



“A Culture of Arts & Sustainability in Cuba ”:
Celebrating 75 Adventures Around the Sun with Sue Pon

February 17-March 1,2025

Monday, February 17th Bien Venidos a la Habana (D)

am Departure from USA and arrival into Havana’s Jose Marti International Airport. Please arrive by 2 pm and then we transfer to check in at our hotel the 5-star **Gran Aston**.

5:30 pm Orientation Meeting and welcome mojito at the hotel bar.

7:30 pm Welcome dinner at **San Cristobal Paladar**

Tuesday, February 18th Historical Orientation (B, L)

8:00am Breakfast is on your own daily at the hotel from 7-10 am.

9:00am Enjoy a briefing by the insightful architect, **Miguel Coyula** to discuss the history and development of the city. <http://www.american.edu/americanoday/campus-news/20101123-cuba-scholar-Miguel-Coyula.cfm>.

11:30am Then our immersion into Havana begins with a Walking **City Tour of Old Havana**. Our guided tour includes a brief history of the city as we visit to important sites throughout Havana. View the diverse architecture of the city. Participants will walk through Havana’s oldest neighborhood to learn about its historic, architectural, and cultural significance. The area was declared a World Heritage Site in 1982 by UNESCO. Learn about the City historian’s massive efforts to restore Old Havana buildings, attract tourism and new investment, and improve social services for local residents. The group will explore the four main plazas of the 18th-century colony: Plaza de Armas, which originally housed the main administrative buildings of the colony; Plaza Vieja, the oldest of the plazas; and Plaza de la Cathedral, site of the baroque cathedral of Havana. This site visit will include other important places such as Plaza de San Francisco, site of the basilica of San Francisco and the old Havana stock exchange.

1:00pm During our tour we will stop and break for lunch at a local paladar.

3:00 pm Learn about contemporary and Revolutionary history at the **Museum of the Revolution** (or the Fidel Castro Center).

5:00pm Dialogue with **Gloria Rolando**, AfroCuban film maker to discuss national identity, ethnicity and the AfroCuban roots in Cuban Culture. She will also share a recent short there with us. <http://www.afrocubaweb.com/gloriarolando/gloriarolando.htm>

6:30pm Break for Dinner and evening is free for cultural events.

8:00pm We are off to the Forteleza de San Carlos de la Cabaña, known as La Cabaña (Fort of Saint Charles), is an 18th century fortress complex, the third biggest in the Americas, located on the elevated eastern side of the harbor entrance in Havana, Cuba. The fort rises above the 200-foot hilltop, along with Morro Castle.

Wednesday, February 19th **Dance!** **(B, L)**

8:00am Breakfast

9:30am Enjoy an intimate conversation with Sonia Baez, about the intersection of dance and health. She will share her newest project **Bio Danza!**

11:00am Learn about dance education at the **National Ballet School** (ballet and point shoes can be donations here).

1:00pm Lunch in Old Havana.

3:00pm Enjoy an exchange with the modern dance troupe of **Rosario Cardenas.**

4:30pm We end our day with a brief tour through the **Alicia Alonso Gran Teatro.**

6:00pm Break for dinner and evening is free for cultural events.

Thursday, February 20th **Arts!** **(B, L)**

8:00am Breakfast

9:30am Experience arts education with a visit to ISA, **the Instituto Superior de Arte** (arts donation can be given here).

11:00am Learn about contemporary arts and history through a guided visit at the **Bellas Artes** fine arts museum.

1:00pm Lunch in Old Havana

3:00 pm Visit to the **Taller Grafica**, artist collective. After we will exchange with AfroCuban artist **Francisco Gordillo** to learn about the Afro roots of his artwork.

6:00pm Break for dinner and evening is free for cultural events.

9:45 pm Soak up live Cuban Jazz in VIP seating at **la Zorra y el Cuervo.**

Friday, February 21st**To Las Terrazas****(B, L)**

8:00am Breakfast

9:00am Check out of the hotel and depart east towards the beautiful **Viñales Valley** – situated in one of the most picturesque parts of Cuba, among the limestone “mogotes” hills of the Pinar del Rio province. It is a small and culturally rich rural village, with friendly and welcoming residents.

11:00am Enjoy a community guided visit in Rosario Mountains bio-reserve, **Las Terrazas**, an ecological community and environmental education center. Participants will meet with reserve officials and community and student volunteers working in the reserve. We will receive an overview of the history of the project, a favorite because it is an intentional tourism community project. Then have time for a hike through the community to meet with local artists and learn about the community’s unique architecture.

1:00pm Lunch at *El Romero*, a Vegetarian Restaurant and exchange in dialogue with its founder Tito. Then we finish our time at Las Terrazas.

3:00pm Depart for the Viñales Valley. Stop at the lookout for a group picture and to admire the views before we check into our accommodations and then you are free to rest and explore this quaint town.

6:00pm Free time for Dinner and local music.

Saturday February 22nd**Viñales****(B, L)**

8:00am Breakfast

9:00am Enjoy a full day excursion in the beautiful **Viñales Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site** that was inscribed in 1999. The Viñales valley is encircled by mountains and its landscape is interspersed with dramatic rocky outcrops. Traditional techniques are still in use for agricultural production, particularly of tobacco. The quality of this cultural landscape is enhanced by the vernacular architecture of its farms and villages, where a rich multi-ethnic society survives, illustrating the cultural development of the islands of the Caribbean, and of Cuba. We start our morning with a **walking farm tour**, including a visit to a tobacco farm.

Lunch and visit to **Finca Paraiso, an agroecological farm**. Enjoy free time on the farm for ecoactivities, hiking and horseback riding (may have a fee).

Later we can visit the Cueva del Indio.

5:00pm Free time for dinner and cultural activities, like live music and dancing at **Centro Cultural Polo Montañez**

Sunday February 23rd Hemingway's Memory (B, L)

8:00am Breakfast

9:00am Check out of our casas particulares. Our last visit in **Viñales Valley Town** is to a **Tobacco processing plant despalillo** nearby.

12:30pm Lunch at a paladar in Cojimar.

2:00pm Visit to **Hemingway's Finca Vigia**, today a museum to this esteemed author who resided here for over two decades.

4:30pm Stop of Diaquiris at El Floridita, and yes you can take a picture with "Papa". Then we check into the Gran Aston.

6:00pm Free evening for rest and dinner.

9:00pm Drop off at the incredible performance and plastic arts space, the **Fabrica de Arte Cubano** <http://www.fac.cu>. We will taxi back to casas on our own afterwards.

Monday, February 24th Love for Cienfuegos (B, L, D)

8:00 am Breakfast

9:00 am Check out and depart for photogenic **Cienfuegos**, known as the "Pearl of the South". It was founded by the French, which lends it a distinctly European flavor, with a wide Parisian-style boulevard and elegant colonnades. Like Havana, Cienfuegos has a beautiful Malecón, where fisherman cast nets and locals socialize. Lunch upon arrival after our three-hour drive.

2:30 pm Visit and exchange with **the Coro of Cienfuegos** and meet with its director Honey. We will stop for a 1/2 hour mojito break or just enjoy the architecture and view atop the amazing Pallazo de Valle at the Malecon.

6:00pm Check into our hotel the Melia Peninsula Trinidad. Dinner is at the hotel and there is live music there.

Tuesday, February 25th Trinidad (B, L)

8:00am Breakfast.

9:30 am Enjoy a guided tour to **the beautiful colonial city of Trinidad, a UNESCO World Heritage site**, and home to many beautiful and photogenic colonial buildings.

12:30pm Lunch.

2:00pm Exchange with Cuban artist **Yudith Vidal** in her gallery.

3:30pm Enjoy an Afro Cuban Folkloric dance group that performs shows at the club Palenque will host our learning. Gisela Zerquera, the director of the ballet will welcome us into the venue by the where they train and perform before taking on a Cuban salsa class.

Evening free at the resort.

Wednesday, February 26th Coastal Beauty (B,L)

8:00am Breakfast

Day This is a full day to rest, restore and enjoy one another.

Thursday, February 27th Trinidad/Havana (B,L)

8:00am Breakfast

9:00am Morning swim.

11:00am Check out, then we return to Havana about a 4-hour drive with lunch along the way. Check into our hostel Buen Viaje in Old Havana upon arrival. Enjoy free time to wander the streets.

7:30 pm Tonight we will make reservations at the wonderful **La Guarida** for you, made famous by the movie Fresa y Chocolate, www.lagarida.com

Friday, February 28th Wrap Up & Diverse Voices (B, D)

8:00am Breakfast

9:30am Exchange with the **FMC** to learn about the role of women and gender rights in Cuba.

11:00am Enjoy an intimate exchange with **Norma Guillard**. Group Discussion circle about LGBT rights today in Cuba with this Cuban activist, academic and psychologist who was an integral part of the literacy.

1:00pm Free time for lunch and to explore the **San Jose de Almancen craft market...** or wander the Puerto de Avenida.

3:00pm Exchange with **FANJ** and meet with **Roberto Perez** to discuss Sustainability in Cuba Today, Tarea Vida and how Cuba will face Climate Change. In the spring of 2017 the Cuban government approved program which is a long-term plan to confront and tackle climate change.

5:00pm Break for rest.

7:30pm Farewell Dinner at Paladar Los Mercedes.

Saturday, March 1

(B, D)

9:00am Breakfast and Check out of your casas particulares.

Transfer to the airport and check in for return flight to USA
FMC

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