



CUBA **Embrace the People** **Discover the Culture**

January 23-29, 2024
7 Days / 6 Nights



WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL
OF GREATER HOUSTON
Global Perspectives, Local Conversations



ITINERARY

DAY 1	Leave Houston for Havana, Cuba. Arrival / Havana
DAY 2	Old Havana sightseeing / Havana
DAY 3	Visits in Havana / Havana
DAY 4	Excursion to Las Terrazas / Viñales
DAY 5	Visits in Viñales. Drive back to Havana / Havana
DAY 6	Visit Cojimar & Lawton / Havana
DAY 7	Departure

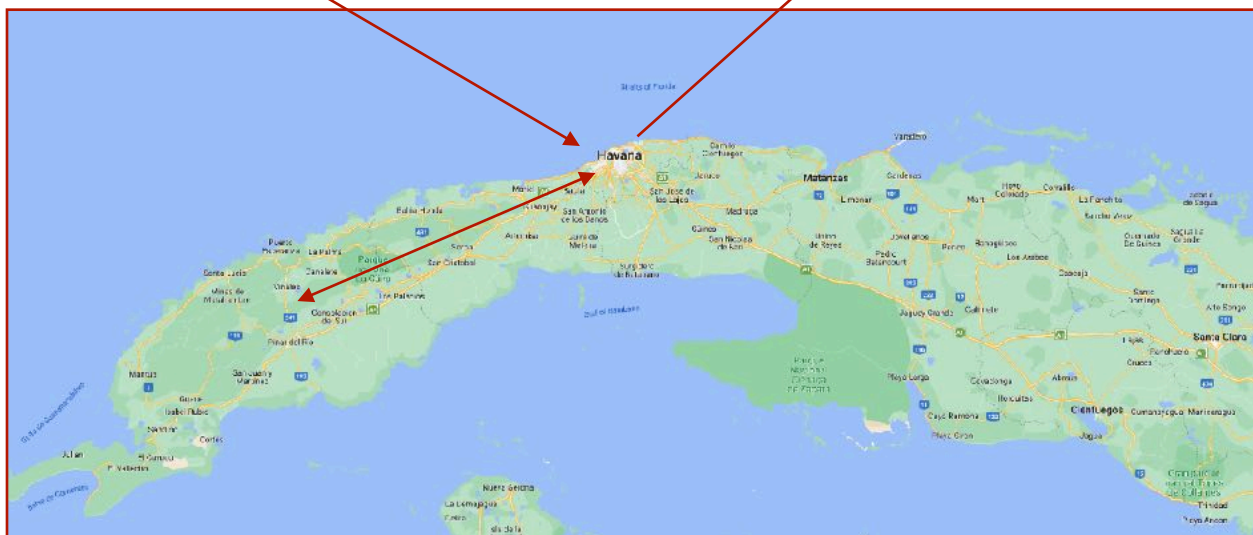


Cuba

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Cuba Highlights:

- *Architecture of Old Havana.*
 - *See Cuban artists at work.*
 - *Cojimar, setting for Hemingway's novel.*
 - *Finca Vigia, Hemingway's house-museum.*
 - *Meet with Cuba's growing private sector.*
 - *Cuban music & dance.*
 - *Learn about tobacco farming in Viñales*
 - *Visit of Fabrica de Arte Cubano.*
 - *Take a ride in classic convertibles.*
 - *Experience Cuban acrobatics.*
- And more...*





INCLUDED

Round-trip airfare.

Visa fees for all passengers except those born in Cuba, who will have to arrange visas through the Cuban Embassy or visa service (we will provide information on how to arrange).

**U.S. Treasury Department (OFAC) License Certification and Authorization letter.
Health insurance in Cuba (mandatory requirement of the Cuban Government).**

Arrival and departure transfers with meeting and assistance.

All ground transportation in appropriately sized vehicles.

Accommodations and breakfast daily in accommodations.

Lunch and dinner daily in carefully selected paladars.

Glass of beer or wine included at welcome and farewell dinners.

Tropicana show.

Comprehensive educational exchange program including entrance fees.

Dedicated English speaking guide throughout.

NOT INCLUDED

Drinks with included meals, except tea or coffee for breakfast.

Gratuities for guide & driver.

Personal expenditures like phone calls, laundry, medical expenses.

Travel insurance.



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INCLUDED FLIGHTS

Included flights are on United Airlines:

Tue, Jan 23	Houston to Havana
UA 6306	dep: 10:20 am / arr: 2:25 pm

Mon, Jan 29	Havana to Houston
UA 6307	dep: 3:30 pm / arr: 5:58 pm

Flights are operated by Mesa Airlines dba as United Express.

Economy class airfare, taxes, surcharges and fees are included in the tour cost.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations will be at privately owned “casas particulares” which offer rooms with a/c, with private facilities, breakfast and meal services.

These private enterprises offer superior alternatives to state owned hotels which most of the time lack the amenities that they advertise and which are sanctioned by US Treasury Department.





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PROGRAM DETAILS

DAY 1

Tue, Jan 23 - Houston - Havana

We will depart Houston for Havana.

Upon arrival, we will be welcomed by our guide and driver. Then we will be transferred to our accommodations.

Rest of the day at leisure.

In the evening, welcome dinner at a local “paladar.”

Overnight in Havana

Meals: B-D

Havana is the capital and largest city of Cuba. Havana is the country's main port and leading commercial center. The city has a population of 2.1 million inhabitants.

The city of Havana was founded by the Spanish in the 16th century, it served as a springboard for the Spanish conquest of the Americas becoming a stopping point for Spanish galleons returning to Spain. Philip II of Spain granted Havana the title of capital in 1592. Walls as well as forts were built to protect the city.

The sinking of the U.S. battleship Maine in Havana's harbor in 1898 was the immediate cause of the Spanish–American War.

Contemporary Havana can essentially be described as three cities in one: Old Havana, Vedado and the newer suburban districts.

In Cuba a **Paladar** is a family-run restaurant. The name comes from a Spanish word for "palate." Paladares serve as a counterpart to state-run restaurants for tourists seeking a more vivid interaction with Cuban reality, and looking for homemade Cuban food.



DAY 2	Wed, Jan 24 - Old Havana
	<p>Our full day in Old Havana:</p> <p>We will walk through the historic center, with its exceptional architecture, visit the used booksellers market, Hotel Ambos Mundos which was Ernest Hemingway's first home in Havana, see various private enterprises to engage with Cuba's growing private sector.</p> <p>We will also visit Castillo de la Real Fuerza, which is a bastion fort on the western side of the Havana harbor. It was built in 16th century to defend against pirate attacks.</p> <p>We will meet with staff at Clandestina, Cuba's first online clothing retailer and renowned design shop.</p> <p>After lunch we will visit an artist's private studio and step into Cuba's world of dance with a private demonstration and lesson. Then, we will walk through Havana's grand San Rafael Boulevard and visit with private business owners.</p> <p>In the evening dinner at a local paladar. Tonight we will enjoy a show at the famous Tropicana club.</p> <p>Overnight in Havana Meals: B-L-D</p>

La Habana Vieja (Old Havana), declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1982, is the historic center of the city of Havana. It is formed by a harbor and the official center, the Plaza de Armas. There you will find all kinds of picturesque monuments, fortresses, churches, palaces, etc. It is full of authentic architectural treasures from different periods and offers one of the most comprehensive collections of urban buildings in all America. This area of the city alone is home to more than a thousand buildings of historical importance with various examples of distinguished architecture ranging from Baroque to Art Deco.



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DAY 3

Thu, Jan 25 - A Day in Havana

This morning, after stopping by a local farmer's market, we will visit Callejon de Hamel, the wonderful alley entirely devoted to Afro-Cuban culture from street art to sculpture to music.

After lunch, we will visit the famous community mosaic project known as "Fusterlandia." Then we will experience the future of Cuban acrobatics with the children's community project Angeles del Futuro.

After dinner at a local paladar, we will visit Fabrica de Arte Cubano for drinks and art exhibit.

Overnight in Havana

Meals: B-L-D

Fabrica de Arte Cubano is an art gallery and club in Havana. The Fábrica's gallery and stage were established inside of a former cooking oil factory, and has since gained notoriety as one of Havana's premier nightclubs and art galas. Several news outlets have described the factory as a symbol of Cuba's accelerating opening to the world.



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DAY 4

Fri, Jan 26 - Las Terrazas - Viñales

Today we will have a full day trip to the Las Terrazas. In our trip, we will visit the community, coffee shop, coffee ruins and enjoy a traditional lunch.

After our visits, we will continue to the town of Viñales.

Overnight in Viñales

Meals: B-L-D

The **Las Terrazas** project arose at the end of the sixties with the purpose of recovering an area that had been destroyed by the intensive cultivation of coffee in the 19th century, so much so that, in an area of 5000 hectares, millions of trees were planted, terraces were dug for cultivation and a small town was built following guidelines that respect nature. Although the interesting ruins of the old coffee plantations can still be seen here and there, their coffee past is today history, as this environment has been reborn as a natural paradise



DAY 5	Sat, Jan 27 - Viñales - Havana
	<p>Today we will be in and around Viñales.</p> <p>We will tour through a farm to learn about different stages of growing and harvesting of famous Cuban tobacco.</p> <p>We will visit the Mural de la Prehistoria, enjoying a Cuban cocktail after our walking tour. After a lunch at a local farmhouse, we will have some time to explore the town of Viñales on our own.</p> <p>After our visits, we will drive back to Havana. On the way, we will have a brief stop at the viewpoint of the Jazmines to enjoy the beautiful view of the valley.</p> <p>Dinner will be in Havana.</p> <p>Overnight in Havana</p> <p>Meals: B-L-D</p>

Viñales is a town and municipality in the north-central Pinar del Río Province of Cuba. The town consists mostly of one-story wooden houses with porches. The municipality is dominated by low mountain ranges of the Cordillera de Guaniguanico such as Sierra de los Órganos. Typical outcrops known as mogotes complete the karstic character of the landscape.

The town and the **Viñales Valley** immediately to the north were made a UNESCO World Heritage Site in November 1999 for the karst landscape and traditional agriculture as well as vernacular architecture, crafts and music.

Viñales is an agricultural area, where crops of fruit, vegetables, coffee and especially tobacco are grown by traditional methods. Fishing is also an important part of the area's economy.



DAY 6

Sun, Jan 28 - Cojimar & Lawton - Havana

In the morning, we will travel to Cojimar, the local fishing village that was the setting for Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*.

We will participate in a traditional Cuban cooking experience, from gathering ingredients from a local organic garden to putting them in use in the kitchen (and bar.)

Then we will visit Finca Vigia, Hemingway's house-museum, and an inspiring community project, Muraleando.

We will also stop at the independent Artisan's Market.

Then comes the time we take a ride in classic American convertible cars for a tour of picturesque Havana.

Overnight in Havana

Meals: B-L-D

Cojimar is a small fishing town located seven kilometers to the east of Havana. This town is famous for being the setting of Hemingway's most famous novel: "*The Old Man and the Sea*," which allowed him to be awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1954. In the novel, the Old Man docked the boat "El Pilar" here during the 40s and 50s. This town was established in the 17th century in the mouth of the river of same name. In 1762, it was here where the British army landed in its conquest of Havana.

Created in 2001 by the artist Manuel Diaz Baldrich, **Muraleando** has transformed the neighborhood into an art gallery. Children from the community and visitors to the project attend classes in pottery, painting, music, dance and engraving aimed at building and developing their artistic skills. This a singular cultural experience and a unique look into Cuban culture, art, food and its way of life.



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DAY 7

Mon, Jan 29 - Departure

After a leisurely morning, we will be transferred to the airport to fly back home.

Contact Us

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