel
Havana – Cienfuegos – Pinar del Rio Educational Trip
Draft
November 5-13, 2013***

Day 1

***** Arrive in Miami and check-in at the Crowne Plaza Hotel the night before**

***** Depart Miami at 10 am, arriving in Cienfuegos at 11 am**

Proceed to the Hotel Union, Cienfuegos' finest hotel, located in the city's center

Following check-in we will do a quick **overview of agenda**, discussion of current events, what you need to know about the trip to get everyone up to speed about our upcoming week in Cuba

Lunch at Palacio del Valle restaurant. This stunning palace, completed in 1917 by a sugar merchant, was once a casino and is now the home of a picturesque restaurant with a sea view. **Cuba overview briefing by Collin Laverty**, Cuba Educational Travel President

Walking tour of historic center of Cienfuegos led by the City Historian's office

Afternoon visit to the **Maroya Gallery** to meet with owner Miguel Ángel Rodríguez and local artists who have organized and promoted their art internationally through this community gallery. Discussion with young artists about their work and their plans and visions for the future

Music and cocktails with the local chapter of UNEAC, the National Union of Artists and Writers of Cuba, featuring an **interactive discussion** with photographers, musicians and other locals, followed by live music and dance

Dinner as a group at a local paladar

Day 2

Day trip to **Trinidad**, a UNESCO world heritage site, known for its cobble stoned streets, pastel colored homes and small-town feel

City Tour with **Nancy Benítez**, a local architect, historian and restoration specialist

Conversation with artist Yami Martínez at her gallery, La Casa de los Conspiradores. Yami has achieved international recognition for her art depicting the strains of life on Cuban women. She will discuss her art, as well as her experiences running both a gallery and a "casa particular" (bed and breakfast) out of her home.



Visit to la **Casa de la Trova** and the **Benito Ortiz gallery**, which houses the work of self-trained local artists.

Dinner at **Sol y Son**, a local paladar known for its fresh fish and live music

Day 3

Food, Nutrition and purchasing power in Cuba: The group will visit the home(s) of average Cubans to learn about the ration card, which supplies them with a monthly ration of food and hygiene products, as well as living conditions, salaries and other daily life issues. The group will then be led by the family to local markets to see the bodega, where ration products are received, the dollar stores, where products are purchased in hard currency, and the various agricultural markets. The activity will allow the group to get a good sense of living conditions, purchasing power and other aspects of daily life on the island.

Visit a primary school to learn about the Cuban education system, with an opportunity to interact with students and professors

Depart for Havana – about 4 hours with stops along the way and lunch en route

Check-in at the Hotel Telegrafo, located in the heart of the Old City and just blocks from Obispo Street, Plaza Vieja, and other attractions

Dinner discussion with journalist Marc Frank. The longest serving foreign correspondent in Cuba, Frank writes for Reuters, the Financial Times and the Economist, and is an authority on the Cuban economy. Frank will offer insight into important economic, political and social issues on the island and share colorful stories about being a reporter in Cuba.

Day 4

Walking tour of the Old City

Wander through the **Plaza Vieja**, the oldest plaza in Havana, dating from the 16th century.

See 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.

Visit **Plaza de la Catedral** and the Catedral de San Cristóbal de La Habana.

Visit 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.

Visit Palacio de los Capitanes Generales. The palace currently houses the Museo de la Ciudad and was the former residence of the Spanish Captains. Visit the Castillo de la Real Fuerza, a massive fortress built between 1558 and 1577.

Lunch at Doña Eutimia paladar. Famous for its *ropa vieja* and frozen mojitos, this recently opened paladar made Newsweek Magazine's top 100 restaurants in the world in 2012



Visit to **la Factoría Gallery** for a discussion with artists and explanation of the gallery's latest edition, followed by a visit to **Fototeca**, the leading photographic guild in Cuba and the most prestigious venue for showcasing work from leading Cuban photographers.

Visit to the Museum of Cuban Art. We will be accompanied by **Nelson Herrera**, an art historian, who will provide an overview of Cuban art and artists over the last 4 centuries.

Visit to the Liza Alfonso Academy, a women-led dance company and school for local youth, specializing in flamenco dance. We will watch a rehearsal of the adolescent dance group, and sit with the dancers afterward to discuss how they came to join the school and the impact it has had on them.

Dinner at Paladar Atelier with English-speaking graduate students from the University of Havana in the fields of economics, international relations and law. Students will offer their opinion about everything from the higher education system to the country's future to the delicate relationship with the United States. **Atelier** is equally known for its atmosphere and exquisite cuisine. The lighting and textures of the house, coupled with walls adorned in modern art, create a cozy, romantic setting. The chef boasts international experience, serving a range of cuisine from traditional Cuban dishes, Paella, and seafood.

Day 5

Morning discussion with Carlos Alzugaray, former Cuban diplomat and expert on U.S. – Cuba relations, to learn about the bilateral relationship and Cuban foreign policy

Visit to the United States Interests Section (USINT), which represents U.S. interests in Cuba. The head of the mission will speak to us about the functionary role of the USINT, current events in Cuba, U.S. policy toward Cuba and bilateral relations.

Lunch and fabulous view at La Torre Restaurant, which boasts the highest view point in Havana. Located in the city's tallest building the panoramic view allows you to see all of Havana. The 36-storey Focsa structure was once called home to thousands of Russian bureaucrats, who were stationed here in the post-Revolutionary years.

Take pedestrian ferry across Havana Bay to the community of Regla, a working-class, Afro-Cuban community with a thriving local culture. Regla is especially known for its strong ties to Santería and other Afro-Cuban religions. We will have a **discussion with Magia López and Alexey Rodriguez of the jazz duo Obsesión** about their experiences and views on race and gender equality in Cuba.

Visit Café Madrigal for late afternoon cocktails and tapas. Café Madrigal, owned and run by film director Rafael Rosales, is housed in a beautiful colonial mansion with the walls lined with captivating art work. We will be joined by musician **Frank Delgado**, renowned singer and songwriter, for a discussion about the nueva trova movement in Cuba, followed by a musical performance

Day 6



Depart for **Pinar del Rio**, the western-most province, famous for its rich soil, tobacco production and spectacular scenery

Visit a neighborhood health clinic to learn about the health care system. We will receive a tour of a typical neighborhood health clinic and have the chance to ask questions of doctors, nurses and patients

Stop at **las terrazas national forest** on the way for an overview of conservation programs and a discussion with local residents in the area. We will enjoy a nice meal in the beautiful nature reserve.

Following lunch we will as a **visit a local farm** to learn about Cuban agriculture and tobacco production, and then visit a local **community project for underprivileged children**

Day 7

Driving tour with Dr. Miguel Coyula, who will take us on a visit of modern architecture in Western Havana. Few people realize the important place Havana holds as a treasure trove of 20th Century architecture. Coyula will highlight some of the best examples to be found in this incredibly diverse area of the city, including the Christopher Colon Cemetery & University of Havana.

Enjoy a traditional Cuban lunch overlooking the Straits of Florida at the Hotel Nacional, Cuba's most famous hotel, with a great view of the Havana sea wall and the old Spanish fortress. Served family style, the rice, beans and roasted chicken are delicious and a perfect match with live music and a beautiful ambiance.

Visit to La Finca Vigía. Formerly the home of Ernest Hemingway, today it still houses his expansive collection of books. It was here where he wrote two of his most celebrated novels: For Whom the Bell Tolls and The Old Man and the Sea.

Drive to the picturesque fishing village of Cojimar. Ernest Hemingway loved this little town. He kept his boat, El Pilar, in harbor of Cojimar, and he used this village setting for his story The Old Man and the Sea, which won him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954.

Farwell dinner at La Guarida paladar, 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 ambiance of the 1920s.

Day 8

Check-out of hotel and depart for airport, en route we will:

- Visit the **Christopher Colon Cemetery**, one of the oldest and most prestigious cemeteries in Latin America.
- Stop at the **Plaza de Revolution** (Revolutionary Square), where Cubans gather for political acts and to pay homage to the country's leaders

***** Depart Havana at 1 pm, arriving in Miami at 2 pm**