



CUBA

JOIN THE WOMEN'S TRAVEL GROUP ON
AN IN-DEPTH JOURNEY DEPARTING MARCH 18, 2018



INTERNATIONAL
EXPEDITIONS



WHY CUBA IS SO COMPELLING

We know Cuba from its past, from its legacy on American culture, and from a pantheon of notorious, tragic, heroic, and historic people and events. Christopher Columbus made landfall in Cuba on his first voyage to the New World. Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders took San Juan Hill in the War for Cuban Independence. Che Guevara and Fidel Castro brought their Marxist brand of rule to the island, setting the course that disrupted relationships with the U.S. International forces under John F. Kennedy's watch stormed in with an attack at the Bay of Pigs, leading to the Cuban Missile Crisis. Later, the Mariel Boatlift brought thousands of refugees to Miami, sparking an unprecedented urban rebirth.

Equally fascinating — and perhaps more uplifting — are Cuba's inviting people and exciting, sensuous culture. With music, art and athletic prowess, Cuba has long demonstrated to the world that it is a bastion of talent and style. From the Tropicana nightlife to the Buena Vista Social Club, Cubans have significant cultural influence. Cuba's vices are legendary...mellow cigars, lavish cabarets, Salsa dancing, and smooth rum. This has always been a playground for inspired eccentrics. Author and adventurer Ernest Hemingway whiled away his time in Cuba, but it was the writings of Jose Marti that best defines Cuba's hunger for freedom and independence. Cuba's culture thrives, while nature pays no attention to political differences.



DAILY ITINERARY

Day 1, March 18 **ARRIVE CUBA**

Today you depart the U.S. for Cuba to begin discovering the incredible culture and people of this once forbidden, island nation. Your private guide awaits your arrival at Santa Clara Airport to transfer you to Trinidad. Due to your late arrival time, your guide will see you to your accommodations and ensure check in goes smoothly. Dinner will be served near your accommodations since you may be tired from the long travel day.

Meals included: D

Day 2, March 19 **TRINIDAD, A DAY IN COLONIAL ERA CUBA** Today is dedicated to the 502-year-old colonial city of Trinidad. Appointed a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1988,

Trinidad has been protected from modern development by its relative isolation and, more recently, by government decree. Upon arrival, we walk the cobblestone streets to Plaza Mayor which was the heart of the old settlement and where the elite families lived. Trinitarios are famous for their pottery and decorative, hand-sewn linens and laces. You will see these handicrafts for sale in many home's windows. Several museums are located in the center of Trinidad, most within walking distance. We will visit the Museo de Arquitectura, the former home of the wealthy Sanchez Iznaga family. This public display of wealth sits on the southeastern side of Plaza Mayor in a museum showcasing the upper-class domestic architecture of the 18th and 19th centuries. The museum is housed



EXPEDITION HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Visit Trinidad – UNESCO World Heritage Site
- ✓ Topes de Collantes National Park
- ✓ Ride in Old Classic American cars
- ✓ Havana Compas Dance
- ✓ Dine in local paladars
- ✓ Full day at Vinales – organic farm, cigar factory
- ✓ Farewell evening in Old Havana



in buildings that were erected in 1738 and 1785 and joined in 1819. Next, lunch is served at Davidmart. You are treated first to Trinidad's famous canchanchara, a locally created drink of aguardiente, honey, and lime juice served in a typical ceramic cup. Chef David has traveled the world and brought the techniques he has learned to the simple town of Trinidad, highlighting what is best in cuisine from the region. Arts and crafts street markets are an invitation to exchange with locals selling their products. The central square in Trinidad offers a variety of authentic souvenirs that cannot be found elsewhere during your journey. We then meet with women from Federación de Mujeres Cubanas to discuss about their experiences about being Cuban women in today's Cuba. Your guide will see you back to your

accommodations to relax and refresh. This evening dinner is on your own, and there are many options in Trinidad. If you're up for it, there are many places to take in local music or have a drink.

Meals included: B,L

Day 3, March 20 TOPES DE COLLANTES AND ONTO HAVANA This morning get an early start as we head into the Sierra de Escambray Mountains at Topes de Collantes National Park, one of the best places to enjoy Cuba's natural beauty. Wet winds coming off the Atlantic make the north face of the mountains a refuge for plants and animals, including Cuban trogon, the national bird of Cuba. After learning the history of Cuban coffee, relax over a cup of coffee while chatting with your local guide about efforts to protect the region. Take a walk with

your guide through the Jardín de los Gigantes, a footpath through the mountains. After lunch visit a modern art museum, seeing pieces by important Cuban artists. We depart down the mountain side and head to Havana, we have a long drive ahead of us and we make our way to Havana (approximately 4 hours). Once we arrive into Havana we check-in at our hotel and go for dinner in a nearby private restaurant. **Meals included: B,L,D**

Day 4, March 21 HAVANA, ON FOOT AND BY CLASSIC CAR This morning you get started early and explore the streets of Old Havana as they come to life. Your tour begins in Plaza Vieja where we will enjoy a fresh juice at a very popular tourist spot, La Vitrola (The Jukebox). Next we take a very short



walk through Plaza Vieja and along the meandering streets to Plaza de San Francisco, stopping to pay our respects to the bronze statue of El Caballero de Paris (the Gentleman of Paris) and learn about the interesting story of why he was immortalized. You then take the short walk to Plaza de Armas, Havana's oldest square, and learn about the history and rich heritage of the buildings in this charming plaza. This is also the location where Havana was founded. From the City Museum (the former Captain General's residence) to the street vendors trading authentic books and memorabilia that commemorate the Revolution, Plaza de Armas is one of Havana's greatest treasures. We continue on to Plaza de la Catedral, the fourth of Havana's wonderful squares. The picturesque plaza usually provides

an opportunity to snap a photo with local Habaneros dressed in traditional costumes. Our lunch stop is also just off the Plaza in one of Havana's best known paladars. After lunch enjoy a performance by Havana Compás Dance, headed by dancer and choreographer Liliet Rivera. Before returning to our hotel to freshen up for dinner we take a walk through the Colon Cemetery with a specialist guide. This evening dinner is at one of the first paladars in Cuba. As a special treat, we are picked up by classic American cars and taken to our dinner spot. Situated in a beautiful 19th century palace, now a multi-family building, La Guarida is one of Havana's best paladars. And no visitor should miss the very place where *Fresa y Chocolate*, the most successful Cuban film, was recorded.

Meals included: B,L,D

Day 5, March 22 CUBA'S MAGNIFICENT VIÑALES VALLEY Early today we drive west into the countryside of Pinar del Rio, Cuba's western most province, with its breathtaking landscapes and the best tobacco growing areas in the world. We arrive in Viñales Valley with it's the rugged mogotes — limestone karst outcroppings with caves and rivers running through. We take in the views from Los Jazmines lookout: the mogotes, the red soil, and the lush vegetation in perfect harmony create a magical landscape that images fail to replicate. Viñales has been named one of the 10 most breathtaking landscapes by the Lonely Planet. First we stop for a visit to the despalillo, a grading and sorting facility. Here you see the tobacco leaves in the stage between the farmer and the cigar factory. This is likely an unfamiliar



process for you and very important, because the tobacco leaves are fermented and selected only by women. Next we stop at an organic farm for lunch and after our meal, we take a walk with the farmers for a tour of the gardens. This farm-to-table experience is unique and will likely make you question why Cuba imports ninety percent of the produce consumed when the rich soil is capable of producing such a variety of fruitage. Before heading back to Havana we visit the colorful town of Viñales with a city historian, if available. You also have a chance to visit the handicrafts market and purchase goods that are made by local artisans. This evening dinner is on your own, and there are several places nearby or a short taxi ride away. There are also a number of venues for evening entertainment if you're up for a late night! **Meals included: B,L**

Day 6, March 23 HAVANA'S ARTS AND TRADITIONS Return to Habana Vieja this morning and pay a visit the Museo de la Revolución. The museum is located in the former Presidential Palace, used to house all Cuban presidents from 1920 until 1959. Next we stop at El Callejón de los Artistas to see their community project or the striking Wilfredo Lam Center of Contemporary Art. After lunch in another private restaurant your guide will show you to the San Jose Arts and Crafts Market. This open air, covered market offers everything from canvas paintings to t-shirts and handicrafts. In the afternoon we visit La Plazuela del Angel. Here children are encouraged to chase their dreams as they train to participate in the circus after school. This evening our farewell dinner is served in a great, private restaurant. Following dinner we attend a

performance at the Habana Café.
Meals included: B, L, D

Day 7, March 24 RETURN TO THE US Today you will be transferred to the airport for your flight back to the U.S. Make certain you have the half of the visa you retained during arrival ready for Cuban Customs. **Meals included: B**

DEPARTS: MARCH 18, 2018

PRICE PER PERSON

Double Occupancy \$4,185

Single Occupancy \$5,035

Please arrange a share (note we cannot guarantee a share and early bookers have a better chance of getting one. If the arrangement does not work out, you will both be liable to the single supplement costs.)

Air, Visa & Departure Tax \$530

Airfare is subject to change and must be purchased through IE.

INCLUSIONS:

- Airport assist by International Expeditions representative on day of departure from Miami
- Professional service of a local guide and an International Expedition's Expedition Leader
- Transportation in an air-conditioned motor coach
- Meals as per noted in the itinerary (B,L,D): breakfasts, lunches, dinners
- 2 drinks per each lunch and dinner (local beer, soda, bottled water)
- Bottled water while touring with the guide and driver
- Gratuities for included meals, local specialty guides when required and porters

EXCLUSIONS:

- Meals not mentioned in the program as included
- Optional activities and other expenses of a personal nature
- Tips for hotel maids and live music during meals
- International airfare, associated fees or taxes, baggage charges - priced separately and estimated at \$440
- Gratuities: National Guide - 10 CUC, Driver - 5 CUC, Expedition Leader - 10 USD
[All recommended tipping is per person, per day]

DEPOSITS & PAYMENTS: A \$600 per person deposit to book. Final payment due 90 days prior to departure.

CANCELLATIONS: \$300 per person from time of booking till 90 days prior. 100% of trip costs from 89 -0 days prior to departure.

International Expeditions has prepared an itinerary that follows the guidelines set forth by the United States Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control to engage, organize and conduct people-to-people travel to Cuba. This type of travel engages participants in meaningful interactions with individuals in Cuba. Each person wishing to be considered for participation in the People-to-People Educational Program to Cuba should complete, sign and return this form. Should you decide to participate and be accepted, this information will be used to obtain your visa and documentation. This is an opportunity to engage with the people of Cuba. You must agree to participate in all scheduled People to People activities in compliance with the terms and regulations pertaining to the general licensing. IE is an organization that sponsors and organizes educational exchange programs to promote contact with the Cuban people i.e. People-to-People Educational Programs. If you are unwilling or unable to comply then you do not qualify to travel with International Expeditions to Cuba.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Phyllis Stoller
The Women's Travel Group

646-309-5607

Phyllis@thewomenstravelgroup.com

www.thewomenstravelgroup.com

116 East 63rd Street, Suite 4A New York, NY 10065