

# Yoga is Solidarity: Dissolving Blockades Through Yoga

Havana, Cuba

February 7th – 13th, 2019

*“In the early 2000s, I had the opportunity to work with this community of Cuban Yogis for several years in a row. To this day, these were some of the most poignant, memorable, and transformative teaching experiences I’ve had. Even more, they were, undoubtedly, the most fun teaching experiences I’ve ever had. You HAVE to do this trip!*

Jason Crandell - International Teacher Trainer [www.jasonyoga.com](http://www.jasonyoga.com)



## Thursday February 7th. arrival and orientation

Arrival at the José Martí International Airport, La Habana where you will be welcomed by your Amistur guide and transported to your accommodations – *If you can, come a day early, please do allow yourself plenty of time to get there! Arrange directly with AltruVistas.*

*YOGA: Please note that all yoga classes are optional. The early am yoga and the evening classes are designed to be suitable for a wide range of student. The late am Advanced Yoga is for more advanced practitioners and teachers.*

*You are welcome to attend all classes but please note you may wish to opt for some interesting cultural tours instead of the Advanced classes. All classes will be bilingual and you will receive a detailed guide to who is teaching each class on arrival. Cubans – both teachers and serious students – will be attending the Advanced Yoga classes and some of the early am and pm classes when possible.*

**4:00-5:00pm** Check in at the Hotel/ Casa Particular

On arrival at the hotel, pick up your ¡Yoga Va!\* T-shirt, relax with a snack and visit the ¡Yoga Va! photo exhibit at the Hotel Nacional.

**5:00-6:30pm Welcome Yoga** session at the hotel taught by the ¡Yoga Va! Faculty - Jorge Ávila, Vladimir Ferreiro, Oswaldo Taquechel, Mary Paffard, Roynel Martínez, Mariela Góngora, Rubio Cruz y Estrella Maro, and assisted by recent graduates of the recent ¡Yoga Va2! 675 hour Teacher Training. Meet our yoga family, some of whom we have worked with for over 20 years, and unwind with a practice designed to unravel the travelling kinks!

**7:30pm Welcome Dinner** at La Casa de La Amistad with ¡Yoga Va! faculty

## Friday February 8th . Earth : Yoga is History, Places, Roots & Intention

**7-8:30am** Greeting the Earth! - **Meditation and Simple Yoga for All** Practice with Eduardo Pimentel, President of the Cuban Yoga Association



**8.30am** Breakfast for participants at the hotel

**9.30am - 10.30 am** A Conversation about Yoga in Cuba - with Eduardo Pimentel, Jorge Ávila – Co-Director of ¡Yoga Va!\* - and other key figures in the story of Yoga in Cuba

**10.45 am – 12.30 pm** Group A - **Active Advanced Asana** with International and Cuban instructors

*Group B - For those that do not attend the Advanced Yoga, there will be a visit to **Organopónico de Alamar**, a cooperative farm and educational center (Group B)*

**Group A and B: 12:30 – 1:15 pm** Light lunch –

snacks / sandwiches will be available for all at Hotel.

**1:30 – 3:00 pm Havana: Past, present and future**, exchange with **Miguel Coyula** to learn about architecture and urban development in Cuba.

**3:30pm Walking Tour in Habana Vieja** with a surprise event provided by ¡Yoga Va! artists at Plaza de la Catedral - Eli Cervino, Tamara Venereo, Jorge Ávila, Gabriel Coto - Yoga on the Streets!!

**6:15 – 7.15pm Relaxing Asana for All** at the hotel

Dinner and evening on your own or personal exploration. Enjoy the city's cultural options with live music for those interested. Note that you are welcome to miss the evening yoga class and stay in Habana Vieja for dinner if preferred.

**Saturday February 9th . Water : Yoga is Art - Confluence, Creativity and Finding new solutions to old problems**

**7-8:30am** Greeting Water! - **Meditation and Simple Yoga for All** - The Habana group of ¡Yoga Va! will teach this session with core faculty present.

**8.30am** Breakfast for participants at the hotel

**9.30am** A Conversation about Afro-Cuban religions. Pablo René Horta Rodríguez, a recent graduate from ¡Yoga Va! Teacher Training program, will explain his personal involvement as a Babalawo/priest and practitioner, and the connections he sees with the yoga path. A group of Ballet Folklórico dancers will introduce these themes by presenting a dance about the different Orishas.

**10.45 am – 12.30 pm** Group A - **Active Advanced Asana with international and Cuban instructors**

*Group B - For those that are not attending the advanced yoga there will be a visit to the amazing **Museo de Bellas Artes**, which houses Cuban visual art from early times to the present.*

**1:00 pm** Lunch for all (Group A and B) at Café Laurent



**3:00pm -5:00pm** An afternoon at the famous **Fábrica de Arte**. Enjoy a celebration of art, with music, chanting, dance, and a meditation through the art galleries!

**6.15 – 7.15pm** **Relaxing Asana for All.**

**7:30 pm** Dinner and evening on your own; time for personal exploration and informal meetings with our Cuban yogis.

### **Sunday February 10th. FIRE : YOGA IS TRANSFORMATIVE Healing, Digesting, Integrating Balance Agni**

**7:00 -8:30am** Greeting our Fire! **Meditation and Simple Sun Salutes** - Hotel Nacional Garden/Malecón depending on weather and permits!

**8.30am** - Breakfast for participants at the hotel

**9:30am** A Conversation about Yoga and Well-Being with Conchita de la Campa, a well-respected Cuban scientist-yogi, and international teachers. How important could Ayurveda be in the system of preventative health that Cuba supports, and for the future of the world?

**10.45 am – 12.30 pm** Group A - **Active Advanced Asana with international and Cuban instructors**

*Group B - For those that do not attend the Advanced Yoga, there will be a visit by Roberto Pérez Rivero from FANJ - Fundación Antonio Núñez Jiménez de la Naturaleza y el Hombre – [www.fanj.org](http://www.fanj.org) FANJ is involved in many exciting projects related to environmental education, science, agriculture, urban agriculture and food security in Cuba. This is an opportunity to hear how ONGs operate in Cuba, their international connections and the trends in sustainable development, tourism and ecology along with the future of climate change and conservation. (We will record this conversation and presentation for those who do not want to miss their advanced class!)*

**1:00 - 2.30pm** Lunch provided by Amistur at a restaurant near the hotel

**2:30 pm** Yoga and Health for all - “Medicina Preventiva y Yoga para todas partes del ser, incluyendo la Salud Mental “ Mariela Góngora, psycho-therapist and yoga teacher trainer for ¡Yoga Va! in Holguín along with other invited guests speaking on some of intriguing medical projects they are involved in currently. Where can yoga and health discussions go further in Cuba and beyond?

**6.15 – 7.15pm** **Therapeutic and Restorative Yoga** at the Hotel.

**An evening of dance** arranged by Altruvistas.

### **Monday February 11th . AIR: YOGA IS SOLIDARITY. AIRE - Breath, Heart, Community**

**7:00-8:30am** Greeting our Air! **Meditation and Simple Yoga for All** A fun practice “en pareja” (in pairs) with Professor Rubio, assisted by YV2 from Holguín

**8.30am** Breakfast for participants at the hotel

**9:30am** A Conversation about Yoga and Solidarity - A discussion with representatives of ICAP – the Cuban organization that is responsible for international relations and programs like this one! - Understanding US/Cuban Relations from the Cuban Perspective. Learn about the impacts the US embargo has had on the lives of Cubans from ICAP, and from our Cuban yoga friends.

**10.45 – 12.30 pm** Group A - **Active Advanced Asana with international and Cuban instructors**

*Group B - For those that do not attend the Advanced Yoga class, there will be a city tour by bus around modern Havana (Vedado- Malecón, Plaza de la Revolución, Miramar and Playa) ending up at the Jaimanita and Fúster, a community project that involves the neighbors by creating art spaces made of tiles. These tiles decorate a whole neighborhood with historical, cultural and traditional motifs.*

**1:00pm** Lunch for all at a restaurant near El Cristo

**4:30- 5:30pm MAIN YOGA EVENT - YOGA IS SOLIDARITY**

Meet at Muelle Flotante to practice **Yoga in Solidarity with everyone**. Simple yoga lead by our Cuban and International teachers outdoors with many Cuban yogis and all our group of visiting yogis to confirm our support of each other's practice and to remind everyone "to dissolve the blockades in their hearts and beyond."

**6.30 –8pm Yoga of the Heart** - Return to the hotel for a short meditation, to calm down! and process what occurred today and then continue the conversation with Patti Hirota-Cohen, of Oakland California, Edgar Ortiz of Mandir Yoga Costa Rica, and other visiting guest teachers about the importance of diversity in yoga and the inspiration for Latino Yoga globally.

**Free time** to rest, continue with conversation or go dancing ....

**Tuesday February 12th. ETHER/ÉTER; YOGA IS PLANETARY - Space Consciousness, Ecological Responsibility, Opportunity and Care**

**7:00- 8:30am** Greeting Space and Loving the planet! **Meditation and simple yoga for all**

**8:30am** Breakfast for participants at the hotel

**9:30-11am** Conversation on Yoga and Planetary Future. How can we see the body of the planet as our body? How can we inspire each other to expand our vision of yoga practice and resolve the blockade/s by coming together over this essential global issue? How do we bring climate consciousness into the every day, including Yoga Teacher Training Programs! Short Climate presentation re the international situation by Mary Paffard; Representatives of FANJ and other ecologically focused groups talking specifically about how Cuba is meeting climate change, and their international climate networks.

**11.15 – 12.45 pm** Group A - **Active Advanced Asana with International and Cuban instructors**

*Group B - For those that do not attend the Advanced Yoga, there will be a visit to Proyecto Comunitario de Trabajo Social "Todas las Manos", from Fundación Nicolás Guillén located in La Timba Community, to learn about local development in a marginal neighborhood.*

**1:15 PM** Departure for **Las Calendulas Farm**, a neighborhood garden and ecological educational center where lunch will be provided. We will end our educational program by symbolically planting a friendship tree, a commitment to our continuing international solidarity and care for the earth.

**6.15-7.15 pm Relaxing Yoga for All** - Farewell class from our YV2 teachers! Final presentation of the ¡Yoga Va2! Teacher Training Certificates to the graduates of this 3-year program.

**7:30 pm** Farewell Dinner

Enjoy live music and dancing all together!!!



**Wednesday February 13th**

**9:00am** Check out of the Hotel

**10:00am** Depart for International destinations. Transport provided for those going to the airport.