



Photo by Steve Wescott



Fund for Reconciliation and Development in association with the University of Washington Botanical Garden



CUBA

Led by Dr. Sarah Reichard
February 22-March 5, 2013

Dr. Sarah Reichard invites you to join her with members of UWBG on this special tour. Cuba, the “Pearl of the Antilles,” has legendary history, romantic music and dancing, and a stunning assortment of indigenous species of flora and fauna. Your journey begins in Havana, a capital city laden with culture. Havana’s streets are lined with museums, churches, schools, and historic buildings currently undergoing restoration. It may surprise you to see that despite revolution and economic hardship, botanical gardens, organic farms, private gardens, and agriculture have thrived in Cuba. You will travel to the Valley de Vinales, the tropical forests of Soroa, the infamous Bay of Pigs, and Zapata National Park. Do not miss this opportunity to experience the contagious passion of the Cuban people reflected in music, dance, and the preserved natural beauty of this embargoed enchantress.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit the National Botanical Garden and meet members of the Havana Botanical Garden Society.
- Visit several Orchid gardens and meet the caretaker to learn of their success with this beautiful family of plants.
- Enjoy a guided hike through an ecologically protected area of Mil Cumbres (Thousand Peaks), lead by a Biological Station expert guide.
- Meet the people who live and work at Las Terrazas, a self-sustained community named after the 5000-hectare reforestation project that is unique to their home.
- Learn about the use and sales of herbs in the typical Cuban diet from owners of Vinales Botanical Garden.
- Meet members of the National Institute for Research on Tropical Agriculture (INIFAT).
- Discover the methods used to garden the Organoponic Gardens and the significance of these unique Cuban gardens.
- Hike through Zapata Peninsula with conservation specialist Professor Tania Charletoin.

ITINERARY

FEBRUARY 22 - MIAMI

This morning you will depart on your domestic flight to Miami. Upon your arrival in Miami, you will take the airport shuttle to your pre-arranged hotel. *Overnight at Sheraton Miami Airport Hotel.*

FEBRUARY 23 - HAVANA

Early this morning transfer to the airport for your flight to Havana (included in tour cost). Upon arrival at the Havana International Airport, meet your guide and transfer to Palacio de San Felipe. This afternoon, gather for an orientation session with Dr. Reichard and your guide. Meet the founder and performers before attending the innovative musical show Opera de la Calle. *Overnight at Palacio de San Felipe. (LD)*

FEBRUARY 24 - HAVANA

This morning meet the director of INIFAT (National Institute for Research on Tropical Agriculture) and hear a presentation about the institution by its members. Afterwards, visit the facility with a botanist. Also visit a local school and meet with the principal. Have a late lunch at Meson de la Flota. This afternoon, hear Dr. Carlos Alzugaray present an overview of U.S. Cuba relations. Dine this evening at the private restaurant La Guarida, which is the location of the Cuban Oscar nominated film "Strawberry and Chocolate." *Overnight at Palacio de San Felipe. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 25 - HAVANA

This morning attend an organic farming workshop with Mr. Miguel Salcines at Alamar Organoponic Gardens. Agronomist Miguel Salcines is the garden leader of this group of 160 cooperative owners. A delegation of 10 owners will discuss the garden's history, accomplishments and current challenges. We'll also learn about the overall success, requirements, and horticultural practices of organoponics in Cuba. Time will be allotted to share information about similar programs at UWBG. Before lunch at El Aljibe restaurant, visit a Cuban food market and interact with the vendors. Here you have an opportunity to learn first hand about Santeria, especially in terms of plants, herbs, and history. Dinner this evening is at Café Mercurio. This evening, Cuban friends will join us for dinner. *Overnight at Palacio de San Felipe. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 26 - SOROA

This morning visit the National Botanical Garden in the outskirts of Havana. Explore the gardens with an expert before attending an exciting workshop with Havana Botanical Garden Society members. You can learn from Dr. Angela Leyva Sanchez, General Director at NBG, Research Director Rosa Rankin, who specializes in endangered species, and Dr. Sarah Reichard. Enjoy lunch with garden members at El Bambu ecological restaurant. This afternoon you will visit Las Terrazas, a self sustained community named after their 5,000 hectares reforestation project. Arrive in Soroa late this afternoon. *Overnight at Horizontes Villa Soroa. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 27 - SOROA

Take a guided tour of the Orchid Garden, run by the University of Pinar del Rio. Meet the garden's caretaker who offers insight about the garden, which features more than 20,000 plants and 700 animal species. The garden also hosts a botanical research center belonging to the University of Pinar del Río. Lunch will be at El Salto restaurant. This afternoon enjoy an interpretive short trekking adventure (2 km) on the trail "Maravillas de Soroa" with a local expert on the native flora and fauna. *Overnight at Horizontes Villa Soroa. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 28 - VIÑALES

This morning hike with the biological station's expert guide in the ecologically protected area of Mil Cumbres (Thousand Peaks), home to the highest concentration of endemic species in Cuba. Later interact with local farmers in the nearby San Juan de Sagua community and taste the famous local coffee. Following a boxed picnic lunch depart to Valle de Viñales. *Overnight at La Ermita. (BLD)*

MARCH 1 - VIÑALES

Today you will have breathtaking views of the Valley and the Mogotes; flat topped hills dating back to the Jurassic period that can be found in only four countries in the world. Meet a farming family and tour their tobacco farm. Your host, Paco Hernandez, 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. Your lunch today is at a very special location known as the Prehistorical Mural restaurant. This afternoon, visit with residents in the town of Vinales. *Overnight at La Ermita. (BLD)*

MARCH 2 - ZAPATA PENINSULA

This morning travel to the Zapata Peninsula. En route, visit an herbal store where a specialist provides insight about the use of plants in the Afro Cuban religion Speak with customers about their purchases. Lunch will be at La Giraldilla. This afternoon join Dr. Reichard and local specialists from the Conservation station in a workshop. Compare Zapata Park's ecosystem and the current conservation efforts with those in Seattle. Zapata Park is renowned for its great diversity of ecosystems, in which more than 1,000 species of plants and 37 species of reptiles, including the Cuban Crocodile, inhabit. The park is also considered one of the world's premier bird watching destinations. After your workshop, have lunch at La Giraldilla with local naturalists. The rest of the day is at leisure. *Overnight at Hotel Playa Larga. (BLD)*

MARCH 3 - ZAPATA PENINSULA

This morning, local bird experts guide us on hikes within Zapata Peninsula. Following lunch at La Cueva de los Peces, spend the afternoon at leisure. This evening learn about the KORIMACAO Project, an innovative community development initiative to help residents develop their artistic skills. After observing a performance, speak with the students about their experience. *Overnight at Hotel Playa Larga. (BLD)*

MARCH 4 - HAVANA

This morning return to Havana. This evening, gather for dinner at La Campana with Cuban friends and celebrate your journey throughout Cuba. *Overnight at Palacio de San Felipe. (BLD)*

MARCH 5 - MIAMI

This morning transfer to airport for a morning flight to Miami (included in your tour cost). Upon arrival, after clearing customs and collecting your luggage, you will be free to check-in for your return flight home on own. (B)

PROGRAM PRICING

\$4,620 (13 participants)

Cost is based on double occupancy. Single supplements available for an additional \$300.

THE FINE PRINT

Cost includes all accommodations (including Miami hotel), international airfare Miami/Havana/Miami, private transportation, Cuban travel insurance, visa fees, expert guides, activities, meals as indicated, gratuities to driver and guide, and \$500 donation to UWBG. A \$400 donation is also included for the Fund for Reconciliation and Development. Cost does not include items of personal nature, airfare Seattle/Miami/Seattle, airport departure taxes, personal travel insurance, alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, or bottled water. Program may incur unforeseen fuel surcharges. Cost is based on double occupancy for all participants. A non-refundable \$400 per person deposit and enrollment form is required to secure your space on the trip. Final payments are due no later than December 22, 2012. Cancellations received after this date are not refundable. For more information call Travel Insured at 800-243-3174. Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Sandy Schmidt 877-907-5306 or schmidt@holbrooktravel.com