



**Holiday Trip 4**  
**Dec 26, 2015 – Jan 2, 2016**  
**Havana**

*Celebrate the end of 2015 and the beginning of 2016 with fellow U.S. travelers and new Cuban friends you will meet along the way. You will start and finish in Havana, the “capital of all Cubans” and the heart of Cuban culture and history. In the middle, we will spend a night in Viñales, in the province of Pinar del Rio – one of the most beautiful, interesting and fun places on the island. This program offers the unique opportunity to stay exclusively in private bed and breakfasts while in Viñales. In Havana, we will stay in the Melia Cohiba – one of Havana’s finest hotels. The program features private concerts, meetings with top experts, and wonderful site visits, while also leaving considerable free time to explore on your own.*

Saturday, Dec 26

- 2:30 pm **Depart Miami on World Atlantic flight K88570**, arriving in Havana at 3:30 pm.
- 4:30 pm **Upon arrival, meet your CET representative and Cuban guide. We will take a short orientation driving tour**, stopping off at **Revolutionary Square**, the gathering place for political demonstrations and the home to many important government offices, and the **Morro Castle**, a centuries old Spanish Fortress overlooking the Bay of Havana and the city skyline.
- 5 pm **Check-in at Meliá Cohiba Hotel.** Located in the modern district of Vedado and facing the famous Malecón (seawall), it is a leading business and meeting hotel with stunning views of the city and the sea.
- 6 pm **Socio-economic discussion with urban planner Miguel Coyula**, whose presentation will touch on housing, infrastructure, investment and restoration programs. It’s bound to leave you with a better understanding of why Havana looks the way it does today and possibilities moving forward.
- 7:30 pm **Welcome dinner at El Cocinero.** This lovely restaurant is housed in a former factory. Home to Havana’s hip, you might think you are in Soho or Madrid. **Following dinner walk next door for live music, art and photography at La Fabrica de Arte Cubana.** Rock star X Alfonso has turned this into meeting spot for a young, eclectic crowd of Cubans and foreigners.

Sunday, Dec 27

- 10 am **Walking tour of the Old City.** Wander through the **Plaza Vieja**, the oldest plaza in Havana, dating from the 16th century. See 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. Visit **Plaza de la Catedral** and the Catedral de San Cristóbal de La Habana. Visit the **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.

- 11:30 am **Visit to the studio of Wilay**, an upcoming artist that specializes in abstract sculptures and paintings. Calle Tejadillo, No. 53 apt 6, entre Cuba y Aguiar. 53864429.
- 12 pm **Lunch at Doña Eutimia paladar.** Famous for its *ropa vieja* and frozen mojitos, this cozy paladar made Newsweek Magazine's top 100 restaurants in the world in 2012. The restaurant's location in the beautiful cathedral square is unbeatable.
- 2 pm **Visit to the Museum of Cuban Art.** We will be accompanied by **Nelson Herrera**, an art historian, who will provide an overview of Cuban art and artists over the last 4 centuries.
- 4 pm **Spend the afternoon at Café Madrigal with Frank Delgado**, renowned singer and songwriter, for a discussion about the nueva trova movement in Cuba, followed by a musical performance. **Café Madrigal**, owned and run by film director Rafael Rosales, is housed in a beautiful colonial mansion with the walls lined with captivating artwork. Enjoy tasty tapas and cocktails.

*Evening free*

#### Monday, Dec 28

- 10 am **Visit to 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. The beautiful grounds and bizarre tales from Hemingway's many years in Cuba are captivating.
- 12 pm **Lunch at Café Laurent**, a recently opened paladar located in the beautiful Vedado District. Blocks from the Hotel Nacional, this penthouse apartment has been converted into a lovely rooftop restaurant.
- 2 pm Visit the **Christopher Colon Cemetery**, one of the oldest and most prestigious cemeteries in Latin America.
- 4 pm **Visit to the Nostalgic Cars restoration garage.** Owners Nidialys Acosta and Julio Alvarez have taken advantage of the recent economic opening to put together a fleet of 20 plus pristine "clasicos" to provide professional service to their clientele. We will visit the garage to see how they restore these beauties from the 1950s.

*Evening free*

#### Tuesday, Dec 29

- 8:30 am **Depart for Viñales.** Considered by many to be the most beautiful place in Cuba, the Viñales Valley National Monument holds stunning landscapes. The area is also famous for being the premier tobacco growing area in the world.
- 11 am Our first stop will be at **the home of a local tobacco farmer**, who will teach us about the cultivation and production process, followed by a rolling demo. He might even light up a cigar or two for the group.
- 12:30 pm **Enjoy lunch on the grounds of a local farm**, Finca Paraiso Agroecologica (the agro-ecological Paradise Farm), where we will learn about Cuban agriculture, while indulging in an organic meal.
- 3 pm **Check-in at bed and breakfasts, known as "casas particulares," or "private homes."** Since the 1990s Cuban families have been permitted to rent rooms out of their family homes to

foreigners. Featuring comfortable accommodations and ample privacy, it's a great way to interact with everyday Cubans.

7 pm            **Enjoy dinner on the grounds of a local farm**, Finca Paraiso Agroecologica (the agro-ecological Paradise Farm), where we will learn about Cuban agriculture and tobacco production, while indulging in an organic meal.

8:30 pm        **Attend salsa-dancing lessons** in the town square. Side-by-side with Cuban dancers, we'll learn new salsa techniques.

#### Wednesday, Dec 30

8:30 am        **Enjoy a morning hike with a local guide through tobacco fields**. Talk to your guide about the possibility to try the excursion on horseback.

11 am           Depart for Havana.

12:30 pm       On the way back to Havana we will **visit a small country town where Mario Pelegrin, a community activist, has created a charming neighborhood project dedicated to local children**. In this tranquil setting, a collection of rustic cabins provide a home for amateur art programs. This wonderful program gives local kids the opportunity to have fun while learning new skills in the areas of music, dance, theatre and art.

4 pm            **Visit to the home and studio of plastic artist Fuster**, who has converted his neighborhood into an art project featuring murals, plastic art and other designs.

5 pm            Check-in at the Hotel Cohiba

7 pm            **Dinner at Paladar Atelier**. This restaurant is equally known for its atmosphere and exquisite cuisine. The lighting and textures of the house, which was home to a pre-revolutionary senator, coupled with walls adorned in modern art, create a cozy, but modern setting. **We will have a discussion with tech entrepreneurs about their startups and telecommunications in Cuba.**

#### Thursday, Dec 31

9 am            **Visit to the Lazaro Salsita's paper mâché studio in Havana**, with the opportunity to purchase art and interact with artists

10 am           Visit to a home in Central Havana for a **discussion with Magia López and Alexey Rodriguez of the hip-hop/jazz duo Obsesión** about their experiences and views on race and gender equality in Cuba.

11 am           **Visit to the Callejón de Hamel**, a neighborhood that has been converted into a cultural center rich in Afro-Cuba religion, art and dance. Scholar **Elias Assef will provide an overview of Santeria** and other Cuban religions with African origins.

12:30 pm       **Lunch at La Paila**, a simple open air local restaurant specializing in meat and fish.

2 pm            **Visit to the arts and crafts market in Old Havana**. The largest handcraft market, la feria de San Jose features hundreds of artisans selling art, crafts, clothes and music.

*Afternoon and evening free – enjoy New Year's Eve festivities*

### Friday, Jan 1

- 10 am            **Depart for the eastern part of Havana** to spend the day in one of the 6 beaches of “Playas del Este”, just 18km far from the city center. This is where Habaneros go to escape the city heat.
- 7 pm            **Farewell dinner overlooking the Straits of Florida at the Hotel Nacional.** Tasty Cuban food served family style with a great view of the Havana sea wall and the old Spanish fortress. The setting brings many back to the 1950s, when the mafia held its annual meetings at this historic hotel.

### Saturday, Jan 2

- 11:30 am       Check out of Hotel and depart for airport. On our way we will stop at the **Plaza de Revolution** (Revolutionary Square), where Cubans gather for political acts and to pay homage to the country's leaders.
- 3:40 pm        **Depart Havana on American Airlines flight AA9471**, arriving in Miami at 4:40 pm.