

**Detours with Matt
presents**

CUBA

with Princeton BTGALA

October 7-16, 2016

Miami - Santa Clara -

Matanzas - Havana



DAY 1

Friday, October 7

Fly in to Miami on your own and check in to the Crowne Plaza hotel.

DAY 2

Saturday, October 8

Today we fly to Santa Clara, Cuba! Santa Clara is the Cuban city most known for having a strong LGBTQ community. After checking into our B&Bs, we'll get oriented to "our" neighborhood and then head to dinner.

Tonight and every night, I'll make suggestions for fun things to do after hours, with me or on your own. My favorite place in Santa Clara is El Mejunje, "The Concoction," a club with decades of history as a safe space for those who don't quite fit in anywhere else. While Cuba today is more gay-friendly than it used to be, El Mejunje still maintains its identity as the leading queer-ish spot in town... especially on Saturday nights!

DAY 2

Sunday, October 9

We start the day with a lecture on Cuba's unique society, how it's been changing in recent years, and what we can expect down the road.

Next is a walking tour of downtown Santa Clara, getting a feel for the city's history, some key public spaces, and a look at everyday Cuban life.

After lunch, we'll visit some key historic sites. The final battle of the Cuban Revolution, led by Comandante Che Guevara, took place nearby. Santa Clara is also his final resting place. We'll spend some time learning about this history and his key place in the national psyche, with visits to an outdoor war museum and the Che Guevara memorial and mausoleum.

Today and every day, you'll get some down time before dinner. Go out exploring, relax at the B&B, get cleaned up for the evening...

We'll enjoy dinner tonight with some local LGBT activists and get their thoughts on LGBT life in Cuba. Afterwards, they'll join us for a drink at El Mejunje. Sunday night there's always something special going on...



HUMANIDAD ES DIVERSIDAD

JORNADA CUBANA CONTRA LA HOMOFOBIA



DAY 3

Monday, October 10

This morning we drive to Matanzas, a province located between Villa Clara and Havana. We'll spend the next two days in its capital, also named Matanzas. We start with a walk around the town center to learn the city's history and get oriented.

After getting some lunch, we'll visit an art museum, then take a dance lesson. This class will focus on the basics of *casino*, or Cuban-style salsa... so we can go out dancing anywhere in Cuba and jump right in!

Next we get checked into our B&Bs. Dinner tonight is at a nearby private restaurant.

DAY 4

Tuesday, October 11

This morning we'll learn about the fascinating Cuban economy: its two currencies, the "inverse income pyramid," and what these mean for society.

We'll spend the rest of the day at the Bay of Matanzas with some friends of mine, the band TrabaSon. One of the bandmembers has a home right on the bay, where they'll host a pig roast for us. There's also a small beach nearby if you'd like to get wet. After lunch comes the music, dancing... and probably as much rum as you can handle.

Dinner tonight at a private restaurant.

DAY 5

Wednesday, October 12

This morning we depart for Havana! We'll start with Old Havana, the city's oldest neighborhood. More than anywhere else in Cuba, Old Havana is a study in contrasts, with the touristy and glamorous on one hand, the quotidian and decaying on the other. We'll get a feel for the rhythm of this unique place, visit the Cathedral and other historic highlights, and have some lunch.

Next, we visit the Museum of Fine Arts for a guided tour of the Cuban Collection. This is a revealing look at Cuba's history through its art, with a special emphasis on the 20th century.

Afterwards, we check into our B&B and enjoy some down time. After dinner, we'll walk around La Rampa, Havana's gayest street, full of LGBT hangouts and historic spots.

DAY 6

Thursday, October 13

Today we get to know the Vedado area. We'll start with a look at the area's most important buildings, including several of the key hotels from the mobster/casino era.

Next we stop by CENESEX, the National Center for Sexual Education. Besides leading the fight for LGBT rights and acceptance, the Center works to improve sexual health, quality of relationships, and gender equality throughout Cuba. CENESEX staff will discuss with us the current state of LGBT life in Cuba and the work they're doing to move things forward.

We'll have lunch with some friends who own a cafe and bakery. They're also Cuba's first same-sex couple to marry in a public (but extra-legal) ceremony. Over lunch and pastries, we'll hear some of their story.

Afterwards, we'll take a dance lesson on *rueda de casino* - a partner/group dance, like the salsa equivalent of square dancing! Trust me, it's fun.

After dinner at one of Havana's trendiest restaurants, we visit the Fábrica de Arte Cubano (Cuban Art Factory) for a guided tour of their collection. Formerly a cooking oil factory, La Fábrica is not just an art gallery, but also the hottest bar concept and live music venue in Havana. After the tour, we'll grab a drink and see who's performing tonight!

DAY 7

Friday, October 14

We start the day by sitting in on a rehearsal of the Luna Chorus, Cuba's only professional women's choir. Their repertoire ranges from classical to popular music, and they draw from cultural traditions the world over.

Next is a visit to the Christopher Columbus cemetery, one of the world's largest and most impressive. An expert guide will help us take in the cemetery's art and architecture and understand its history.

We pick up lunch on the way to Mi Cayito, Havana's LGBT beach. Our community forcibly claimed this spot many years ago, when Cuba was not so accepting as it is today. It wasn't easy. A pair of activists will join us to walk the beach and explain why they did it - and what repercussions they faced.

Dinner tonight is at leisure.



Day 8 Saturday, October 15

We round off our trip today in the colorful Capitol area, where you'll see some of Havana's most beautiful buildings and classic cars. To start us off, concert pianist Marita Rodriguez will introduce us to Cuban chamber music and how it's situated in the genre.

Across from the Capitol building, we'll visit the Museum of the Orishas. This temple honors the many gods of the santería religion with an altar for each one. Some worshipers volunteer as docents and will help us understand these altars and the history of santería in Cuba.

After lunch, we'll check out the weekly artists' market on the Prado promenade. You'll also have free time this afternoon for any last-minute shopping or sightseeing.

Our final dinner is a pilgrimage to La Guarida, one of Havana's most innovative restaurants. What makes this a pilgrimage? In a past life, this was the set for *Fresa y Chocolate*. The film's release was a watershed moment in LGBT visibility and public acceptance. We'll dine in this sacred space surrounded by photos and memorabilia from the film.

After dinner, we'll walk to the *malecón*, Cuba's wall along the sea. Local residents crowd the wall at night, sipping rum and chatting, as roving musicians play for tips. Sometimes one section of the wall becomes unofficially gay... and our presence can only help!

Hopefully everyone's still got some gas left in the tank, because Saturday night is Havana's best gay party and drag show of the week!

Day 9 Sunday, October 16

Today you'll pack your bags, say a sad good-bye to Cuba, and return to Miami.

PRICING:

Double occupancy: \$3775 per person

Single occupancy: \$4275 per person

--minimum 8 guests, maximum 16

--price drop of \$200 for 12 guests and up;
and another \$150 for 15 and up

PROGRAM INCLUDES:

One night hotel accommodations in Miami

Roundtrip charter airfare between Miami and Cuba with one checked bag included

Travel to Cuba with a full-time program of activities in compliance with Cuban Assets Control Regulations section 515.565(b)

Private B&B accommodations for 2 nights in Santa Clara, 2 nights in Matanzas, and 4 nights in Havana

All meals in Cuba except one dinner at leisure

Bottled water provided daily

Transportation for all included activities

Escorted by bilingual Detours With Matt trip leader and local Cuban guide

Cuban visa and departure tax

All gratuities except housekeeping

Health and evacuation insurance within Cuba

PROGRAM COST DOES NOT INCLUDE:

Domestic airfare to and from Miami

Activities outside of the scheduled program

Unlimited alcohol

Personal costs such as laundry, email, phone calls, and room service

Baggage fees above the airline's standard weight allowance

Any changes in the in-tour airfare (included as part of the program cost), security, or fuel surcharges imposed after the initial pricing of this program

DISCLAIMER:

This program subject to change due to availability of flights and planned activities.