



SUNY Geneseo Alumni Travel  
February 19-25, 2023



# Day 1

## Sunday, February 19, 2023

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Arrival to Jose Marti International

**Check into private, boutique hotels.** For your stay, you will be staying in private hotels. As one of the main drivers and professions for folks in the private sector, there are certain licenses such as the one to operate and independent hotel. This first came to be known in the 1990s as a “casa particular”, however with the change in US Regulations on travel to Cuba, as well as the boom in tourism the past decade, there has been an increase in private enterprise in this sector. From private room, there are now airbnbs and even privately owned hotels.

**Orientation with guide.** Review the week ahead and sit down from your local guide to discuss money, and basic cultural expectations for your trip.

**Driving tour of the city in classic cars from the 1950's.** Classic cars are one of Cuba's first private businesses that emerged after the new economic changes, becoming an important source of income for local families. Cruise through the western side of Havana, exploring the Miramar and Siboney neighborhoods, before heading back west through Vedado, along the Malecon, and ultimately ending in Old Havana.

**Welcome dinner at Grados,** a private restaurant defender of the traditional Cuban cuisine and member of the slow food movement. Each dish has a history which is thoughtfully laid out by chef Raulito Bazuk. (pre-fix meal included).

(D)





## Day 2

# Monday, February 20, 2023

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**Socio-economic discussion with an urban planner**, 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.

**Behind-the-scenes walking tour of Old Havana.** Explore the historic center and learn about the history and architectural importance of Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1982. Venture to the side streets to witness Cuban life first-hand stopping at local bodegas, markets and the popular gathering places where Habaneros play dominos and discuss sports, transportation, jobs and other topics of their daily life.

**Lunch at Dona Eutimia.** Situated in Old Havana, this paladar is famous for its ropa vieja or frozen mojito. ( pre-fix meal Included)

**Beyond Roots tour with Adriana Heredia**, a start-up sharing Afro-Cuban culture with the world. Adriana hosts various Afro-Cuban experiences in Havana to educate foreign visitors about this subject. She also organizes community workshops on the Afro aesthetic and designs and sells Afro-Cuban products from her new storefront in Old Havana.

**Reception with a family of artists at AltaMira.** 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.

(B, L, R)





## Day 3

# Tuesday, February 21, 2023

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**Coffee and economics with young economist.** Over a traditional *cafecito*, sit with a Cuban economist for a discussion about the state of the Cuban economy.

**Visit to the Museum of Cuban Art.** We will be accompanied by an art historian, who will provide an overview of Cuban art and artists over the last four centuries.

**Lunch with Cuban entrepreneurs.** Get an overview of the Cuban economy, the new reforms and the private sector from the leading economic and entrepreneurial minds in Cuba (pre-fix meal included)

**Tour of La Finca Vigía.** Formerly the home of Ernest Hemingway, Finca Vigía still houses his expansive collection of books and his boat El Pilar. Your private guide will show you around and share some of the bizarre and captivating tales from Hemingway's many years in Cuba.

**Visit the home of La Reyna y Real,** a female hip hop/jazz duo. The group's music focuses on breaking down stereotypes in Cuban society, including machismo, healthy relationships, gender relations and race. They will share info about their interesting musical journey and insight into the challenges and opportunities young Cubans face.

**Afternoon Roundtable discussion on US-Cuba relations.** Explore the unique history and political relationship of Cuba and the United States with dialogue from experts. Understand the current relationship and what the future holds. It's no secret that the US Embargo on Cuba has had an impact on the past 60 plus years on the island.

*Ask your guide for dinner reservations at a Cuban paladar.*

(B, L)





## Day 4

# Wednesday, February 22, 2023

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**Journalist Marc Frank.** Author of *Cuba Revelations* and one of 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.

**Visit a centuries-old mansion in Vedado neighborhood.** Step inside this stately residence to discover what lies behind the crumbling facades of Havana's impressive mansions. Josie, who has lived in the house for over 60 years, will show us around and explain its rich history. Visit local businesses of the entrepreneurs with whom you met the day prior.

**Visit the Habana Compás Dance studio** for a show and discussion with instructors and students. Liliet Rivera, protege of the renowned List Alfonso Dance Company, established Habana Compas in 2004 to reclaim and preserve Cuba's dance heritage from Spain and Africa. In 2009, the masterful drummer Eduardo Cordova Diaz joined Liliet to lead the percussion group, and with this, Habana Compas' signature style was born. Almost 15 years later, Habana Compas has developed into an institution within Cuba, running a free school for youth in the afternoons.

**Swimming, coastal breezes and lunch at Marea**, a private restaurant in the outskirts of Havana with a stunning location by the sea, great food and atmosphere. Pay in cash – not included.

**\*\* Bring your swimsuit and a towel**

**Cigar tasting with a local expert at Café Madrigal.** He will explain the qualities and traits of fine Cuban cigars and how to properly light and smoke what is considered the finest tobacco in the world. **Café Madrigal**, owned and run by film director Rafael Rosales, is housed in a beautiful colonial mansion with the walls lined with captivating artwork.



# Day 5

## Thursday, February 23, 2023

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Check out of Boutique Lodging

Hands-on tech in Cuba – visit to a privately owned software solutions incubator for a hands on look at entrepreneurship in action. By now, you have learned that the island is filled with talent. Giulio Ricci and his business partners created a software solution company that services international clients. Visit his business and see it in action.

Depart for 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.

**Visit to a private farm in the valley owned by the large family of Concha and Paco Hernandez.** The descendants of Concha and Paco have farmed the same plot of land for many generations and their land is involved in the production of a multitude of fruits, vegetables, grain and tobacco. Members of the family will give us a tour of this beautiful 40-acre farm before bringing us back to the farmhouse. **Enjoy lunch at the farm.**

**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.

Visit with one of the best tobacco farmers in the area, Benito. Have fun enjoying beers and cigars while listening to some of Benito’s stories.

Dinner at a Viñales paladar.

**Dance Time.** Following dinner, get ready to learn some new moves with **private salsa dancing lessons with a private instructor.** Once you’ve got it down, head to the town square for an evening party with the Viñales townspeople.





## Day 6

# Friday, February 24, 2023

Return to Havana

Check into boutique hotels

Afternoon Activity (choose one)

- **Get down with Cuban Music.** Cocktails with Rafa Escalona, director and editor of AM/PM magazine, followed by a living room jam session with top Cuban musicians.
- **Behind-the-Scenes Art Tour.** Visit the homes and studios of independent Cuban Artists.

**Farewell dinner at Tierra,** Havana's newest international dining spot. Located inside a container in the Fábrica de Arte Cubano, the restaurant mirrors the eclectic crowd, serving dishes from around the world (pre-fix meal included)

Following dinner, enjoy live music, art and dancing at La Fabrika de Arte Cubano, the brainchild of Afro-Cuban fusion musician X-Alfonso, this is one Havana's finest new art projects, an intellectual nexus for live music, art expos and fashion shows that has turned into a meeting spot for a young, eclectic crowd of Cubans and foreigners.

(B, D)

Day 7  
Saturday, February 25, 2023

**Breakfast at your accommodations.**

**Depart for Jose Marti International Airport**

