



CUBAN MUSICIAN IN TRINIDAD BY LUCASH

CUBA

Exploring Culture and Community in Central Cuba

9 DAYS | Choose your dates

About this trip

Over the course of centuries, Cuba has been shaped by a blend of indigenous, European, and African influences. This program examines different aspects of the country's cultural heritage, from the 19th century sugar trade and its lasting impact, to the incorporation of various religious identities, to more recent history, like the 1959 revolution and Bay of Pigs invasion. Interact with Cuban people as you meet with modern-day artists, craftsmen, and engineers in their workshops. Plus, explore natural areas like Zapata National Park – a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Ramsar wetland – and go snorkeling to experience Cuba's marine biodiversity.

Your students will...

- Examine colonial architecture in Old Havana and discuss how the capital has been shaped by its history.
- Learn about the country's native inhabitants during a visit to a traditional Taíno Village, where the indigenous way of life is depicted through life-sized statues.
- Hike through caves, swim under a waterfall, and look for native flora and fauna in the mountains of El Nicho.
- Visit the Castillo de Jagua fortress, restored main square, and the Malecón promenade in Cienfuegos, the "Pearl of the South."
- Stroll the cobble streets and view the colorful houses of Trinidad.

Educational Connections



Natural History



Social Sciences



History &
Archaeology



Interdisciplinary
Studies

What's included?

- Bilingual local guide
- Driver
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Private transportation
- Meals
- Beverages with meals
- Carbon offsetting



CIENFUEGOS BY GUILLAUME BAVIERE

Itinerary

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

DAY 1 - HAVANA

Arrive in Havana. After clearing customs and immigration, a process that takes about one hour, a Cuban representative will welcome the group and transfer you to your accommodations. Stop by the Plaza de la Revolución along the way. The center of government, this area contains most of the offices of the main ministries and is often used for massive rallies, including when the Pope visited in 2012. This evening enjoy a welcome orientation and dinner at a local paladar. *Overnight at Hotel Ambos Mundos. (D)*

DAY 2 - HAVANA

After breakfast take a walking tour of Old Havana. Please make sure to wear comfortable shoes! Thanks in part to history and ideology, Cuba—and especially Havana—is a treasure trove of architectural styles spanning six centuries. With buildings dating from the 16th through the 19th centuries, Havana is perhaps one of the most authentic colonial city in the Americas. Since 1982, when the city became a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the government has embarked on an ambitious preservation and restoration program concentrated in the Old City. However, a severe lack of funding and materials has hampered efforts. Therefore, the decay and neglect of the past 40 years, coupled with the destructive tropical weather, continues to claim buildings every year. 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. Continue through 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 the Plaza Vieja, one of the oldest 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 Fototeca, Cuba's leading venue for photographic exhibitions, and visit the Escuela de Taller, where you will learn about the restoration project that is underway in Old Havana. This urban rehabilitation project is preserving the architectural history and cultural heritage of this beautiful city. Meet students, engineers, builders, woodworkers, and other craftsmen utilizing traditional handcrafting methods to preserve the authenticity of these once-resplendent structures. For lunch, enjoy traditional Cuban food at Paladar Doña Eutimia, a restored home in Old Havana. *Overnight at Hotel Ambos Mundos. (BLD)*

DAY 3 - HAVANA

Board the bus to visit Finca Vigía, the former house of Ernest Hemingway located on the outskirts of the city. Have lunch at a paladar. In the afternoon visit western Havana. The tour will highlight some of



FINCA VIGÍA BY MICHELLE KORCZYNSKI

the best architectural examples to be found in this incredibly diverse area. Explore the Vedado District—the city’s modern political and cultural center—and the Miramar District to the west, Havana’s most elegant quarter, whose main tree-lined avenue, Quinta Avenida, is flanked by splendid villas. Visit the iconic Hotel Nacional de Cuba, which overlooks the Straits of Florida, and the Malecón before dinner at a local paladar. *Overnight at Hotel Ambos Mundos. (BLD)*

DAY 4 - ZAPATA PENINSULA

Today travel to the Zapata Peninsula, home to the largest wetlands in the Caribbean as well as the Bay of Pigs. Seventy percent of the area is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve making up Cuba’s largest national park. Isolated and serene, the Bay of Pigs is famed for its marine species, coral reefs, and birds. Upon arrival embark on short excursion crossing the Tesoro Lagoon to visit the Taína Village, where Cuban sculptor Rita Longa has depicted the way of life of Cuba’s native inhabitants through life-sized statues. After lunch at a local restaurant, receive an introduction and welcome to Zapata National Park. Next continue with a visit to the town of Palpite to interact with the community of artists at the Korimacao Project. *Overnight at Hotel Playa Larga. (BLD)*

DAY 5 - ZAPATA PENINSULA

After breakfast explore Zapata National Park. Afterwards visit the town of Playa Girón and its museum to learn about the famous events of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Have lunch at Caleta Buena, a beautiful inlet in the heart of the bay. After lunch, enjoy snorkeling to explore the marine biodiversity of the area. Later return to the hotel for dinner. *Overnight at Hotel Playa Larga. (BLD)*

DAY 6 - CIENFUEGOS

Today travel to Cienfuegos. Established in 1819, more recently than most major Cuban cities, and the only city in the country founded by French settlers, Cienfuegos is an easy-going place, noticeably cleaner and more spacious than the average provincial capital and deserving of its label as the “Pearl of the South.” After lunch explore Cienfuegos, one of the chief seaports of Cuba and a hub of sugar, coffee, and tobacco production. During your exploration you will visit Castillo de Jagua, a fortress erected in the 1740s for protection against Caribbean pirates, the restored main square, the Catedral de la Purísima Concepción, and the Teatro Terry. Also visit the Paseo del Prado, marked by monuments and important buildings such as the former Rotary Club building, which today is the House of the Culture of the City. Afterward, drive along Punta

Gorda on a 1.8-mile-long peninsula where the Malecón promenade is bordered by imposing villas, vestiges of the American period under General Fulgencio Batista. Have dinner at the hotel restaurant. *Overnight at Islazul Pasacaballo. (BLD)*

DAY 7 - CIENFUEGOS

Visit nearby Trinidad today. Trinidad is the perfect example of a colonial town, which has earned it a position on the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Discover the true beauty of this romantic city atmosphere mixed with the ghosts of past slavery. The cobblestone streets are lined with colorful houses from a bygone era and remain well-preserved, even today. The

impressive palaces on the Plaza Mayor, which used to belong to wealthy sugar barons, are a particular highlight. Visit the historic city center and have an opportunity to walk around the town and see the handicrafts that are so well-known in the city, especially the embroidery and textiles. After lunch visit the Tres Cruces square and the former Fisher House. Also visit El Cabildo de San Antonio, the first cult house where African slaves got permission from the Spanish authorities to worship their deities. Stop at a family-run pottery workshop, where the tradition of making pottery has been passed on



CUBAN TROGON BY ALTON BIGGS

for generations. Return to Cienfuegos. Have dinner at the hotel restaurant this evening. *Overnight at Islazul Pasacaballo. (BLD)*

DAY 8 - CIENFUEGOS

Today visit the mountains of El Nicho, where you can hike through the caves, swim under waterfalls, and observe the region’s flora and fauna. All the way through the reserve you’ll find picturesque waterfalls inviting you to bathe in the crystalline clear waters of the natural pools at the base of each cascade. These are probably some of the most attractive natural rock swimming pools in western Cuba. Next, continue to a protected sanctuary to find the Cuban Trogon, known locally as the Toco-ro, which lives in this mountain region. Originally called guatini by the indigenous people, the Toco-ro was chosen as Cuba’s national bird for two main reasons: the symbolism of its red, white, and blue feathers, which represent the colors of the country’s flag, and its resistance to captivity. Return to the hotel later this afternoon. *Overnight at Islazul Pasacaballo. (BLD)*

DAY 9 - DEPART

After breakfast transfer to the airport for your return flight home. (B)

Program pricing

\$2,455 (21 participants + 3 leaders)

\$2,595 (14 participants + 2 leaders)

\$2,645 (7 participants + 1 leader)

International airfare, gratuities, and items of a personal nature are not included. Valid for travel in 2020.

Travel protection

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants traveling in 2018 or beyond. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more. Refer to the Plan Document for more details.

Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

The fine print

Rates are based on double occupancy for participants; complimentary leader accommodations may be single or double occupancy based on availability. International airfare is included for complimentary leaders. Holiday surcharges may apply. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form is due upon booking. This deposit is refundable until 95 days prior to departure excluding a \$100 cancellation fee. Final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure. Cancellations received less than 95 days prior to departure are non-refundable.

More from Holbrook

Holbrook was founded on the principle that travel fosters a greater understanding of our world's cultural and natural treasures and that these experiences allow individuals to become agents for global change. We hope that your experiences in Madagascar will remain with you forever and will challenge you to make a difference in the world we share!

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