

University of Rhode Island – Cuba Trip – January 2020



About Us

Cuba Educational Travel (CET) is a leader in educational travel to Cuba. CET unlocks the best of the island country by providing access to top academics, community programs, government organizations, leading cultural figures and everyday Cubans. CET's tailor-made programs enable travelers to experience Cuba's vibrant culture and gain a deeper understanding of the island, while ensuring full compliance with all U.S. regulations. Our travel programs are all about enrichment and giving back and allow travelers to deeply engage with Cubans they meet, and we focus on building relationships that will be mutually beneficial and empowering for everyone involved.

CET has been on the frontlines of educational and cultural collaboration, helping to bring Cubans to the U.S. and Americans to Cuba. With wide ranging experience and contacts in educational exchange, CET has organized short term study abroad program for hundreds of American universities undergraduate and graduate programs spanning from international relations, business, economics, law, the arts and more. CET also specializes in coordinating academic conferences, research delegations and visits by University leadership teams. CET believes strongly in promoting multi-faceted exchanges and has organized dozens of academic exchanges for Cuban academics, students and entrepreneurs in the US.

www.cubaeducationaltravel.com

Our Value Proposition

By leveraging this expertise and curated travel capabilities, Cuba Educational Travel offers a product that is unrivaled. Our strong presence on the island and in important academic and cultural circles allows us to provide unparalleled access and knowledge. This combined with the beauty and intrigue of Cuba and its people make for truly unforgettable experiences.



URI – JANUARY 2020

Friday, Jan 3

(D)

PM Arrival to Havana International Airport. (pending flight information)

Upon arrival, **meet your CET guide** at the exit of the Terminal and transfer to accommodations.

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.

Evening **Group welcome dinner at casas.** Enjoy a traditional Cuban meal prepared by your local hosts.

Saturday, Jan 4

(B, L)

9 am **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.

10:30 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.

12:30 pm **Lunch at Paladar Mas Habana**, a private restaurant that has become very popular for its delicious food and great ambiance.

2 pm **Visit to the Museum of the Revolution**, which holds hundreds of artifacts from pre- and post-revolutionary times and highlights the tense relationship between the U.S. and Cuba.

3 pm **Enjoy a tour in Nostalgic Cars and stop at their 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.

Stop at Revolution Square, the gathering place for political demonstrations and the home to many important government offices.

Internal, academic session organized by URI.

Evening free

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Sunday, Jan 5

(B, L)

9:30 am **Take pedestrian ferry across Havana Bay to the community of Regla**, a working-class, Afro-Cuban community with a thriving local culture, especially known for its strong ties to Santería and other Afro-Cuban religions. We will have 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.

12:30 pm **Light lunch at paladar El Cafe** in Old Havana.

Afternoon **Explore on your own and take part in activities that support the locals**, such as visiting art galleries, speaking with artisans, or hiring private cars and bicycle taxis. CET representatives will offer guidance on ensuring legal compliance with OFAC regulations.

Internal, academic session organized by URI.

Evening free

Monday, Jan 6

(B, L)

9 am Check-out and **depart for Trinidad**, a UNESCO world heritage site, known for its cobble stoned streets, pastel colored homes and small-town feel.

On the way, **visit Cienfuegos**, referred to as the “Pearl of the South,” is one of Cuba’s only cities to display French and Spanish architecture. Located on one of the country’s largest Bays, the city offers beautiful ocean front landscapes, and is deeply rich in culture.

12:30 pm **Lunch at las Mamparas**, a family run paladar. Quick and simple, the food is extraordinary and the family that runs it even better.

2 pm **Explore historic square in downtown Cienfuegos** with a local representative from the City Historian’s Office.

3 pm **Music and coffee** with the local chapter of UNEAC, the National Union of Artists and Writers of Cuba, featuring an **interactive discussion** with photographers, musicians and other locals.

4 pm Continue to Trinidad.

5:30 pm Check-in at casas particulares.

Evening free

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Tuesday, Jan 7

(B, L)

- 9 am **City tour with a local specialist** who will provide an overview of the city's history from an architectural, economic and infrastructural point of view.
- 11 am **Enjoy lunch at Paladar San Jose**, a nice restaurant with a diverse menu featuring everything from lobster to pizza.
- Afternoon **Visit to the archeological site San Isidro de los Destiladeros**, near the city of Trinidad, it was a typical sugar plantation, operated with slave labor in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Remnants of this thriving and historically underappreciated industrial heritage survive: an impressive owner's house, three-story tower, cistern, main sugar factory, ancillary buildings, and dikes. Almost all are in ruins or in imminent danger of collapse. We will discuss about sugar cane in Cuba and slavery.

Evening free

Wednesday, Jan 8

(B, L, D)

- 10 am Check-out and return to Havana. **Boxed lunch** en route.
- 3 pm Arrival. Check-in at casas particulares.
- 5 pm **Tour of the Hotel Nacional**, which is both a national monument and a beacon for Cuban history and culture. From the Cuban Missile Crisis to the American mob meeting in 1946, this hotel was the site of many important historical events during the 20th century.
- 5:45 pm **Visit the home and studio of a family of artists, at AltaMira art loft.** A few years ago, Edel Bordón and his family embarked on a journey to establish an art collective in their apartment building. Spearheaded by his wife Yamilé Pardo, the family created the AltaMira art space, which features an exhibition and workspace off of the main lobby and collaborations with neighbors.
- Enjoy a private performance by La Reina y La Real hip hop duo.** The group's music focuses on breaking down stereotypes in Cuban society, including machismo, healthy relationships, gender relations and race. At AltaMira
- 8 pm **Dinner at Bone'ma**, a cozy and modern cafe located in Vedado neighborhood, that demonstrates the delicacy of the international food cooked and prepared in Cuba.

Thursday, Jan 9

(B, L, Tapas)

- 9 am **Discussion with Dr. Marcelino Feal**, a Professor of General Surgery at the University Hospital Calixto García. Dr. Feal will provide an overview of the Cuban health care system, followed by a discussion.
- 11 am **Tour of the grounds of the University of Havana**, the country's oldest and most prestigious university.

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- 12:30 pm **Lunch 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 be joined by Cuban entrepreneurs**, for a discussion about their startups in Cuba.
- 3 pm **Enjoy a performance by Habana Compás Dance**, which encompasses the rich rhythm and flow of the island, performing traditional and modern dances born from their Spanish, Cuban and African-Cuban heritage.
- 6:30 pm **Private musical performance by** renowned singer and songwriter **Frank Delgado at Café Madrigal.** 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 while discussing about the *nueva trova* movement in Cuba.

Friday, Jan 10

(B, L, D)

- 9 am **Discussion with journalist Marc Frank.** Author of “Cuba Revelations” and the longest serving foreign correspondent in Cuba, Frank writes for Reuters, the Financial Times and the Economist, and is an authority on the Cuban economy. He will offer insight into important economic, political and social issues on the island and share colorful stories about being a reporter in Cuba.
- 10:30 am Check-out and **depart for Pinar del Río**, the western-most province, famous for its rich soil, tobacco production and spectacular scenery.
- 11:15 am **Visit Finca Tungasuk**, an organic farm in the outskirts of Havana. Enjoy a tour of the farm to see the crops and surroundings followed by a farm to table Cuban lunch.
- 2 pm Continue on to Viñales.
- 4 pm **Arrive in Viñales Valley.** 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.
- Check-in at casas particulares.
- 5:30 pm **Attend salsa-dancing lessons.** Side-by-side with Cuban dancers we’ll learn new salsa techniques.
- Evening Enjoy a home-cooked meal prepared by your hosts.

Saturday, Jan 11

(B, L, D)

- 9 am **Enjoy a morning walk with a local guide through tobacco fields**, where we will stop to see beautiful farms and learn about Cuban agriculture.
- 12 pm **Enjoy lunch on the grounds of a local farm, Finca Paraiso Argoecologica** (the agro-ecological Paradise Farm), where we will learn about Cuban agriculture and tobacco production while indulging in an organic meal.

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2 pm **Visit Cueva del Indio**, an underwater cave beneath the limestone mogotes, which are unique to Viñales.
OR
Horseback riding in Viñales National Park. Take in the unique and gorgeous scenery of the surrounding *mogotes* from horseback.

6 pm **Sunset farewell dinner at Balcon del Valle** (Balcony of the Valley). Enjoy the best traditions of rural Cuban cooking from one of the most beautiful lookouts of the valley.

Sunday, Jan 12

(B, L)

TBD Check-out of accommodations and depart for airport in Havana. **Boxed sandwiches en route.**
(pending flight information)