

Cuba

Art, culture, music, history and politics in Commonwealth Club style. Meet experts, writers, artists and musicians and witness the vibrant intellectual and artistic talent for which Cuba is known.

Havana and the Viñales Valley

December 10-17, 2014





Itinerary

Wednesday, December 10 US/Havana

Depart from Miami on our charter flight for Havana. (Travelers arrive into Miami the prior evening, independently.) After a traditional Cuban lunch, take an orientation walk down the Prado before checking into the Hotel Parque Central, perfectly located in the central part of Havana. Enjoy a welcome drink on the roof or our hotel, before dinner at one of the Cuba's best restaurants. (L,D)

Thursday December 11 Havana

Enjoy a morning lecture and discussion with historian, author, and journalist Rafael M. Hernandez. Continue on a walking tour of Old Havana, including the Plaza de Armas, Plaza de la Catedral, Plaza de San Francisco (with buildings dating from the 18th century) and the Plaza Vieja, the oldest in Havana, dating from the 16th century. Meet artists at the Taller de Grafica Experimental. More than Havana's printmaking workshop, it is a studio and a school. Enjoy dinner in a private home at one of Havana's top *paladares*. (B,L,D)

Friday, December 12 Havana

Attend a briefing by our foreign service staff at the United States Interests Section which represents U.S. interests in Cuba. We then visit Callejon de Hamel, a street in Havana known for its lively murals, and an area popular with followers of the Santeria religion. Our host and guide will be Cuban scholar Elias Aseff. After lunch at the Hotel Nacional, meet with residents at the Santovenia Home for the Elderly. For those interested, join professional dancers at La Casa del Son for a dance demonstration and lesson. (B,L,D)

Saturday, December 13 Havana

Lecture and discussion with Prof. Carlos Alzugaray, Former Cuban Ambassador to the European Union. Take an architect-led tour of Western Havana, a treasure trove of 20th Century architecture, including the University of Havana and the Christopher Colon Cemetery. Enjoy fabulous views La Torre Restaurant, which boasts the highest point in Havana. Visit the Organoponico de Alamar, an agricultural cooperative. Enjoy dinner on your own. (B,L)

Sunday, December 14 Viñales Valley-

Considered by many to be the most beautiful place in Cuba, the Viñales Valley National Monument holds stunning landscapes, and is the premier tobacco growing area in the world. Led by a family member, we a tour a beautiful 40-acre privately owned farm. We have lunch with the family at the farm. Then visit Mario Pelegrin who created a charming community art, education, and garden project dedicated to local children. Return to Havana for dinner on your own. (Depending on the schedule, attend a national baseball game. (B,L)

Monday, December 15 Havana

Attend a private dance performance of the Compañía Irene Rodríguez (flamenco). Meet Irene and the company, considered by many to be the finest flamenco dancers in Cuba. Pending ministerial approval, visit Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA) the premier school in Cuba for students studying music, visual and performing arts. Lunch is at the whimsical home of artist Jose Fuster, who has made a major contribution to rebuilding and decorating the fishing town of Jaimanitas. Experience the beautiful home of collector and art dealer, Milagros Borges. Finally attend a lecture on Cuban music by Prof. Alberto Faya. Dinner at Havana Gourmet Restaurant, which used to be the old American Club. (B,L,D)

Tuesday, December 16 Havana

Morning lecture with professor from the University of Havana on gender and the role of women in Cuba today. Then visit the Museum of Cuban Art with an art historian and curator. The museum is dedicated exclusively to Cuban Art. After lunch, explore the Mercado Cuatro Caminos and speak with vendors and customers to understand how the local economy works, the use of convertible pesos, dual currency, and ration cards. Tonight enjoy a farewell dinner at La Guari-da, one of the best *paladares* in Havana. It is housed on the third floor of a large, old town house carrying the charming ambience of the 1920s. (B,L,D)

Wednesday, December 17 Havana/US

Check out of the hotel and depart for the airport for our flight to Miami. (Please note that charter flight times are subject to change. Details on air arrangements into and out of Miami will be mailed with confirmation.) (B)

*Itinerary is subject to change

What to Expect

Travelers must be in overall good health and with good mobility in order to enjoy this program fully. There is considerable walking over uneven terrain and old city streets throughout the tour. Many places have stairs without handrails. In addition, many buildings do not have elevators, or the elevators may not be functioning. Restaurants in private homes often require walking up several flights of stairs. This is a busy program, with many activities. We are sure you will enjoy the trip, but want you to be aware of the physical requirements and pace.

Trip Details

Dates:

December 10–17, 2014

Group Size:

Pricing is based on a minimum of 8 travelers and a maximum of 16 (not including staff).

Cost:

\$5,045, per person, based on double occupancy; \$450 Single room supplement (limited), includes all land and charter flight from Miami.

Included:

7 nights accommodation at 4-5 Star Hotel Parque Central Havana (standard room); round trip airfare MIA-HAV-MIA; meals as listed in itinerary (B=Breakfast L=Lunch and D=dinner. Includes at least one beverage: water, beer, mojito, or soft drink. Wine with welcome and farewell dinners.); bottled water; air conditioned bus throughout the trip equipped with water; admission to all museums and public buildings listed in itinerary; speaker fees and conference room rentals; gratuities for all group activities – including meals, baggage handling, bus driver, and local Cuban guide; Commonwealth Club representative and local Cuban tour guide; Cuban Tourist Visa; Cuban Medical Insurance for those under 80 years of age (health and evacuation); Compliance with US Treasury Department.

Not included:

Airfare to Miami; airline baggage fees; meals and beverages other than listed on itinerary; individualized hotel expenses (mini bar, room service, laundry fees, internet); personal activities and additional gratuities; Havana Airport departure tax.

*The Commonwealth Club has had a license to operate *People to People* programs in Cuba since 2011. Our license is up for renewal in November 2014, and we are currently awaiting renewal.



Terms and Conditions:

Reservations: A \$1,000 per person deposit, along with a completed and signed Reservation Form, will reserve a place for participants on this program. The balance of the trip is due 90 days prior to departure and *must be paid by check*.

Cancellation and Refund Policy: Notification of cancellation must be received in writing. At the time we receive your written cancellation, the following penalties will apply:

- 91 days or more prior to departure: \$500 per person
- 90-60 days to departure: \$1,000 deposit
- 59-1 days prior to departure: 100% fare

Tour can also be cancelled due to low enrollment. CWC does not accept liability for cancellation penalties related to domestic or international airline tickets purchased in conjunction with the tour.

Trip Cancellation and Interruption Insurance: We strongly advise that all travelers purchase trip cancellation and interruption insurance as coverage against a covered unforeseen emergency that may force you to cancel or leave trip while it is in progress. A brochure describing coverage will be sent to you

upon receipt of your reservation.

Medical Information: Participation in this program requires that you be in good health. It is essential that persons with any medical problems and related dietary restrictions make them known to us well before departure.

Itinerary Changes & Trip Delay: Itinerary is based on information available at the time of printing and is subject to change. We reserve the right to change a program's dates, staff, itineraries, or accommodations as conditions warrant. If a trip must be delayed, or the itinerary changed, due to bad weather, road conditions, transportation delays, airline schedules, government intervention, sickness or other contingency for which CWC or its agents cannot make provision, the cost of delays or changes is not included.

Limitations of Liability: CWC and Owners, Agents, and Employees act only as the agent for any transportation carrier, hotel, ground operator, or other suppliers of services connected with this program ("other providers"), and the other providers are solely responsible and liable for providing their respective services. CWC shall not be held liable for (A) any damage to, or loss of, property or injury to, or death of, persons occasioned

directly or indirectly by an act or omission of any other provider, including but not limited to any defect in any aircraft, or vehicle operated or provided by such other provider, and (B) any loss or damage due to delay, cancellation, or disruption in any manner caused by the laws, regulations, acts or failures to act, demands, orders, or interpositions of any government or any subdivision or agent thereof, or by acts of God, strikes, fire, flood, war, rebellion, terrorism, insurrection, sickness, quarantine, epidemics, theft, or any other cause(s) beyond their control. The participant waives any claim against CWC for any such loss, damage, injury, or death. By registering for the trip, the participant certifies that he/she does not have any mental, physical, or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for him/herself or other participants. CWC shall not be liable for any air carrier's cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket to or from the departure city. Baggage and personal effects are at all times the sole responsibility of the traveler. Reasonable changes in the itinerary may be made where deemed advisable for the comfort and well-being of the passengers.

RESERVATION FORM DECEMBER 10-17, 2014

NAME 1 _____

NAME 2 _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____

CELL _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

PAYMENT:

Here is my deposit of \$_____ (\$1,000 per person) for ____ place(s).

___ Enclosed is my check (make payable to *Commonwealth Club*). OR ___ Charge my deposit to my ___ Visa ___ MasterCard ___ AMEX

CARD# _____

EXPIRES _____

SECURITY CODE _____

AUTHORIZED CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

After receipt of your deposit, a confirmation packet will be sent with several forms for you to complete. Final payment must be paid by check and is due 60 days prior to departure.

Tour Conditions: **(It is required that you initial in following three spaces and sign below)**

___ Travel to Cuba under the People to People license requires that everyone must participate in our scheduled activities. Therefore, I intend to comply with this Office of Foreign Assets Control requirement and attend the scheduled activities.

___ I certify that I have not recently been treated for, nor am I aware of any physical or other condition or disability that would create a hazard to myself or other members of this tour.

___ I understand that the Commonwealth Club is unable to accept or retain any person as a tour passenger who may require special physical assistance, a wheelchair, or special attention because of a medical condition unless personal arrangements have been made.

___ I/We have read the Terms and Conditions for this program and agree to them.

SIGNATURE _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM ALONG WITH YOUR DEPOSIT TO:

**Commonwealth Club Travel
595 Market St., 2nd floor
San Francisco, CA 94105**

You may also fax the form to 415.597.6729

You've always wanted to go. Now is the time.