

Detours with Matt
presents

CUBA

with Brenda Priddy

October 15 - 23, 2016

**Miami - Cienfuegos -
Playa Larga - Havana**





DAY 1

Saturday, October 15

Fly to Miami on your own and check into our hotel. If you have extra time to play with, you can explore Miami, relax at the hotel, or run last-minute errands at a nearby shopping center.

At 6pm, meet Brenda, trip leader Matt Smith, and your fellow travelers for a wine reception. Here you'll review details of tomorrow's flight and the trip in general. Dinner is on your own at the hotel or one of several nearby restaurants.

DAY 2

Sunday, October 16

Around mid-day we catch a flight to Cienfuegos! Known as the "Pearl of the South," the port of Cienfuegos sits on Cuba's southern coast and boasts beautiful colonial architecture. We'll be met at the airport by our Cuban guide and our driver. Both of them will be with us for the entire trip.

To get a feel for Cienfuegos, we'll start with the town square, home to the city's most important buildings. One of these is the Provincial Museum, where we'll enjoy a private performance by the Concierto Sur chamber orchestra. They'll welcome us to Cuba with a program ranging from Cuban classical music to popular rhythms. When they play a cha-cha, it can be hard to stay in your seat! Check out one of their performances at: <https://youtu.be/Op6LbKapPzs?t=1m28s>

After this, we check into our private B&Bs. Private B&Bs are one of Cuba's most popular kinds of small business. Besides offering comfortable accommodations, they also give us a chance to get to know the owners.

Today and every day, you'll have down time before dinner to venture out on your own, take a break, or get cleaned up for the evening.

We enjoy dinner and sunset at a restaurant with a gorgeous view of the Bay of Cienfuegos.

Looking to go out on the town? Tonight and every night, Matt will make suggestions for fun things to do after hours, with him or on your own. Leading options for tonight include going out to a club with live music or checking out the nightlife on the malecón, the wall along the Bay of Cienfuegos.



DAY 3

Monday, October 17

We start the day at a local market filled with the produce of the season. The walls are covered with government propaganda - a great way to get a sense of how the Cuban government tells its story. We'll chat with the vendors and look for unusual tropical fruits to try.

Next we visit some artists in their nearby studios and galleries. Besides enjoying their art, we'll learn about being an artist in Cuba and what they have to say about their rapidly changing society. I'm especially friendly with a collective of printmakers who specialize in everything from lithography to woodcutting. Every day they break for a hot lunch, and today we'll join them for it!

This afternoon we meet a Cuban rock band. They'll play for us, exploring Cuban rock and its varied influences from around the world.

For dinner tonight, we take some of Cienfuegos' best classic cars to a private restaurant.

DAY 4

Tuesday, October 18

Today we drive to Playa Larga ("Long Beach"), a small town on the Bay of Pigs. We'll pass through Girón, an area famous as the site of the Bay of Pigs invasion. A museum gives us the local perspective on this conflict, illuminating the island's national identity and complicated relationship to the U.S.

Next we'll grab lunch at Cueva Los Peces ("Fish Cave"), a natural pool that communicates underground with the ocean. Fish swim in and out freely, and you can take a dip with them if you like.

On arrival in Playa Larga, we'll check in at a bed-and-breakfast near the beach. There we'll meet our host family, Enrique and Dalía,

This evening, Enrique and Dalía are throwing us a pig roast! Joining us are some friends: the Cubanacán Quintet from rural Cuba. Besides traditional Cuban music, they play a style of music popular in the country, which we don't hear in the big cities. After dinner, Cubanacán will perform an open-air concert for us on the roof.



HUMANIDAD ES DIVERSIDAD
JORNADA CUBANA CONTRA LA HOMOFOBIA



DAY 5

Wednesday, October 19

This morning we depart for Havana! As we enter greater Havana, we'll visit Finca Vigia ("Lookout Farm"), Ernest Hemingway's estate in East Havana. Here we'll see how Hemingway lived and learn why he has such a special place in Cuban hearts.

After lunch, we stop by Cuba's car museum, El Depósito del Automóvil, home to a collection of cars representing most of the 20th century. For anyone feeling the urge to buy souvenirs, right next door is a huge bazaar full of handicrafts and art.

Afterwards, we check into our B&Bs and enjoy some down time. This evening we'll catch the sunset from the back garden of the Hotel Nacional de Cuba, then have dinner at a nearby restaurant. For those interested, Havana has a wealth of late-night options, like the Jazz Cafe, the Buena Vista Social Club live show, or the iconic cabaret show at the Tropicana.

DAY 6

Thursday, October 20

We start today in Old Havana, the city's oldest neighborhood. Today it's both a must-see for visitors and a neighborhood where local residents go about their everyday lives. We'll get a feel for the rhythm of this unique place as we visit the Cathedral, key public squares, and other historic highlights.

After lunch, we visit the Museum of the Revolution. Formerly the Presidential Palace, this building now serves as a reminder of what Cuba once was and how Cubans fought to overthrow the former leadership. It also features several military vehicles used by Castro's revolutionary forces.

Next we meet several members of the Nostalgic auto club! This is a group of owner/drivers of lovingly restored classic cars. They'll chauffeur us to visit the iconic Revolution Square, then on to the private garage where their cars are restored and maintained. This is the leading garage of its kind in Cuba. We'll get a behind-the-scenes look at how they manage to keep such old cars running and looking good year after year.

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



Day 7 Friday, October 21

Our friends from Nostalgicar are back with us today, transporting us around town in style! First we'll take a spin around Playa, a residential area with a look all its own. Playa is famous for some of the city's fanciest homes. The biggest and most important of these line Havana's elegant Fifth Avenue, and today many of them serve as embassies and state agencies.

Next we visit Cuba's only professional women's choir, the Luna chorus. The group's repertoire ranges from classical to popular music from Cuba and around the world. We'll join them in their rehearsal space for music and conversation.

We continue to lunch at the Ludwig Foundation, which funds the arts in Cuba - from visual arts to dance and filmmaking. They particularly fund work by the younger generation of Cuban artists. We'll eat and chat with foundation staff and some of the young artists they support. And afterwards, we'll visit Malpaso ("Misstep"), a modern dance company supported by the Foundation, for a demonstration and discussion of their work.

Dinner tonight is on your own.

Day 8 Saturday, October 22

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. We start with 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, from the colonial period to the nation's struggle for independence and the Revolution.

Several spots around the Capitol are unofficial gathering spots for classic cars - from the beautifully restored to those aging less gracefully. Each one's story is more colorful than the last, and the owners are often happy to share them.

After lunch, we'll visit the weekly artists' market on the Prado promenade and chat with the artists. You'll also have free time this afternoon for any last-minute shopping or other adventures.

Tonight we'll have a special farewell dinner featuring a favorite salsa band. Afterwards, we'll walk to the *malecón*, Cuba's wall along the sea, jokingly referred to as the world's longest sofa. It fills up with locals sipping rum and chatting as roving musicians play for tips. This is one of Havana's most iconic nighttime hangouts, the perfect place to spend our final evening in Cuba.

Day 9 Sunday, October 23

Pack your bags, say a sad good-bye to Cuba, and return to Miami.

PRICING:

Depending on group size. 8-11 travelers: \$4185 double occupancy/\$4685 single. 12-14 travelers, \$3985/\$4485. 15-16 travelers, \$3785/4285.

PROGRAM INCLUDES:

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

Round-trip airfare from Miami to Cuba with one checked bag

One night hotel accommodations in Miami; seven nights private B&B accommodations in Cuba

All meals in Cuba except one dinner at leisure

Bottled water provided daily

Transportation for all included activities

Escorted in Cuba 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:

Activities outside of the program, even if accompanied by the trip leader

Personal costs such as laundry, phone calls, room service, and unlimited alcohol at meals

Excess luggage charges above the 44 pound 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.

DISCLAIMERS:

Program subject to change due to availability of flights and planned activities