



Journey to Havana, Cuba

Texas Bar Association

A People to People Educational exchange

Tuesday March 29 - Sunday April 3, 2016

Itinerary Subject to Change

Organized by Cuba Cultural Travel

Monday March 28

Travelers arrive in Miami independently and check in to the **Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel** (located 5 minutes from MIA). Free shuttle service to and from the Miami airport every 20 minutes. Look for signs indicating where hotel shuttles pick up passengers in the departure level (2nd floor). Taxis are also available. 950 NW Le Jeune Road, Miami, Florida 33126. Ph. (305) 929-0116. The cost of this overnight stay is included in the cost of the trip.

Day 1

Tuesday March 29

7:30 am

Meet in hotel lobby and depart for Miami Airport. Group will be flying on **HavanaAir Charters, flight #EA3145**, operated by **Eastern Airlines**.

Charters have 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.*

10:00 am

Depart for Havana. Flight time is 1 hour.

11:00 am

Arrive in Havana. Clear immigration and customs and baggage, a process that takes about an hour and a half. You will be greeted by your escort who will assist you to your bus.

En route to lunch, we see the **Plaza de la Revolucion**. The center of government, this area contains most of the offices of the main ministries and is often used for massive rallies, including that of the Pope in 2012.

1:00 pm

Lunch at **El Litoral**. This restaurant is located on the Malecón and was recently acquired from the State by a co-op of restaurateurs.

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. All rooms include a safe deposit box free of charge.

Hotel Parque Central ★★★★★

Neptuno, esquina Prado y Zulueta, Havana, CubaTel. 53 7 860 6627

Our rooms will not be ready, your bags will be dropped off at the hotel and will be waiting in your room upon your return while we depart on foot to explore the historic area surrounding the hotel.

Stroll down the tree lined **Paseo de Marti (el Prado)**, a tree lined pedestrian promenade leading to the sea. This area includes the home of Cuba's former president **Jose Miguel Gomez** and the lavish **Palacio de los Matrimonios**.

We see the massive renovation project of the **Capitolio** and continue to the **Parque de la Fraternidad**. This is "Old Taxi" central; here you will find all make and models of American cars from the 50's. It is a great opportunity to mingle and converse with taxi drivers and engage in their favorite subject; their cars.

4:00 pm

CUBA IN TRANSITION: The Rule of Law as part of Cuban Reforms.

Lecture by Rafael M. Hernandez. Rafael is a lawyer, historian, author, and editor of *Temas*, a Cuban quarterly in the field of social sciences and humanities. *Temas* is considered the leading intellectual publication in Cuba and an important source of independent thought.). He has taught as a visiting professor at Harvard, Columbia, the University of Texas, the University of Puerto Rico; CIDE and ITAM in Mexico, and served as visiting scholar at the Wilson Center (Washington DC) and other US and Latin American academic institutions.

He has published widely on Cuban and U.S. policies, inter-American relations, international security, migration, and Cuban culture, civil society, and politics Rafael co-authored "The History of Havana" and has recently returned to Cuba after role as adjunct professor at Columbia University. This lecture will take place in the Hotel Conference Center.

6:15 pm

Meet in hotel lobby and walk a few steps from the hotel to **Centro Asturianos** for a private musical performance and welcome dinner. Cocktails at Bar Asturias with a private performance of Cuban music and dance. The band leader is **Professor Alberto Faya** has been working as a musician, professor and researcher within the Cuban musical world since 1973. He has won national awards in music and musicology. He will be joined by several young musicians who will treat us to a lively journey through the history of Cuban music.

During this exchange Profs. Faya will explain the evolution of music in Cuba from the time of discovery to contemporary Cuban sounds, including simple peasant tunes from the 1600s, traditional African tribal songs brought over by slaves, and popular favorites of the 1940s & 50s and the long relationship between American musicians and composers and Cuban musicians and composers. The U.S. travelers are encouraged to ask questions and share their perspectives and opinions throughout this presentation. This will be followed by a short performance by the Cuban artists designed to demonstrate the evolution of music in Cuba previously discussed. At the conclusion of the performance, there will be a question and answer session, facilitated by Prof. Faya in which the U.S. travelers are invited to ask questions to each of the Cuban performers. Individuals also have an opportunity to respond to questions from the Cuban performers about culture, music and life in the USA.

7:30 pm

We dine at **Las Terrazas** on the 3rd floor of Centro Asturianos.

Day 2

Wednesday March 30

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

10:00 am

Meet in the hotel and walk a few steps from the hotel to attend a private dance performance by the **Compañia Irene Rodríguez**. We will receive a warm welcome by choreographer and lead dancer **Irene Rodríguez** and her company at the **Centro Asturianos**. Irene is considered by many to be the finest flamenco dancer in Cuba.

Following the performance there will be an educational exchange with **Cuban dancers** from the independent dance company as well as with its director, **Irene Rodríguez**. We will discuss among other topics; cultural education programs in Cuba and the United States, the challenges of professional dance as a career in both countries, and the economic opportunities of dancers who choose to remain in Cuba rather than to practice their art form abroad. Additionally, there will be a broader discussion of cultural life in the U.S. and Cuba and life more generally in both the U.S. and Cuba.

Continue on foot for **Havana Vieja**. Please make sure to wear comfortable shoes!

Visit the **Plaza Vieja**. This plaza is the oldest plaza in Havana, dating from the 16th century. Learn about the massive historic preservation program which began in this Plaza under the leadership of City Historian, Eusebio Leal.

Visit the **Plaza de San Francisco**, a cobbled plaza surrounded by buildings dating from the 18th century, dominated by the baroque **Iglesia and Convento de San Francisco** dating from 1719.

See the **Escuela de Taller** to learn about the Restoration Project underway in Havana Vieja. This urban rehabilitation project is preserving the architectural history and cultural heritage of this beautiful city. We 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. We will be accompanied by the director **Juan Jesús Gesen** who lead us on a private tour through the various schools of expertise.

1:00 pm

Group lunch at **Paladar Los Mercaderes**. This impeccably restored mansion is a welcome retreat from the bustling streets of the old city. We enjoy delightful tapas and a selection of seasonal specialties. Our affable host Yamil will entertain us with his charming anecdotes as will the house musicians.

We stroll through **Plaza De Armas**, a scenic tree-lined plaza formerly at the center of influence in Cuba. It is surrounded by many of the most historic structures in Havana as well as important monuments.

Experience the **Taller de Grafica Experimental**. The Taller is more than Havana's printmaking 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 and director Yamilis Brito and other participating artists.

The printmakers will share their personal experiences as independent Cuban artists and artisans and their views on Cuban society. They also will discuss, among other topics: their equipment (considered outdated by U.S. standards), their limited access to new technology and materials, and how these challenges influence their professional aspirations. The U.S. travelers are encouraged to ask questions and share their own experiences and perspectives about the role of art and artists in the U.S. The U.S. travelers will be divided into smaller groups, each accompanied by an artist who will bring the group to his or her workspace, explain the art of printmaking, display the current art being produced and described his or her work to the U.S. travelers. The U.S. travelers are encouraged to ask questions throughout this process.

Non-Lawyers will continue with the walking tour of Havana Vieja.

2:00 pm

Lawyers board bus and depart for the neighborhood of Playa for a 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 included: the structure of the Cuban legal system, lawyer regulation, dispute-settlement procedures and a description of typical cases handled by the Law Colectivo. Host: Sra. Nuris Pinero Sierra (Director, Bufete de Servicios Especializados).

4:00 pm

Return to the hotel.

6:45 pm

Group meets in the hotel lobby and departs for dinner.

7:30 pm

Dinner at **Paladar Río Mar** at Puente Hierro.

Day 3

Thursday March 31

9:30 am

Lecture by **Professor Carlos Alzugaray Treto** on **U.S./Cuba Relations**. Professor Alzugaray was the Former Cuban Ambassador to the European Union and former Director of the Institute of Foreign Relations. Professor Alzugaray will be accompanied by several English speaking students from Institute of Foreign Relations. Professor Alzugaray will then lead a question and answer session with the group and we have time for open dialogue and exchange. This lecture will take place in the Hotel Conference Cent

These activities are meant to provide meaningful interaction between the U.S. travelers and individuals in Cuba and to learn about, among other things, how the American people do not always agree with the decisions of their government; how the American people view the current economic embargo and what steps can be taken by both sides to improve relationships. The U.S. travelers learned about, among other things, how the Cuban people do not always agree with decisions of their own government and how they feel about the current economic sanctions; how the Cuban people have a long and positive relationship with American culture and how most Cubans have relatives and friends residing in America who share information with them.

11:30 am

Walk the Prado for our lecture and lunch at **Nazdarovie** - a new Cuban-Soviet inspired restaurant on the Malécon. We will be greeted by **Gregory Biniowsky**, an attorney from Canada who moved to Cuba over 20 years ago. Six months ago Gregory and his Cuban wife Attorney Danelys Coz opened Nazdarovie as a personal 'oeuvre de coeur' & as a way to pay homage to the Soviet women who settled and established families in Cuba. They have created a space of nostalgia and memories for the thousands of Cubans who spent 'the best years of their youth' studying at universities in the USSR - a nostalgia which transcends politics and ideology.

Lecture by Havana-based Canadian attorney **Gregory Biniowsky**.

Gregory is a Canadian lawyer and political scientist who has lived in Cuba for more than 20 years, and has a diverse background involving a multitude of for-profit and nonprofit endeavors, including teaching at the University of Havana, doing consulting work for foreign companies exploring or setting up ventures in Cuba, and working as a consultant for the Canadian Embassy in Havana and the United Nations in Havana. Gregory presently works for the Canadian based international law firm *Gowlings Lafleur Henderson LLP*, focusing on offering strategic advice, business intelligence, and venture options to prospective investors and companies, from around the world, who looking at the Cuban market. Gregory is also the founding partner of *Havanada Consulting Inc.*, which is a non-profit consulting firm, specializing on giving advice to philanthropists, charitable foundations, and development NGOs who want to undertake or fund non-profit projects in Cuba. Gregory will share his personal insights into Cuban society, the evolving political landscape and the fast changing business and investment environment.

1:00 pm

Bus tour of **Modern Architecture** in Western Havana. Few people realize the important place Havana holds as a treasure trove of 20th Century architecture. Our tour will highlight some of the best examples to be found in this incredibly diverse area of the city where some of its most fascinating buildings were built using different architectural styles.

Our guide will be **Architect Universo Francisco Garcia Lorenzo**. Since 1988, Mr. Garcia has been important architect and restoration designer throughout Cuba. As the director of such high profile restoration projects as the Hotel Nacional, Tarara Beach Resort and more recently the National Art Schools Complex, Mr. Garcia has played an important role in designing or restoring many iconic Havana landmarks. His wide ranging talents include landscape design, interior design, acoustical engineering, conservation and historic preservation.

This exchange will give U.S. travelers an overview of the modern architectural heritage of Havana as well as highlighting cultural importance of buildings designed from 1920 to 1960. Havana is considered by many to have the most diverse collection of modern masterpieces in the New World. The U.S. visitors and Mr. Garcia will visit relevant buildings that are considered to be important representations of architectural design movements. During this time together, Mr. Garcia will engage the U.S. travelers in a discussion related to the various building on the itinerary, placing each building in historical context and explaining why it is relevant from a design standpoint.

See the **Christopher Colon Cemetery** in Havana with a self-employed docent. During our visit, the docent will give an explanation of the history of cemetery and explain the Cuban custom of constructing privately owned and maintained family mausoleums and memorials. The grounds of the cemetery are massive, covering over 7% of the land mass designated as the city of Havana. Our group visited a multitude of grave sites and memorials alongside our docent who engaged the group in questions related to burying the dead in Cuba. We also discuss the role of the Catholic Church in today's Cuba and how spiritual beliefs and burial customs have been affected by changes in government and society.

View the **Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA)**. One of the few major architectural projects completed in Cuba in the early 1960s, this remarkable post-revolution campus is the premier school in Cuba for students studying music, visual arts and performing arts. Castro commissioned Cuban architect Ricardo Porro and two Italian architects, Vittorio Garatti and Roberto Gottardi for this tuition-free, educational institute built on a former golf club. *"Cuba will count as having the most beautiful academy of arts in the world."* – Fidel Castro (1961). Visit the whimsical home and studio of artist **José 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.

This exchange will begin with a tour of the neighborhood by Mr. Fuster, who will be accompanied by several neighbors who have contributed to the construction. During this tour of the neighborhood, the Cubans will talk about how the community banded together to create Mr. Fuster's vision, and what effect the reconstruction of the neighborhood has had on the community. Throughout our visit, the U.S. travelers will be encouraged to ask questions and share their own perspectives and experiences about community and community redevelopment in the U.S.

2:30 pm

Artist studio visit: **The Merger** A collaborative venture created under the name of "The Merger" consisting of artists **Mario Miguel Gonzalez** (Mayito), **Niels Moleiro Luis**, and **Alain Pino**. The Merger recreates ubiquitous and mundane objects on a grand scale, presenting palatable socio-political metaphors to their viewers.

The **independent Cuban artists** who are part of this collaborative art venture created under the name of "**The Merger**" as well as their **business representative, Sandra Tomacelli, in their private residence**, which serves as a gallery. This exchange with the individual artists displaying and describing the meaning of their artwork. The CCT representative will facilitate a discussion focusing on, among other topics; their insights and opinions about art, the role of the artist as both creator and entrepreneur, the influence of American art buyers on the Cuban marketplace, and the role of Cuban and U.S. art in the U.S., Latin America and the world. The U.S. travelers can be separated into smaller groups to allow for more intimate dialogue with the Cuban artists. Each artist will have an opportunity to discuss their work with U.S. visitors and describe the inspiration, creative processes and practical challenges of their work, as well as life more generally in Cuba. The U.S. travelers are encouraged to ask questions and share their opinions and perspectives on this work.

3:30 pm

Tour the iconic **Hotel Nacional de Cuba** overlooking the Straits of Florida and the *Malecón*. When it opened in 1930, Cuba was a prime travel destination many illustrious guests including Frank Sinatra, Ava Gardner, John Wayne, Marlene Dietrich, Marlon Brando, and Ernest Hemingway.

4:30 pm

Return to the hotel. Remainder of afternoon free.

7:30 pm

Dinner 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.

Day 4

Friday April 1

9-10:30 am

Lecture by Attorney Lázaro Núñez Montero.

Note: Final half hour will be dedicated to question and answer session This lecture will take place in the Hotel Conference Center.

12:30 pm

Lunch at **La Xana**.

2:00 pm

Visit the **Museum of Cuban Art** with art historian **Ayelet Ojeda**. The museum is dedicated exclusively to Cuban Art from the earliest days of colonialism to the latest generation of Cuban artists. Aylet will provide an introduction to Cuban art and a brief historical explanation of Cuban art from the time of colonialism to present day contemporary artwork and artists. During our visit, Aylet will share views and opinions about the art and encourages the U.S. visitors to share their own opinions and perspectives about the artwork.

3:30 pm

Visit to **Callejon de Hamel** where our host and guide will be Cuban scholar **Elias Aseff** will explain the role of African religion and culture in Cuba and the importance of Santería in everyday life. He will also explain how Afro-Cuban religion has influenced the evolution of Cuban culture.

A short walk away is 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. The priest and several residents of the house will discuss, among other topics; the role of the house as a spiritual center for their community, their stories and songs dedicated to the deity that guide each one, as well as other topics of cultural interest and life more generally in both the U.S. and Cuba. The U.S. travelers may ask questions and share their perspectives and opinions throughout the exchange. U.S. travelers and Cubans discuss, among other topics; the meaning of some of these items, the importance of art and imagery within the Afro-Cuban religions as well as religions prevalent in the U.S.

Tour an 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. This is an educational exchange with independent vendors of the **Havana Craft Market** in Havana Vieja. During our visit to the craft market visitors will receive a brief orientation of the marketplace and encouraged to engage Cuban individuals selling various handmade crafts and artwork from privately operated stalls. While the Cuban government controls nearly every element of commerce in the country, these vendors are part of a new generation of private entrepreneurs who are able to earn income in a free market environment without government intervention.

Dinner on your own. Suitable recommendations will be provided.

Day 5 Saturday April 2

9:00 am-10:30am Lecture by Economics professor **Juan Alejandro Triana** who is a notable scholar in his own right. Juan Jr. is a faculty member of the Department of Economics at the Instituto Politecnico Jose Echevarria. His research and publications have focused on micro-financing in Cuba as well as US-Cuba economic relations. Together they will discuss various topics related to the rapidly changing business and economic landscape in Cuba. They will cover the some of the practical challenges that economic reforms are presenting to a society that until recently had no commercial activity. Additionally he will discuss the idea of micro-financing in Cuba and the potential benefits of government support of small business owners. Note: Final half hour will be dedicated to question and answer session. This lecture will take place in the Hotel Conference Center.

Visit to the **Egido Marketplace**. While the Cuban government controls nearly every element of commerce in the country, these vendors are part of a new generation of private entrepreneurs. The market has many organic fruits, vegetables and meats that are grown and subsequently transported from the countryside into Havana. Cubans rely on these marketplaces to supplement the monthly food rations they receive from the State and as well as those items that are not readily available in State run ration stores.

This activity will result in meaningful interaction between U.S. travelers and individuals in Cuba, because U.S. travelers better understand how private enterprise has provided new economic opportunity for Cuban citizens. This exchange also results in meaningful interaction between the U.S. travelers and individuals in Cuba as the Cubans learned about, among other things: the trend for American consumers who are seeking locally grown organic foods in favor of corporate farmed food; the growing popularity of locally produced food products in the U.S. and an increase in farmers' markets in urban areas; the effects of factory farmed food on the body, childhood obesity, slow food movement, and the lack of quality goods in urban areas.

11:30 am Board our bus and depart for **La Finca Vigía**. Formerly the home of Ernest Hemingway, today it still houses his expansive collection of books. It was here where he wrote two of his most celebrated novels: *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *The Old Man and the Sea*. Please keep in mind that there are restrictions on passage to preserve the house in the intact state that Hemingway left it.

Visit **Finca Yoandra**, a farm located in the neighborhood of Mantilla that produces more than a 100 varieties of organic fruits, vegetables, and medicinal plants. The farm also serves as a community center, providing social programs and leisurely activities for the local elderly. We will get a chance to meet and talk to some of the senior citizens.

1:00 pm Lunch at the farm's restaurant **El Divino**.

Drive to the picturesque fishing village of **Cojímar**. Ernest Hemingway loved this little seaside town. He kept his boat, **El Pilar**, in the harbor of Cojímar and used this village setting for his story *The Old Man and the Sea*, which won him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954.

4:00 pm Return to the hotel.

7:30 pm Farewell 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.

Evening entertainment to be determined.

Day 6 Sunday April 3

8:00 am Hotel check-out and board bus.

11:00 am Airport check in.

12:00 pm Flight departs Havana for Miami on **HavanaAir Charter Flight #EA3148**, operated by Eastern Airlines. Flight duration is 1 hour.

1:00 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 minimum 5-7CUC per day, per passenger for your guide and minimum 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

**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.*