

**A Culture of Arts in Cuba**

**December 11-20, 2017**

Dec. 11 Welcome to Cuba

Please book your flight to arrive by 2pm. 1 group transfer will be provided at the most convenient time for arrivals. If you are not scheduled to arrive by 2pm or if you cannot be included in the transfer, you will take a taxi to the first hotel to meet up with the group.

**Walking tour of Old Havana**. Here we will visit the four major historic plazas. You will learn about the history in Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here we will have our welcome lunch at a local paladar, a privately operated restaurant (the San Cristobal is requested).

Check into our hotel with a **Welcome Cocktail** in the Historic Bar.

Welcome Dinner at San Cristobal Paladar.

Eve Free for local music- Jazz: Check out the "*La Zorra y El Cuervo*”  a short walk from your hotel.                     (L, D)

Dec. 12 Orientation to Cuba Today

Morning: **Orientation Meeting** and then we have **a briefing by Miguel Coyula**, a  leading architect in Cuba today for a briefing on the *History and Development of the Capital.*

Exchange with a community arts project called the **El Muraleando.** Learn how a culture of arts has rejuvenated a community.

Lunch at El Ajbe Restaurant

Afternoon:  **Visit with Malpaso Dance Company**

**Then enjoy a private Exchange with Cuban musicians** to discuss Music and Life in Cuba. Learn how musicians are trained and what life is like to live as a professional musician.  Then enjoy a private concert with **Grupo Mezcla** (3-5pm)

Dinner free for local paladares, privately owned restaurants. We however will make a group reservation during all the evenings as an option for the group to dine together.

Eve Free for exploration Havana’s nightlife and music, like the ***Fabrica del Arte***  ( B, L)

Dec. 13th  Excursion to Matanzas Province

 After breakfast we depart for the province of Matanzas, just to the east of Havana. Matanzas known for itsAfroCuban culture and legacy is called the “City of Bridges” or the Athens of Cuba”. Our highlights of our full excursion are many. We stop at the **Bacunayagua Bridge** on way to Matanzas town where we will visit a book making work shop the **Ediciones Vigia** to exchange with local artists and writers. Next we are off to learn about the history of the region at the **Castillo de San Severino** as we walk through this fort and learn about the Slave Route and the legacy of slavery in Cuba. This fort was decared a National Monument in 1978 and is a UNESCO World Heritage site. We will request a presentation by the performance arts group,  **Afrocuba (requested).** Our afternoon finds us in the resort town of **Varadero**. Here we will have time for personal exploration on the beach. You will learn about the booming tourist economy here firsthand. In the evening we return to Havana. (B, L)

Dec. 14

Late Morning          This morning we will be briefed by with a representative from the **Yoruba Association** to discuss Santeria and Afro-Cuban religion in Cuba then enjoy some time to continue our city tour of other sites in Havana.

Then visit to the **Rosario Cardenas Contemporary Dance Company.**

Lunch follows in Old Havana of one of Hemingway’s old dives, the Bodeguita del Medio.

Afternoon

 Dinner on own and Evening to enjoy local, cultural, and musical activities (B, L)

Dec. 15

Morning  We start our day with a guided tour of the **Bellas Artes Musuem** to learn about important contemporary artists.

After lunch in Old Havana we will visit to an **Artist Studio** (the well known Afro Cuban artist Choco will be requested)  and  the **Graffic Artists Workshop.** Here we will have time to exchange with local artists.

Our highlight this afternoon is an exchange at **Prodanza.** Here we will learn about education in the arts through the window of dance. Prodanza is one of Cuba’s most important ballet schools.   Donations of shoes and leotards are appreciated here. Afterwards we will learn about the time intensive labor behind another of Cuba’s favorite exports, the Cigar, as we tour a Cigar Factory in Havana.

 Dinner  and  enjoy a private concert organized by a young jazz fusion quartet (Julio Diaz and Penta jazz) (B,L)

Dec. 16th Promotion of the Arts within and outside of  Cuba

Our day starts with a brief tour around **ISA, the Fine Arts School.** Then we are off for a meeting with **ARTEX** to learn about the promotion of Cuban music around the globe.

After lunch we will have a special opportunity to meet with the **film maker , Gloria Rolando.** She will share her experience as an artist and discuss *Race and Gender in Cuban Film* and address any questions you may have about film genres and national identity in  Cuba. If time permits we will also request a brief meeting with **UNEAC,** the Cuban Union of Writers and Artists to learn about the promotion of Cuban arts and literature.

 Dinner on own and enjoy local, cultural, and musical activities ( B, L )

17th Politics and the Arts

Late Morning           This morning we are briefed by **ICAP**- the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples. We will learn about the US Cuban relations from the Cuba perspective   Hear you will learn about the impacts of the Embargo on  Cuban artists and musicians and discuss their views on normalization of relations with the US..

Afternoon       After we will visit the home of a renown **Cuban Photographer, Roberto Salas (or Roberto Chile)**  to discuss his experience working in Cuba and around the world. Learn about the Revolution through his eyes and photographs.  For those further interested in the history of the Revolution and photography. We will end our day with a visit **Fototeca’s Gallery** for more exhibits in contemporary photography. We end or day with an option for the group to explore history at the **Museum of the Revolution.**

 Dinner on own and Evening to enjoy local, cultural, and musical activities (B, L)

Dec.18     Music Education

Our late morning starts with a visit to a **conservatory of music** learn about music education in Cuba . Then after lunch we will meet with a one of the local chapters of the**Colmenita** (Cuban National Children’s Theater requested or another youth performance group) learn about how Cuban music and dance is incorporated into after school community engagement for youth.

Meeting with home and jewelry gallery of the Ramírez whose triplets attend the National Ballet school to share their experiences as parents.

This afternoon there will also be time to visit the **Fortelleza de San Carlos de Cabana** today. We will have time to wander this 18th century fort, enjoy the phenomenal views and visit the tucked away museums and shops. The Cabana also welcomes Cubans and foreigners annually to its book fairs and art festivals.

Dinner on own and enjoy local, cultural, and musical activities ( B, L )

Dec.  19th   Wrap Up

This morning enjoy free, to walk around the Malecon, or to rest out on the patio of the Nacional. After we will enjoy a dynamic community arts exchange, (the **Contio Vitier**  project is requested) that incorporates music and creative writing with the intergenerational community.   After we will visit the **Artists Fair** to see local artists sell their sculptures, products and paintings.

After lunch we will enjoy another private performance with the jazz pianist **Alexis Bosch, Cuban Jazz Project** (3-5) .

7 pm **Wrap -up Meeting**

8 pm Farewell Dinner at El Divino (B, D)

Dec .20st Hasta Luego Havana

Departure back to US (B)

*This Journey is Powered by* …       

\*This trip is an OFAC licensed People to People tour powered by Altruvistas.

The cost of this journey is $3990 and includes:double room accommodations at a 5star hotel (the Hotel Nacional is reserved), program activities as on the itinerary, transportation to and from activities, a qualified trip leader and translator, honoraria to speakers, donations to NGOS (.

One meal a day, extra beverages, individual tips (to hotel staff, driver and Cuban Guide) personal expenses, optional evening activities and round trip national airfare to Miami) are not included in the cost of this trip. Single rooms are available for an additional $700.