

Detours with Matt
presents

CUBA

with Brenda Priddy

November 4 - 13, 2017

**Camagüey - Holguín -
Santiago de Cuba - Havana**



Oriente, the eastern part of Cuba, is considered the cradle of Cuban culture, where Caribbean and African influences are strongest. This area gave rise to most of Cuba's music, dance, religions, and food. Today it's considered the place where Cuban culture is best experienced - and best preserved from international and commercial influences.

Oriente is also where the Revolution was launched, so there's rich political history here too! The area also hosted key battles in the (Cuban-)Spanish-American War. We'll explore some of this history... and the evolution of Cuba's relationship to the U.S.

After taking in the history and culture of Oriente, we'll head west to Havana, Cuba's most cosmopolitan city. All along the way, we'll admire vintage American cars and meet their proud and dedicated owners.

DAY 1 - 2: Camagüey

Saturday and Sunday, Nov 4 - 5

Fly into Camagüey, one of Cuba's largest cities. Here we'll get an introduction to modern Cuban society.

Shopping trip to a produce market and area shops for our first look at Cuba's unique economy, a capitalist/socialist hybrid

Meet with a local auto club and admire their cars

Visit art galleries such as the home gallery of Martha Jiménez, a leading painter

Private performances by a modern dance company and a favorite local band

Photo, top right: "The Revolution will continue onward." Bottom right: Street performers in Old Havana.





DAY 3: Holguín **Monday, November 6**

Today we'll drive to Santiago de Cuba, the nation's second largest city. On the way, we'll stop in Holguín for lunch and a short visit. Known as the "City of Parks," Holguín is a quiet, picturesque city. While there, we'll visit the Cuadernos Papiro publishing shop, famous for its handmade paper and books, each one a work of art!

DAYS 4 - 6: Santiago and Guantánamo

Tuesday - Thursday, Nov 7 - 9

Santiago is Cuba's former capital, situated on a large bay that made it an important center for commerce and immigration. This is where African, Caribbean, and European people came together, merging their cultures into one. Besides exploring Cuban culture and Revolutionary history here, we'll learn some of the history behind Cuba's complicated relationship with the U.S.

Ride vintage cars to the Baconao Park auto museum

Walk the city's historic downtown area

Visits to historic sites like:

--San Juan Hill, where U.S. troops joined Cuban defenders to defeat Spain

--The Moncada barracks, where the Revolution began

--Santa Ifigenia Cemetery, where Fidel Castro and other key figures are buried.

Private performances by an Afro-Cuban dance company, a favorite local singer, and a traditional Cuban band

Day trip to Guantánamo, a smaller city with a strong cultural scene... and a controversial U.S. naval base that still casts a shadow over the U.S. - Cuba relationship

Travel by boat to a tiny island and meet a group of fishermen who owe the U.S. a strong debt of gratitude

Enjoy Santiago's amazing nightlife!



DAYS 7 - 9

Friday - Sunday, Nov 10 - 12

Today we fly from Santiago to Havana, Cuba's capital and largest city. Havana is also the nation's most cosmopolitan city, home to leading restaurants and museums, amazing cultural opportunities, and the best of Cuba's vintage cars. For those who have traveled with Brenda before, we'll be revisiting some old favorites, but also checking out spots that maybe weren't around the last time you visited!

A day in Old Havana, Havana's oldest and most colorful neighborhood

Your choice of either a guided tour of the Fine Arts Museum, where we'll learn Cuban history through its art; and/or the Museum of the Revolution, where we learn how Cuba tells its story

Visit the Nostalgicar garage, Cuba's leading private garage specializing in the restoration of vintage American cars. Brenda's got a strong relationship with them, cultivated over years - since before they ever had a garage at all!

Check out one of Havana's weekly auto meets, where owners show off their cars and haggle with prospective buyers

Hit the Capitol area, home to some of the city's best cars, architecture, and art!

An evening outing to the Cuban Art Factory, Havana's hottest nightspot - a huge, multi-use space with art galleries, bars, music venues, and more

A stroll along the malecón, Havana's iconic wall along the sea, where locals congregate at night to sip rum, chat, flirt, and enjoy impromptu concerts by roving musicians

DAY 10

Monday, Nov 13

Say a sad good-bye to Havana and fly home - or stay a few days longer on your own. (We can help you plan this!)

PRICING:

Double occupancy: \$4195 per person

Single occupancy: \$4685

--minimum 6 guests, maximum 10

PROGRAM INCLUDES:

Travel in Cuba under the auspices of Detours with Matt, with a full-time program of activities in compliance with U.S. law as specified under Cuban Assets Control Regulations section 515.565(b)

Private B&B accommodations for 2 nights in Camagüey, 4 nights in Santiago, and 3 nights in Havana

All meals in Cuba except two dinners at leisure, including unlimited water/juice/beer/soft drinks and one round of cocktails

Bottled water provided daily

Transportation for all included activities, including a domestic flight from Santiago to Havana

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

All gratuities except housekeeping

PROGRAM COST DOES NOT INCLUDE:

Airfare to and from Cuba

Associated costs handled by your airline such as baggage fee, Cuban visa, and Cuban medical/evacuation insurance

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

Unlimited alcohol

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

DISCLAIMER:

This program is subject to change due to availability of planned activities

ON TRAVELING WITH MATT

RELATIONSHIP-BASED TRAVEL

Visiting a foreign country is richer when you connect with people who live there. That takes personal relationships with locals. We use relationships to:

- Give you a more personal experience than the typical tourist routine
- Hire/support people who don't work in tourism and don't normally benefit from tourism to their community
- Better understand how our travel affects the communities we visit

ETHICAL TRAVEL

Tourism is often unkind to the destination and its people. Ethical or sustainable travel means traveling right - in ways intended to help local residents rather than exploit them.

In this spirit, we make it a point to:

- Stay in locally-owned lodging, eat in locally-owned restaurants, etc
- Hire local experts, guides, and coordinators to do much of the work
- Support local activists and programs working to benefit their community, both by hiring them and with contributions to their projects
- Pay well instead of trying to squeeze everyone as hard as we can

GIFTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

A portion of your trip cost is used to support local residents and community projects. We prioritize medical needs and gifts that help people help themselves. Some recent examples:

- Battery-powered bass and guitar amplifiers for a Cuban band in a rural area. The amps let them play gigs in venues without electricity.
- A tablet and smartphones for a community project. They use these to get online and promote their programs internationally
- Funding towards a loft space in a B&B. The owners can now rent both their bedrooms and sleep in the loft. (photo opposite)
- Nicoderm patches to help a friend quit smoking

ON TRAVELING TO CUBA

CREATURE COMFORTS

Cuba is a developing country where not everything is up to the standards you're used to.

So should you expect to have AC in your bedroom? Yes. En suite bath with hot water? Yes.

Decent water pressure in the shower? Maybe. Refrigerator in the room? Maybe.

Air conditioning everywhere we go? No. In every vehicle? No. Will every toilet have a seat? No. (You either sit on the toilet bowl's rim or stand/crouch over it.)

Terrain can be more challenging than we're used to. Sidewalks can have gaping holes. Staircases may be steeper than we'd like and may lack banisters.

People typically do fine with these differences, so we don't worry much about it when planning our trips. But if this is the kind of thing you'd have trouble with, talk to us. You may prefer a custom trip tailored to your needs.

FLEXIBILITY

In Cuba, things don't always go as expected. Maybe technical difficulties will prevent us from getting online for a few days. A museum may close without warning to host a diplomatic event. It's even possible (though not likely) that we'll experience a power outage or water outage during the course of our trip. Flexibility and a sense of humor are crucial!



Our May 2016 group met Isel and María Julia, who were involved in making our trip such a success. They loved meeting our travelers, and everyone loved them! Some members of our group still keep in touch. To thank them, we contributed to the construction of their loft space and covered the cost of this staircase. Beautiful and functional!