



Journey to Havana, Cuba

Empire State/NYSBA

A People to People Educational exchange

Monday, December 1 – Saturday, December 6, 2014

(Night of November 30 in Miami included.)

Itinerary Subject to Change

Organized by Cuba Cultural Travel

This NYSBA member trip is open to spouses, partners, friends and family. This itinerary reflects alternate events for non-lawyers. Eligibility requirements for participants are (a) each traveler must be a US citizen traveling on a US passport, (b) each traveler must be either a NYSBA member or spouse/partner/significant other accompanying a NYSBA member, (c) all lawyer participants must attend all the events in the lawyer itinerary, all non-lawyers must attend all the events in the alternative non-lawyer itinerary, and all participants must attend all the non-lawyer events as per the itinerary.

Sunday, November 30

Participants will fly independently to Miami and congregate at the **Crowne Plaza** located near the airport at 950 NW Lejeune Road, Miami, FL 33126. 305-446-9000. Accommodations for the night in Miami will be included in the cost of the trip.

Day 1 Monday, December 1

9:00 am Meet in lobby of the hotel for our bus transfer to airport. Our flight from Miami to Havana is on **ABC Charter flight #AA9450**, operated by American Airlines. Check-in is located in **Concourse D**. Enter through Door 1 and check-in at the AA counter.

ABC Charters has the following luggage policy: All additional luggage fees must be paid in cash at the time of check-in. One carry-on and one personal item at no charge. 1st checked bag; \$20.00. Each additional checked bag; \$20.00. 70 lbs max weight per bag. 44 lbs allowed free; \$2.00 per pound over (including carry-on). No luggage fees apply on your return to Miami. *Please be aware that in the event of a full flight into Havana you may be required to check your carry-on luggage for an additional \$20.00 fee.*

11:30 pm Depart for Havana. Flight time is 1 hour.

12:30 pm Arrive in Havana. Clear immigration and customs and baggage, a process that takes about an hour and a half.

Lunch at the famous **El Aljibe**. Cuban food at its best; the roasted chicken soaked in orange garlic sauce is a favorite, located in the Havana neighborhood of Miramar, home to many embassies and residences of foreign diplomats.

On the way into Havana we will stop by **Plaza de la Revolucion**, one of Havana's most active public squares.

Continue with a tour of the Vedado Neighborhood visiting the most iconic buildings of Havana's modernist movement. We will stop at the **Habana Libre** hotel, **The Coppelia Ice Cream** parlor, the **Pabellon Cuba** and the **Riviera hotel**.

Check into **Hotel Parque Central**. This five star hotel is considered the finest hotel in Havana and perfectly located in the central part of Havana. Your bags will be dropped off at the hotel and will be waiting for you upon check-in while we explore the historic area surrounding the hotel.

Hotel Parque Central ★★★★★

Neptuno, esquina Prado y Zulueta

Havana, Cuba

Tel. 53 7 860 6627

All rooms include a safe deposit box free of charge.

This five star hotel is considered the finest hotel in Havana and perfectly located in the central part of Havana. Your bags will be dropped off at the hotel and will be waiting for you upon check-in while we explore the historic area surrounding the hotel.

7:00 pm Meet in hotel lobby and walk across the street to **Centro Asturianos** for a private musical performance and dinner. Our evening begins with demonstrative lecture on **Cuban Music** at Bar Asturias by **Prof. Alberto Faya** who since 1973 has been working as a musician, professor and researcher within the Cuban musical world. He has won national awards in music and musicology. He will be joined by a trio of musicians who will take us on a musical journey through the history of Cuba. This will be an interactive experience, with the audience encouraged to engage the lecturers and musicians.

8:00 pm Welcome dinner at **Havana Gourmet Asturianos**, formerly known as the **American Club**.

Day 2 Tuesday, December 2

Complimentary breakfast is served at the restaurant on the lobby level from 7am to 10 am.

10:00 am Lecture by **Juan Alejandro Triana**, a graduate of the University of Havana and a faculty member of the Department of Economics at the Instituto Politecnico Jose Echevarria (ISPJAE). His research and publications have focused on micro-financing in Cuba and Cuba-U.S. economic relations. He will lead the walking tour of Old Havana down Obispo Street to illustrate the new economic reforms including visits to state ration stores and new private businesses. He will explain the changing policies of privately owned businesses in Cuba and the concept of micro-financing and how it differs from similar programs in other countries. This presentation will take place in the hotel business center.

*For those who opt out of the lecture we depart on a walking tour of **Havana Vieja**. Make sure to wear comfortable shoes! We will walk down **Obispo Street**, a pedestrian promenade, stopping at some of the most significant buildings like the Art Deco style La **Moderna Poesia**, the **Ambos Mundos** Hotel, and the banks of the former Havana Wall Street.*

Group reunites in Havana Vieja. We visit the Director at the **Escuela de Taller** where we will learn about the Restoration Project that is underway in Havana Vieja. This urban rehabilitation project is preserving the architectural history and cultural heritage of this beautiful city. We will visit a construction site and meet with engineers, builders, woodworkers and other craftsman utilizing traditional handcrafting methods to preserve the authenticity of these once – and soon to be once again - resplendent structures. Faced with challenges such as lack of materials, tools, equipment and even vehicular access to some of these sites, these monumental projects are a testament to the indomitable Cuban spirit to succeed in the face of adversity.

Visit the **Plaza Vieja**. This plaza is the oldest plaza in Havana, dating from the 16th century.

1:30 pm Group lunch at **Paladar Los Mercaderes**. This newly opened private restaurant in Havana Vieja is receiving rave reviews for its excellent food, service and ambiance.

Following lunch we stroll through **Plaza De Armas**.

3:00 pm Visit the **Taller de Grafica Experimental** at **Plaza Catedral**. The Taller is Havana's printmaking and lithographic workshop. It is a studio, a school and most of all, an art institution that preserves and develops the sophisticated art of print making with relative freedom of spirit and form. We will be welcomed by artist **Yamilis Brito** and several fellow printmakers that belong to the guild. The artists will display their works and be available for personal exchanges.

Optional visit to the **Wifredo Lam Center**. The Wifredo Lam Center of Contemporary Art is a cultural institution dedicated to the study, research and promotion of contemporary visual arts from developing countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Caribbean. An extensive and valuable collection of contemporary visual artworks allows the Center to exhibit regularly in Cuba and abroad.

Optional visit to the **Galería Diago**, specializing in Afro-Cuban folk art. The shop next door sells movie posters from Cuba's extensive movie archives, silk screens, and the two volume book on Cuban folk painting, **Arte Magico de Cuba**.

Return to the Hotel at your own pace.

7:30 pm Group dinner at **El Cocinero** in Vedado. This chic and elegant bar & restaurant is located in a converted power station is considered a world class establishment popular with Cubans, Diplomats and foreigners alike.

Visit the **Fabrica de Arte Cuba** located in the Vedado neighborhood. Built in the beginning of the XX Century, this former tramway power plant was later converted into an olive oil factory and is the most current collaborative art project in Havana.

Day 3 **Wednesday, December 3**

10:00 am **Lecture by Dr. Marta Nunez**, professor and a researcher at the University of Havana. Her research has concentrated on transition projects for Cuba proposed by Cuban American and U.S. scholars, and women's employment in Cuba. Marta was a visiting scholar at the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard in 2010. She'll discuss with you many fascinating and unique aspects of Cuban society including family rights, property laws and gender issues. This lecture will take place in a conference room in the hotel.

*For those who opt out of the lecture for a visit painter **Antonio Jimenez's** studio. His depictions of the seemingly mundane are rich in meaningful message and esoteric significance.*

*For those who opt out of the lecture continue for an artist studio visit with sculptor **Wilay Mendez**. A sculptor, painter and poet, he is one of the most exciting artists to come out of the new generation of contemporary Cuban art world. A self-proclaimed cimarrón or "runaway slave," Wilay's work utilizes commonplace materials that have been recycled and discarded; often decomposing.*

12:00 pm Group reunites at the hotel and boards bus to depart for lunch. Enjoy a traditional Cuban **lunch** overlooking the Straits of Florida, at **La Barraca** restaurant at the historic **Hotel Nacional de Cuba**. Sit under the *palapas*, feel the ocean air and dine on traditional Cuban fare.

2:30 pm Group bus for a tour of **modern architecture** in Western Havana with **Architect Pedro Vazquez Rodriguez**, Founding Member of Cuba's National Union of Architects and Engineers. Few people realize the important place Havana holds as a treasure trove of 20th Century architecture. Pedro will highlight some of the best examples to be found in this incredibly diverse area of the city, including the **University of Havana** and the **Christopher Colon Cemetery**.

4:00 pm Group visit to **3ma y 30**. This is an art studio of three young and very talented Cuban artists: **Adrian Fernandez**, **Alex Hernandez** and **Frank Mujica**, who belong to an emerging constellation within the island's contemporary visual arts scene. By three different mediums (photography, painting, and drawing) and refine technique, the artists explore conflicts and problems existing in present day Cuba. The artists will receive us in their studio space and discuss their work.

Return to the hotel.

7:30 pm Group dinner at the famous **La Guarida Restaurant**. One of the best restaurants in Havana and famous not only for its delectable dining, but also as the location for the film "Strawberry and Chocolate." It is housed on the third floor of a large, old town house carrying the charming ambience of the 1920's.

9:00 pm Following dinner we will enjoy a private performance at the **Hotel Capri** rooftop by the group known as **TradiSon**, playing traditional Cuban songs similar to the Buena Vista Social Club.

Day 4 Thursday, December 4

10:00 am Group walks across the street from the hotel and attend a private dance performance of the **Compania Irene Rodriguez**. We will receive a warm welcome by **Irene Rodriguez** and her company at the **Centro Asturianos**. Irene is considered by many to be the finest flamenco dancer in Cuba. Irene will introduce the dancers, many of whom speak English; describe the history of her own dance career and formation of her independent dance company; and discuss the cultivation of artistic talent in Cuba, opportunities and challenges of being a professional dancer, and the arts more generally in Cuba.

11:30 am Board our bus and depart for the neighborhood of Playa for our meeting at the **Organizacion Nacional de Bufetes Colectivos**. This Cuban Law Collective offers various legal assistance and representation to Cuban citizens, legal aliens and Cuban residents living abroad, for the means of arbitration, court hearings, customs, registry and other State institutions. Topics include the structure of the Cuban legal system, lawyer regulation, dispute-settlement procedures and a description of typical cases handled by the Law Collective.

*For those who opt out of the meeting we visit **Callejon de Hamel**, a street full of shrines, diverse sculptural pieces, and colorful murals. It has been considered a public temple to **Santería** and African influences in Cuban culture. Much of the artwork there has been created by artist Salvador González Escalona since 1990. Our host and guide will be local scholar **Elias Aseff**, who will explain the role of African religion and culture in Cuba and the importance of Santeria in everyday life. He will also explain how Afro Cuban religion has influenced the evolution of Cuban culture.*

*We will visit the home of a **Babalao**, (Yoruba Priestess) who will receive the group and explain via Elias the religious deities and elaborate alters in her home. The home is very large and many visitors pass thru during the day to give offerings.*

1:00 pm Group reunites and departs for lunch at the whimsical home of artist **Jose Fuster** who has made a major contribution to rebuilding and decorating the fishing town of **Jaimanitas**, in the outskirts of Havana, where he lives. Jaimanitas is now a unique work of public art where Fuster has decorated over 80 houses with colorful ornate murals and domes. Jose and his son Alex have invited friends and neighbors to share and discuss the public art projects and the impact on Jaimanitas and beyond.

Return to Hotel. Remainder of afternoon free.

8:00 pm Dinner at **Dona Carmela**. Located in a private home, the charming backyard dining area is a wonderful backdrop for the home-cooked, family style meal.

Optional late night entertainment: Visit the cool bohemian club **El Gato Tuerto ("One-eyed Cat")**, a laid back venue featuring various styles of traditional Cuban music from sultry Boleros known as **Feeling**, a soul-like genre heavily influenced by jazz, and **Trova**, another unique musical style that gained its popularity in the 70s.

Day 5 Friday, December 5

10:00 am **Lecture by Cuban Law Professor** from the **Bufete Especializado de Casación** (Specialists in annulling or repealing a law or reversing a judicial sentence). This lecture will take place in a conference room at the Parque Central.

*For those who opt out of the lecture we visit the **Museum of Cuban Art** with art historian **Nelson Herrera**. The museum is dedicated exclusively to Cuban Art from the earliest days of colonialism to the latest generation of Cuban artists.*

Lunch on your own. Remainder of afternoon free.

For those who choose, on our return to the hotel we visit to the **Arts and Crafts market**, a great place to interact with local, everyday artisans. You'll find just about anything here, and can find souvenirs or gifts for your friends and family back home.

8:00 pm Farewell dinner and celebration at **Paladar San Cristobal**. This cozy paladar has a reputation of excellence in both atmosphere and local cuisine. The food is refined and balanced (enjoy dishes like gazpacho, tender lobster, crème caramel) and the nostalgic atmosphere is unforgettable, adorned in a unique style of art nouveau.

Optional: Enjoy an evening of music at **Habana Café**, a venue that features a nightly variety-type show that includes Cabaret dancers combined with comedy and music. With a 1950's, nostalgic décor, **Habana Café** attracts locals and tourists alike. Be ready to get on the dance floor and dance all night to the rhythm of great Caribbean music.

Day 6 Saturday, December 6

12:30 pm Check out of the hotel and depart for the airport.

3:40 pm Flight departs Havana for Miami on **ABC Charter Flight #AA9471**, operated by American Airlines. Flight duration is 1 hour.

4:40 pm Arrive in Miami. Clear customs and connect with flights home.

*Tips may be given to your Cuban guide and driver at this time. The recommended tip is 5-7CUC per day, per passenger for your guide and 3-5CUC per day, per passenger for your driver.

BE SURE TO COLLECT YOUR BELONGINGS FROM THE SAFE DEPOSIT BOX IN YOUR ROOM

- ✓ PASSPORT
- ✓ VISA
- ✓ PLANE TICKET
- ✓ OFAC LICENSE AND LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION
- ✓ 25 CUC DEPARTURE TAX (TO BE PAID AT THE AIRPORT)

**Please Note: This is a "Working" Itinerary. There may be some changes, additions and/or subtractions to the Final Itinerary. All venues and artist's studios are subject to final confirmations. Be assured that any changes made will be done to enhance the total program, and to promote a smooth operation of the tour.*

Note about Purchasing Art in Cuba:

The U.S. Government allows US travelers to bring back an unlimited amount of Cuban art and informational materials such as books and CDs. If you feel you might be interested in purchasing art during your stay in Cuba you should carry additional money to pay on the spot. Your hotel rooms includes a safe deposit box in which you can keep your valuables safe.

Acquiring additional money via an ATM machine in Cuba is not possible. Some of the more established artists could possibly have U.S. bank accounts in which the payment can be wired. The art can normally be brought home and payment sent at a future date. Our first recommendation is that you bring additional cash.

