



CUBA

Gardens, History, Art, & Nature

Sherman Library & Gardens | *Led by Scott LaFleur*

October 17 – 27, 2021



Sherman
LIBRARY & GARDENS

Join the Sherman Library & Gardens on this exciting 11-day exploration of Cuba's unique indigenous species of flora and fauna. Despite the revolution and economic hardships endured by the people of Cuba, its botanical gardens, organic farms, private gardens, and agriculture have thrived. Discover the history and culture of Havana, with its many museums, churches, fortresses, and urban parks. Travel to Viñales Valley, one of the most beautiful regions of Cuba, onto the coastal city of Cienfuegos and the colonial town of Trinidad. Evidence of the Cuban people's passion is apparent at every turn, from their music, dance, love of life, and appreciation of the natural beauty found on this small Caribbean island.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Discover a selection of Cuba's public and private gardens, including the National Botanical Garden, the Jardín Botánico de Cienfuegos, and the urban cooperative Alamar Organoponic Gardens.
- Learn about Havana's culture and history as you enjoy a musical show, dine at Hemingway's favorite restaurant, and take a guided walking tour of Old Havana, a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Tour a working tobacco farm in Viñales Valley, home to the limestone formations known as mogotes.
- Explore Trinidad, Cuba's best-preserved colonial town.

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

OCTOBER 17 - HAVANA

Upon arrival at the José Martí International Airport in Havana, you will be met by your guide and driver, and transferred to the hotel. Depending on arrival time, you may have the afternoon to explore Old Havana on your own, taking a wonderful old taxi car to get there from the hotel. This evening dinner is on your own. *Overnight at Hotel Nacional.*

OCTOBER 18 - HAVANA

Today, enjoy a guided walking tour of Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Discover the four “plazas” in Old Havana: Plaza de la Catedral, Plaza Vieja, Plaza de San Francisco de Asis, and Plaza de Armas. You will also learn about the restoration projects going on throughout the city. This evening dinner is at the private restaurant La Guarida, which is the location of the Oscar-nominated Cuban film “Strawberry and Chocolate.” *Overnight at Hotel Nacional. (BLD)*



OCTOBER 19 - VIÑALES

This morning visit the National Botanical Garden, located in the outskirts of Havana. Explore the gardens with your specialist guide then enjoy a delicious, healthy lunch at El Bambú, an ecological restaurant within the garden. After lunch, continue your travels to Valle de Viñales. Following arrival, have the remainder of the late afternoon and evening to explore your new surroundings. If you would like, your driver can take you to a local restaurant in the “downtown” area of Viñales, or you can enjoy dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Hotel Los Jazmines. (BL)*

OCTOBER 20 - VIÑALES

This morning wake to breathtaking views of the valley and the mogotes, flat-topped hills dating back to the Jurassic Period that are found in only four countries in the world. Meet a farming family and tour their tobacco farm. Your host, Paco Hernández, will explain how Cuban farmers collaborate with the government in order to get farming supplies and transport produce to market. Paco’s family is one of the many hardworking Cuban families that have been growing tobacco for more than 100 years. Lunch today is at a unique location known as the Prehistorical Mural restaurant, followed by some free time this afternoon. Early this evening head to a garden and paladar (a privately owned restaurant) located in the hills surrounding Viñales called the Agro Ecologico. Savor all the dishes made with the produce from their gardens, using their special family recipes. *Overnight at Hotel Los Jazmines. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 21 - HAVANA

This morning return to Havana, stopping en route for lunch at La Terraza de Cojímar, one of Hemingway’s favorite Cuban restaurants. It offers a fabulous view of the Cojímar Bay where Hemingway would go fishing and from where he met the fisherman on which the “Old Man and the Sea” is based. After lunch, arrive and check in at the beautiful Melia Habana, located on the sea, in the section of Havana known as Miramar. The remainder of the afternoon and evening is at leisure to enjoy the amenities of your hotel. *Overnight at Meliá Habana. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 22 - CIENFUEGOS

Set out today for the city of Cienfuegos. Upon arrival, enjoy lunch at a local paladar. This afternoon, take a guided tour of the city. Some of the places you will see are the Castillo de Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles de Jagua (fortress); the Arco de Triunfo, the only one of its kind in Cuba; the Catedral de la Purísima Concepción, a cathedral with stained glass work that was built from 1833 to 1869; the Museo Provincial, a furniture and porcelain museum; the Palacio de Valle, built from 1913 to 1917 in Neo-Gothic style; the Parque José Martí, a park in the Plaza de Armas; and the Palmira Yorubá Pantheon, a museum of religious Afro-Catholic syncretism. The remainder of the late afternoon and evening is yours to enjoy the beautiful views and seaside location. Dinner this evening is at a local paladar in Cienfuegos. *Overnight at Jagua Hotel. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 23 - TRINIDAD

This morning you will be taken to the Jardín Botánico de Cienfuegos. The garden encompasses 97 hectares and is one of the oldest institutions of its kind on the island, founded in 1901 by Edwin F. Atkins and his wife. They arrived in Cuba in 1899 in search of the island's most precious commodity, sugarcane. Atkins built the "Soledad" sugar mill and soon after a research center dedicated to the investigation and enhancement of sugar cane under the name "Harvard Botanical Station for Tropical Research and Sugar Cane Investigation." Mr. and Mrs. Atkins were also fond of plant collecting and soon afterwards started a tropical and rare species garden in the backyard of their estate, where plants from as far as India and China were grown in tropical Cuba. Today the garden has a large collection of tropical exotic plants (2,000+ species) clustered in 670 genera and 125 botanical families. Among the most complete collections are orchids (400+), palms (230+), ficus (65+) and bamboo (29). Following your time at the garden, transfer to the beautiful city of Trinidad. Trinidad, Cuba's best-preserved colonial town, was the third settlement in Cuba and was founded in 1514 by Diego Velázquez, the country's first governor. Upon arrival at your hotel, you will have the remainder of the day at leisure. Dinner at the hotel this evening. *Overnight at Iberostar Heritage Grand Hotel. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 24 - TRINIDAD

This morning visit Topes de Collantes, a nature reserve park in the Escambray Mountain range. It is the third highest peak in the reserve, where a small settlement and tourist center is located, all sharing the same name. After your visit, return to Trinidad for lunch, followed by a walking tour of the town. Explore the cobblestone streets of this UNESCO Heritage site that seemingly remain just as they were centuries ago. Visit the artisans and street vendors in the local market. There are also several casas de musica, including one next to the cathedral in Plaza Major. The remainder of the afternoon and evening are yours to enjoy on your own. *Overnight at Iberostar Heritage Grand Hotel. (BL)*

OCTOBER 25 - HAVANA

Today, travel back to the Miramar neighborhood of Havana. En route, stop for lunch in Playa Larga. Upon arrival at the hotel, you will have the remainder of your late afternoon and evening on your own. *Overnight at Meliá Habana. (BL)*

OCTOBER 26 - HAVANA

This morning, visit Alamar Organoponic Gardens, an incredible urban garden located outside of

central Havana. Meet with one of the cooperative representatives and discuss how this garden functions as a cooperative and the techniques that have been utilized to minimize the use of pesticides. Enjoy lunch at a local paladar. In the afternoon, visit the Quinta de los Molinos Garden, the first Botanic Garden in Cuba. This evening, following dinner at your hotel, enjoy the innovative musical show Opera de la Calle to celebrate your last night in Cuba. *Overnight at Meliá Habana. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 27 - DEPARTURE

This morning you will be transferred to the Havana International Airport for your flight(s) home. (B)



MEET YOUR LEADER



Scott LaFleur's achievements over the past 20 years in the field of horticulture have made him an accomplished and accessible advocate for horticulture, native plants, conservation and the development of Public Gardens as cultural and educational centers. Elected to the American Public Gardens Association's Board of Directors in 2009, he has traveled the country visiting and meeting with public garden professionals from all styles and size of gardens. Since January 2014, Scott has served as the Director of Sherman Gardens, located in Corona del Mar, California. In his short tenure at Sherman Gardens, he has introduced several new programs, such as Garden Fusion Dinners and the garden's inaugural sculpture exhibit, "Metaling in the Garden." Previously, he was the founding director of Garden Bud's (Building Upkeep Design), a high-end perennial garden design and maintenance company; the Director of Horticulture and the Garden in the Woods Senior Horticulturist at the New England Wild Flower Society; and the Director of Horticulture for Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden (RSABG).

PROGRAM PRICING

\$4,920 (based on minimum 12 participants)

COST INCLUDES:

- Accommodations, entrance fees, and activities as listed in the itinerary
- Meals as listed in the itinerary
- Private vehicle transportation
- Non-alcoholic beverages with meals
- Full-time guide for duration of program
- All tips/gratuities
- Bottled water on the bus
- Carbon offset
- Departure tax
- Cuban visa
- Travel Insurance
- Donation to Sherman L&G

NOT INCLUDED:

- International airfare
- Meals not listed
- Alcoholic beverages
- Items of a personal nature

TRAVEL PROTECTION

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants. 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

Cost is based on double occupancy; single rooms are available for an additional \$640 per person.

A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to hold your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable minus a \$100 cancellation fee until August 18, 2021, at which time final non-refundable payment is due.



FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL

Contact Sandy Schmidt at schmidt@holbrooktravel.com or 877-907-5360.
Register online at holbrook.travellsherman-cu21

PHOTOS BY

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