



# OTHER CUBAN JOURNEYS

## ***Taste of Cuba in 6 nights Havana and Varadero***

***Embark on a journey back in time. Be part of this exploration of music, art, history and culture. Join an adventure only 90 miles away!***



***"Purposeful Travel for Passionate People"***

**Cuba in the midst of change...and its happening fast!  
Experience Cuba during the most fascinating time in the past 50 years  
Join in the transition while immersing in Cuban culture  
Enjoy classic cars, cigars, salsa, Cuban cuisine and all that Cuba has to offer with behind the scenes access...  
Awaken your five senses on this trip of a lifetime!**

# Itinerary

## Day 1, US/Havana (L,D)

- Today we arrive in Havana after a short flight from the US from your home city. The guide will be at the airport to greet you.
- En route to Havana, we'll stop at Plaza de Revolucion which is where you see the familiar iconic silhouette of Che Guevara and where the "bearded one" made his famously long speeches from this largest square in Cuba. A great spot for a group photo.
- Learn the history of Cuban political development from the Cuban perspective at Museo de la Revolución. This fascinating visit houses the most complete exhibit of revolutionary history including the Granma Memorial, the vessel that brought Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, and other revolutionaries from Mexico to Cuba in 1956
- Lunch is included unless the flight is an afternoon arrival.
- As time allows, we will take a tour of the Capri hotel which was owned by Santos Trafficante and the Hotel Riviera which was built by Meyer Lansky. Did you know that the Mafia had history in Cuba? They played a big part of building the Cuban skyline.
- Check into your hotel or casa; enjoy a welcome cocktail, time to unpack, relax, change money, etc.
- Tonight we get acquainted with real Cuban food at El Aljibe which is known for its traditional black beans and rice, chicken and other local specialties.

## Day 2, Havana (B,L)

- After breakfast at the hotel, we learn about one of Cuba's most well-known exports, the Cigar. We will visit one of Cuba's most prominent cigar factories accompanied by an in house guide who will explain how cigars are made. This work of art in action will leave you amazed at the skill and precision of the workers. Afterwards a chance to buy cigars. With new US rules, you can bring back cigars to the USA.
- Continuing, we will make our way to Old Havana – a UNESCO Heritage site which dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century where you will witness the greatest wealth of Spanish colonial architecture in the western hemisphere. Here we will stop at many local sites and have the opportunity to interact with Cubans. At Plaza de Armas you will

meet with old book collectors, at the new bakery in the Plaza de la Cathedral, and many more interactive opportunities. You will feel the warmth and kindness of the Cuban people and begin learning about their life and culture during these morning's visits.

- We will visit an art workshop, Taller Grafica, where some of the country's most important engravers got their start. This studio founded in 1962 is one of the most important graphic arts establishments, preserving the old printmaking techniques and turning out some of the most significant works of graphic art in Havana today.
- Lunch is included at the famous and iconic Hotel Nacional de Cuba. Built in 1939 this historical hotel was visited by many mobsters along with famous personalities. Enjoy the old-world glamour, grounds of the hotel and the views of the Malecon. The hotel has one of the best cigar rollers on the island – a female at that! It also boasts of having great Mojitos!
- Visit to Colon Cemetery, the largest cemetery in the Caribbean. While learning about this 4th most important cemetery in the world, we will see many mausoleums, many of them made with Carrera marble and Lalique glass. You will gain insight into the wealth that once lived on the island. If fortunate we will interact with locals who make a pilgrimage to one of the most visited grave sites in Cuba, La Milagrosa.
- Be wowed by our colorful and whimsical experience at Casa-Estudio de Fuster in Jaimanitas. This is the studio-home of Jose Fuster, commonly called the 'Picasso of the Caribbean. Explore the unique studio, property, and neighborhood whose homes are adorned with Fuster's ceramics. Time to take photos of the neighborhood and talk with the locals.
- Return to the hotel for a rest from your first full day in Cuba as you get ready for dinner.
- Tonight, dinner is not included. Guide will provide you with recommendations and reservations.
- If not too tired, you may choose to continue your night by listening to some of Cuba's famous Jazz at the Fox and Crow or the Jazz Café.

### **Day 3, Havana-Bay of Pigs-Varadero (B,L,D)**

- After breakfast and check out of our hotel, we drive to Varadero
- On our way we will dive through the historical Bay of Pigs region. Learn the Cuban side of the history; quite different than the history we learned!
- Visit a Cenote, Cueva de los Peces, time to swim in this nature wonder and in the Bay of Pigs, snorkeling gear available for rent at the site.
- Lunch included before we continue to another unique visit in this area

- Visit to a Crocodile Farm, at the largest swamp in the Caribbean, Cienaga de Zapata. This is site of several endangered species like Manatee and Manjuarí, and a refuge for many birds from USA and Canada.
- Head for your lodging for the next two nights in the world famous beach and península of Varadero, this 20 kilometer spit of land is known to have one of the worlds' most beautiful waters
- Check into your all-inclusive hotel and enjoy the many restaurants and bars that are on site and included
- After dinner there will be different options of free live music and dancing in our hotel. These performers and entertainment staff are very approachable and this is a great opportunity to learn about the performing arts in Cuba and interchange ideas about their professional training in art schools compared to ours in the US.

#### **Day 4, Varadero(B,L,D )**

- Breakfast at hotel
- Visit to town of Varadero. We offer you time to shop at the local crafts market where you can talk with the local artists and learn about how they procure their products. This is another way to support private entrepreneur's and civil society in Cuba
- Visit Josone Park, walk this beautiful grounds and witness what richness was alike for the owner...just 2 people, Jose and Onelia.
- Visit DuPonts former house known and Xanadu which was built in 1927. The 4<sup>th</sup> floor bar is in its original glamour and is a great place for a cocktail, maybe return at sunset to watch an amazing sunset in Varadero
- After Lunch we will meet at the Piano Bar area to discuss about the experiences of the trip, your favorite encounter and more
- Before dinner you may want to take a salsa lesson...there are always hotel staff ready to take you to dance floor and show you the Cuban beat and dance.
- Dinner included at your leisure at one of the many options in the hotel

#### **Day 5, Varadero/Matanzas/Havana (B,D)**

- Breakfast at hotel before we return to Havana.
- On the way, we will stop at the town of Matanzas which is known as the city of bridges or the Venice of Cuba.
- Our first stop will be at Ediciones Vigía, an independent publishing house of handmade books, created by artisans who are volunteers. All of the books featured on this site are handmade using collaged, repurposed materials. A purchase is a must!

- See some incredible local art and ceramic sculptures in an old sugar ware house which was converted into a private gallery. Discuss freedom of expressions when you meet with some of the artists in this collective workshop. You will have the opportunity to buy.
- Stop in Bacunayagua Mirador. The bridge of Bacunayagua was inaugurated in 1959. It crosses a canyon and at 110 meters above the valley floor, is the highest bridge in Cuba. Cubans consider it one of the seven wonders of Cuban civil engineering. You will have time to enjoy a great Pina Colada and other snacks as lunch is not included today.
- As we enter to Havana we will visit the small, working-class town of San Francisco de Paula and visit Finca Vigia. This was the home of Ernest Hemingway in Cuba. The house that birthed "The Old Man and the Sea" is now a museum devoted to the author. The home is preserved as it was when Hemingway lived in it. The museum features items such as his original typewriter, fishing boat Pillar and many of his prized hunted animals.
- Next, the city of Havana will unfold before your eyes as we stop at the 17<sup>th</sup> century Morro fortress for a group photo and the best vantage point to see the "smile of Havana"
- Check into hotel in Havana before we have an included dinner.

### **Day 6, Havana (B,L,D)**

- After your breakfast at hotel we will visit Callejon de Hammel to learn about the Afro-Cuban religion. This art inspired alleyway was created by Salvador Gonzales and depicts many traditions in the Santeria religion.
- Next, we visit to the Cuban National Art Collection at the Bellas Artes Museum to see their extensive collection of works from colonial through contemporary periods.
- A walk on the Prado promenade and by the Capitalio will give you a feel of another part of Old Havana.
- Lunch included before we visit with one of Cubas must talented dance troupes. This is a combination of music and dance which will have your feet stomping! A mixture of salsa, son, flamenco and other beats create a unique performance style.
- Don't forget your scarfs tonite!...we ride to dinner Cuban style! Take an old yank-tank to our farewell dinner where we will toast the new friends we met along the way!

### **Day 7, Home (B)**

- After our last breakfast at hotel we will check out of hotel
- Transfer to airport for return flight

*Trip licensed by Other Cuban Journeys, LLC which complies with the Department of Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) which authorizes registered guests of our programs to legally travel to Cuba, to participate and engage in a full time schedule of authorized exchange activities in Cuba, which will involve meaningful interaction between our travelers and people in Cuba. Trip itineraries are subject to change due to factors outside of our control but if any changes need to take place, we will substitute with something just as interesting!*

***For groups that are interested in religious sites, we can include Jewish or other visits***

## **Prices from:**

### *Casa Particulars (private home stay)*

#### **Per person (double occupancy) from:**

2-3 travelers .....	\$ 5600
4-6 travelers .....	\$ 4200
7+ travelers.....	\$ 3700
Single supplement.....	\$ 600

### *Hotel (depending on availability)*

#### **Per person (double occupancy) from:**

2-3 travelers - .....	\$6100
4-6 travelers - .....	\$4700
7+ travelers -.....	\$4200
Single supplement.....	\$ 1200

## **Your trip includes:**

- 7 days in Cuba, 6 nights
- Hotel/casa accommodations in Cuba
- Meals of 6 breakfasts, 5 lunches, and 4 dinners which include beverages
- Opportunity to try privately owned Paladars and sample some of the best cuisine of Cuba
- Private A/C land transportation in Cuba by an experienced driver.
- English Speaking guide with many years of service for the entire program He /she will enlighten you in all things Cuba.
- Entrance fees to the included cultural and historic sites
- Gratuities to wait staff at included meals and bellboys in Cuba
- 1 bottle of water daily

### **Not included:**

- Trip cancellation insurance – **highly recommended**. Cancellation for any reason prior to trip can cause you to lose all money paid.
- Airfare to Cuba
- Tips for guide and driver



### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

- Your passport must be valid for 6 months from date of departure.
- If you are Cuban born and departed Cuba before December 31, 1970 you will need a special visa and must notify OCJ as soon as possible. This is a timely and lengthy process and can take up to 8 weeks to receive.
- Trip cancellation is highly recommended.
- All payments are by check only.
- Each traveler must sign the enclosed liability form.
- Cuban health insurance is included (and compulsory) in the cost of the trip. It covers medical expenses in Cuba due to illness and accident up to \$25,000 and repatriation and transport up to \$7000. Pre-existing conditions are not covered.
- As a participant on this people to people trip, you are required by OFAC to participate in the full time activities of this itinerary.

