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## SMALL GROUP - CUSTOM CUBA TOUR

Feb: 23<sup>rd</sup> – March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 (9 days, 8 nights)



**TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:** Explore Old Havana, Trinidad, and Cienfuegos on walking tours, enjoy private concerts, ride in classic cars, visit the Hemingway home, Bay of Pigs, and a tobacco farm in the countryside, eat at the top *paladares*, and more!

### Day 1 - USA- Havana / Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023

- Arrive at Jose Marti International Airport (HAV)
- Look for your tour leader in the arrival area holding a sign with your name
- Head to lodging for check-in and orientation
- Experience a ride in a classic convertible car around Havana City

Havana is beloved by American visitors with its collection of thousands of vintage American cars, manufactured before the Revolution and subsequent US embargo. In the absence of automobile imports, these living relics are preserved by Cuban mechanics or improvised fixes by the owners themselves. Experience an hour in a classic convertible Chevy, Ford or Oldsmobile!

- Welcome dinner at Al Carbon *paladar* (included)
- Nighttime suggestion: Enjoy a Buena Vista Social Club style show at El Guajirito



## Day 2 - Havana / Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- Visit Old Havana and learn about Havana's world-renowned UNESCO heritage designated architecture on an expertly guided walking tour (2 hrs)

There is no better introduction to Havana than a walk through Old Havana, where the streets are bustling with life. On this walk you will explore Old Havana's five major plazas and see the interiors of cathedrals and other important buildings. UNESCO designated Old Havana as a world heritage site in 1982. Although today Havana is a sprawling metropolis of more than two million people, the old center retains an interesting mix of Baroque and neoclassical monuments, beautiful balconies and courtyards.



- Lunch at Esto no es un *Cafe paladar*
- Enjoy a private performance with one of Cuba's top professional music groups
- Visit the Taller de La Gráfica lithograph collective

Located in the heart of the old city, Taller de La Gráfica de la Habana is one of Havana's most revered artistic attractions, featuring lithograph artists who create and sell their own experimental work on site. Visitors learn about the collective's equipment and techniques from the artists themselves and can purchase art directly from the Taller.

- Nightlife suggestion: Visit the Cuban Art Factory

### Day 3- Havana / Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- Visit Fusterlandia, the home, gallery, & mosaic art neighborhood of Jose Fuster.

Sometimes referred to as the Picasso of the Caribbean. Inspired by works he saw by Gaudí in Spain and Brancusi in Romania, this self taught artist devoted himself to creating a more colorful and creative atmosphere for himself and his neighbors. The result is unlike anything you have ever seen!



- Lunch at Casa Mia *paladar*
- Visit Ernest Hemingway's quirky estate, Finca Vigía

Peer into the home of celebrated novelist Ernest Hemingway, where the artist created "The Old Man and the Sea" and "For Whom the Bell Tolls." Take a guided tour to make sense of the writer's life and see his collection of books, trophies, and other memorabilia. Outside you'll be able to visit the gardens and see Hemingway's boat Pilar on display.

- Visit the historic Hotel Nacional

The upscale 457-room Hotel Nacional de Cuba has a fascinating and storied history, ranging from a major mafia meeting in the '40s that took place on-site to tunnels in the gardens used during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The common spaces, including the lobby and the ocean-view gardens, are gorgeous, casting light on Havana's golden age of Cuban hospitality, nightlife and entertainment.

- Dinner at El del Frente *paladar* (included)



#### Day 4- Havana – Bay of Pigs – Cienfuegos - Trinidad / Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- Head to Bay of Pigs and visit the Bay of Pigs Museum (3 hrs drive)
- Visit Cienfuegos, a small stunning city known for its French architecture



- Lunch at Camila's *paladar*
- Enjoy a walking tour of the Punta Gorda neighborhood along the water
- Head to Trinidad (1 hour drive) and check into lodging
- Dinner at El Dorado *paladar* (included)
- Nighttime suggestion: Visit the Casa de La Trova, a great place to experience traditional Cuban music and dance

#### Day 5 - Trinidad / Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- Take a city tour of Trinidad with a local expert and become acquainted with its 500-year-old UNESCO designated historical sites (around 2 hours of walking)
- Lunch at Sol Ananda *paladar*
- Hike to a waterfall and go swimming OR visit the beach





### Day 6 - Trinidad- Havana / Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- Travel back to Havana (3.5 hours drive)
- Lunch at ChaChaCha *paladar*
- Enjoy a performance by Havana Compás Dance troupe

Cuba's Spanish and African roots are on display with this popular female group, which merges flamenco style dance with Afro-Cuban rhythms. Dancers use sticks, castanets, heels, flip flops, keys, chequerés and chairs to create a unique percussive aesthetic.

- Check back into your lodging

### Day 7- Havana – Pinar del Rio & Viñales / Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

- Travel to the countryside (around 2 hours)
- Meet a farmer in Cuba's famed tobacco fields

Cuba's lush Western province is among the most fertile grounds for growing tobacco in the world. On a tour of the Montesino tobacco farm you will learn about the tobacco growing process, enjoy a cigar rolling demonstration, and meet the fourth generation farmers responsible for some of the most famous cigars in the world. You will also enjoy the stunning scenery of this region, known for its distinct hills called mogotes.



- Enjoy a delicious organic farm to table lunch at “Patio Pelegrín”

Often called the secret garden, Patio Pelegrín is not only an organic farm but also a community hub for dance, literature, debate, music, and theater for local residents to cultivate their artistic and intellectual interests.



#### **Day 8- Havana / Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>**

- Experience a cooking demonstration and lunch at one of Havana’s best restaurants

This adventure in Cuban daily living and cooking begins in the morning, when an expert cook gives you an introduction to Cuban cuisine and its origins. After a tour of the gardens and farm (on site) you will watch a demonstration of how to prepare local dishes such as ropa vieja (shredded beef), lobster and shrimp enchilado (in tomato sauce). You will also learn how to prepare a Cuban mojito.

- Visit San Jose Craft Market for Cuban art and souvenir shopping
- Farewell dinner at Yarini *paladar*

#### **Day 9- Havana - USA / Friday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023**

- Head to Jose Martí Airport for check in (airport transfer included)
- Adios Cuba!





***\*\*Our mission at Cultural Island Travel is to immerse you in this passionate culture and experience the real Cuba\*\****

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- Alcoholic beverages are not included, however, typically each included meal will include one beverage
- Nighttime activities are typically for people 18 and over

***This itinerary is subject to change. In-country programming is customized for each group to maximize your cultural experience. To maintain authenticity, many of the places we visit are not tourist destinations and are not always available. Our programs are intended to provide meaningful interaction with the Cuban people under the “Support for the Cuban people” category. These programs require mandatory participation under our license by the U.S. Department of Treasury.***