



University of Illinois
Alumni Association

 **Duration**
7 days

 **Activity Level**
Moderate

 **Journey Type**
Land
Small Group



Cuba and its People ~ Havana

February 26 – March 5, 2027

Starting from \$6,045/pp

Discover enigmatic Cuba's complex history, vibrant culture and resilient, charismatic people on a seven-night immersive educational journey. Stay in historic Havana and engage in meaningful daily exchanges with local Cubans from diverse backgrounds — entrepreneurs, dancers, artists, musicians and community leaders — while gaining insight into their lived experiences and Cuba's ever-changing landscape. This exclusive program, developed by AHI Travel, is operated in accordance with a People-to-People general license.



Day-by-Day Itinerary

Cuba and its People

Explore Cuban history and culture through a full schedule of daily activities and interactions with local Cuban residents, artists, dancers, musicians, writers, activists, philanthropists and entrepreneurs, which will directly benefit and support the Cuban people.

This exclusive program, developed by AHI Travel, is operated in accordance with a People-to-People general license established by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control pursuant to 31 CFR section 515.565.

Air Program: 8 days/ 7 nights

Land Program: 8 days/ 7 nights

Breakfasts: 7 | Lunches: 6 | Dinners: 4

B | L | D denotes included breakfasts, lunches and dinners.

This itinerary is subject to change due to operational conditions.

Activity Level ratings indicate each excursion's physical expectations. To make the best personal choice, please evaluate each excursion's rating and your ability to meet the tour's physical demands. Please note, excursions on this program require: walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths and uneven surfaces and getting on/off motor coaches.

- Mild: Walk under 1 mile on mainly flat terrain; navigate under 50 stairs; stand under 1 hour
- Moderate: Walk 1-3 miles on flat/uneven terrain; navigate 50-100 stairs; stand 1-2 hours
- Active: Walk 2+ miles on flat/uneven terrain, including up and down inclines; navigate 100+ stairs; stand 3+ hours

Day 1 | Depart gateway city | Miami, Florida | Havana, Cuba

Paseo 206

D

Passengers depart for Havana, Cuba, via Miami, Florida. Arrive in Havana, proceed through immigration and then to the baggage claim area to retrieve your luggage. After completing customs, exit the baggage claim area and proceed to the Arrivals Hall, where an AHI Travel representative will meet you.

Transfer with your group and check in to the first-class ARTeHOTEL Havana, a privately owned boutique hotel located in Havana's El Vedado neighborhood.

Welcome Dinner. Gather with your fellow travelers for dinner this evening at a locally owned and operated restaurant. During the economic reforms of the 1990s, many Cubans were able to open their own independent establishments, each offering a distinctive atmosphere and authentic regional cuisine. Enjoy the opportunity to mingle with fellow travelers and local hosts alike, savoring the flavors of Cuba while supporting the entrepreneurial spirit that continues to shape the island's culinary scene.

Day 2 | Havana

Paseo 206

B | L

Start each day with a hearty breakfast at the hotel, featuring freshly prepared dishes and a selection of seasonal, locally sourced fruits.

Enrichment: Havana's Architecture. Uncover Havana's architecture with Miguel Coyula, architect and professor at the University of Havana. He will share his expertise and local perspective on the history, style, and stories behind Havana's unique architectural character, as well as the challenges and complexities of restoring Havana.

Old Havana Walking Tour. Founded by Spanish colonists in 1519, Havana's UNESCO-inscribed historic district, La Habana Vieja, invites you to explore its rich heritage on a guided walk through the four historic main squares: Plaza de Armas, the city's oldest; Plaza de San Francisco, graced by to the 19th-century Fountain of Lions; Plaza de la Catedral, dominated by the majestic Cathedral of Havana; and Plaza Vieja, renowned for its eclectic architecture.

As you stroll, immerse yourself in the rhythm of daily life. Each square has its own character, yet all are united by a spirit of community, artistry and resilience. Street performers tune guitars and rehearse dance steps beneath balconies adorned with fluttering laundry and flags. Artists set up colorful stalls, antique booksellers lay out their treasures beneath banyan trees, children chase pigeons around fountains and locals play dominoes and debate politics—all scenes that capture the living heartbeat of Havana. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Female Cuban Entrepreneurs. Stop by Dador, a clothing store founded independently by three Cuban women, for an enriching visit. Connect with the shop's staff as they share their personal experiences—the challenges, rewards, and resilience involved in creating and running a female-led business in Cuba. Gain a deeper understanding of their journey while discovering the creativity and spirit behind their work. (Mild)

Share your insights from the morning over a relaxed group lunch in Old Havana.

Enrichment: The Cuban Economy. Attend an engaging talk on the Cuban economy with Camilo García López-Trigo, esteemed professor at the University of Havana. Gain firsthand perspective on the country's economic landscape, challenges and opportunities from a leading Cuban scholar.

Dinner is at your leisure tonight. Your AHI Travel Director can recommend nearby restaurants. While dining at a local restaurant of your choice, you contribute to Cubans making a living in the private sector.

Day 3 | Havana

Paseo 206

B | L

People-to-People: Cuba's 1961 Literacy Campaign. This morning at the hotel, you'll meet the remarkable Norma Guillard, a distinguished Cuban social psychologist, activist and advocate for LGBTQ rights. An adjunct lecturer at the University of Havana, she teaches courses on psychology and gender while remaining at the forefront of Cuba's social and cultural discourse. Guillard's extraordinary career began at just 15, when she joined the Cuban Literacy Campaign, helping teach more than 700,000 people to read and write—a story captured in Catherine Murphy's short documentary "Maestra," in which Guillard is featured as one of the protagonists.

Watch the short documentary and hear Guillard recount her experiences as a teenage literacy worker, her founding of an LGBTQ rights group, leading sexual health workshops for women in low-income neighborhoods and her published work on sexuality and feminism. Then participate in a thoughtful discussion with Guillard, with time for questions, gaining a rare, firsthand perspective on the social movements and cultural currents that have shaped modern Cuba. (Mild)

People-to-People: Cuban Fine Art. Meet Wilfredo Benítez Muñoz, Executive Director of the Ludwig Foundation, at the National Museum of Fine Arts in central Havana. The museum's diverse collection includes Cuban artists dating to the 17th century, as well as works by Goya, Rubens, Murillo, and a host of Greek and Roman art—spanning the colonial era, 19th century, modern and revolutionary movements. Muñoz will offer insightful commentary as he guides you through the museum's galleries. (Moderate)

Discuss the morning's visits over lunch together at a local restaurant.

People-to-People: Vintage Convertible Ride. Set out in one of Havana's legendary American convertibles. Roughly 60,000 of these 1950s-era classics still roam the streets thanks to the ingenuity and perseverance of their owners, despite the U.S. trade embargo. Settle into one of these iconic Cuban treasures for a scenic drive along the Malecón, the 4.3-mile seaside esplanade lined with notable landmarks and monuments. Enjoy easy conversation with your driver and take a peek under the hood to hear about the mechanical creativity and maintenance techniques that keep these cars running. Along the way, you'll gain a deeper appreciation for the resourcefulness Cubans bring to everyday life. (Mild)

Enrichment: The Cuban Health Care System. Health care in Cuba is considered a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of national policy. Through a focus on prevention, primary care, and community-based services, the system achieves remarkably high health outcomes despite economic limitations. Join a discussion with Alberto Roque to gain an insider's perspective on how these principles shape daily life and reflect Cuba's commitment to social welfare.

As the evening unfolds, step out to explore Havana's culinary scene at your leisure, choosing from a range of inviting eateries and supporting local entrepreneurs while taking in the city's flavors and rhythms.

Day 4 | Havana

Paseo 206

B | L | D

Enrichment: Empowering Cuban Women. Begin the day with an illuminating talk led by sociologist Dr. Marta Núñez, who offers insightful perspectives on gender relations and the evolving role of women in Cuban society. Explore the significant contributions of Cuban women in government, science and other professional fields, and engage in a thoughtful conversation about the ongoing challenges and strides toward gender equality.

People-to-People: Cuba's Jewish Culture. Set out to visit the Patronato community center, home to Havana's Ashkenazi Synagogue. A member of the city's Jewish community will welcome you and share the history of Ashkenazi and Sephardic immigrants who arrived in the early 20th century from Eastern Europe, as well as insights into contemporary Jewish life in Havana. Once numbering over 15,000, Cuba's Jewish population declined sharply after the Revolution, when policies declaring the island country an atheist state created an environment where religious practice and personal freedoms were restricted. Today, the community is a small but enduring remnant of its pre-1959 presence. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Cuba's Elite Dancers. Next, step into Malpaso, a contemporary dance studio renowned for hosting internationally acclaimed choreographers. Go behind the scenes to meet elite dancers, gaining insight into their rigorous training, artistic passion and commitment to advancing Cuba's dynamic dance tradition. (Moderate)

Take a break over a group lunch at a restaurant in Old Havana, while sharing thoughts about the morning.

Hemingway's "Lookout Farm." Venture to Havana's San Francisco de Paula district for a visit to La Finca Vigía, the former home and museum of Ernest Hemingway. The Nobel Prize-winning author purchased the property in 1940 and lived there for 20 years, during which he wrote the novella, "The Old Man and the Sea," inspired by a Cuban fishing village. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Ludwig Foundation of Cuba. Later, gather on the terrace of the Ludwig Foundation of Cuba, founded in 1995 by Peter and Irene Ludwig as a nonprofit institution dedicated to supporting Cuban artists both locally and internationally. The Foundation nurtures emerging talent across various art forms. During tonight's event, meet independent Cuban artists and engage in conversations about their creative drive, dedication to their craft and future aspirations. (Mild)

This evening, enjoy dinner together at a local restaurant, reflecting on a day rich in culture, history and the enduring spirit of Cuban creativity.

Day 5 | Havana | Matanzas

Paseo 206

B | L

Matanzas is known for its rich cultural heritage shaped by its diverse roots and artistic excellence. Founded in the late 17th century, it grew into a thriving port where Spanish, African and Caribbean influences converged. The city played a key role in Cuba's national arts as the birthplace of rumba, danzón and the spiritual drumming traditions of Santería. These forms emerged from Afro-Cuban communities descended from enslaved Africans who worked in the sugar industry, and their legacy lives on in the city's rhythms, poetry and spiritual practices.

Matanzas Panoramic Tour. Today, journey along Cuba's scenic northern coast to Matanzas. Known as the "City of Bridges," Matanzas is shaped by the Yumurí, San Juan and Canímar rivers as well as an intricate network of canals and streets. Pause at the Puente de Bacunayagua, Cuba's longest and highest bridge, which marks the border between the Mayabeque and Matanzas provinces, and appreciate the sweeping views of the Yumurí Valley. Continue into Matanzas, where you'll pass by the neoclassical Teatro Sauto, once home to acclaimed performers and a symbol of the city's artistic heritage. Drive through the historic Barrio de Versalles (French Quarter), where French-influenced design, Afro-Cuban heritage and the Yumurí Valley converge to create a slice of Cuban history. Though time has weathered many of the grand colonial mansions, they stand as eloquent markers of the wealth and spirit of Matanzas' golden age.

San Severino Castle, La Libertad Park & Pharmaceutical Museum. Stop to visit the San Severino Castle, built in 1735 as a fortress and the location where African slaves were brought in the 18th century. It is now a part of UNESCO Sites of Memory of Slavery in Cuba, honoring significant places linked to slavery, the slave trade and their legacies. From there, walk through the historic La Libertad Park, reflecting on Cuba's struggles for independence as you pass by statues and monuments honoring national heroes. Then, visit the Museo Farmacéutico, a preserved 19th-century French-style pharmacy founded in 1882, to see its collection of French porcelain jars and North American stained-glass medicine bottles. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Cuban Choir Performance. Stop for lunch nearby, where a lively choir will entertain you with vocal arrangements that tell stories of hisNext, a local choir will entertain you with lively vocal arrangements that tell stories of Cuba's history, culture and social life. Interact with the dedicated and talented choir members during a brief question-and-answer session. (Mild)

Take a break to relax and recharge over a group lunch nearby.

Sugar Mill Triunvirato & Museum. After lunch, visit the Sugar Mill Triunvirato, a 19th-century plantation that flourished during the sugar boom. It is also one of the UNESCO Sites of Memory of Slavery in Cuba. Contemplate the poignant, towering Monument to the Slave Rebellion, which depicts the legendary Carlota, the slave who led the rebellion in 1843, with a raised machete. The statue commemorates the 329 enslaved people who rose against inhumane conditions and stands as an enduring symbol of resistance and courage in Cuban history. At the Sugar Mill Museum, located in the former overseer's house, explore artifacts and furniture that provide a visual depiction of life here during the 1800s, as well as information about the 1843 Slave Rebellion. (Moderate)

Return to your hotel in Havana and have dinner at leisure tonight, reflecting on the day in Matanzas, which has brought Cuba's African legacy and Afro-Cuban culture to life.

Day 6 | Havana

Paseo 206

B | L | D

Enrichment. Race and the Cuban Revolution. Begin the day with a thought-provoking discussion led by Dr. Rosaida Ochoa, exploring the intersections of race and the Cuban Revolution. Gain rare insight into the social, historical and cultural forces that have shaped modern Cuba.

People-to-People: Agromercado. This morning, take a walk to visit a typical Cuban street market bustling with vendors selling fruits, vegetables, rice, beans and a variety of meats. Pause to chat with the local purveyors as you immerse yourself in the daily shopping life of local Cubans. (Moderate)

El Callejón de Hamel. Stroll through this eclectic, colorful alleyway to experience the richness of Cuba's oldest community art project, a diverse menagerie of African, European and North and South American influences. The paint-splattered street has become central to Afro-Cuban culture, reflected in rumba drummers and dancers, vibrant murals and sculptures and art made from recycled items. Along the way, discover the religions, rituals and cultural traditions that continue to shape life in Havana. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Inside an Art Studio. Afterward, visit Casa Fuster, the home and studio of renowned Cuban painter and sculptor José Fuster, whose work is inspired by Picasso. Admire his vividly colored mosaics and hear about his artistic journey, as well as the challenges and opportunities facing contemporary Cuban artists. Then, share an enriching group lunch amid this uniquely creative environment before returning to the hotel. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Cultural Community Project. In the afternoon, visit Casa de la Cultura, a center devoted to nurturing Cuba's art and heritage. Meet the staff and engage directly with teachers and children who are learning dance and theater through the center's workshops, witnessing firsthand how Cuba's art and culture are preserved and passed on to the next generation. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Afro-Cuban Dance. Back at the hotel, meet a group of Cuban-born-and-raised dancers whose lives have been shaped by the studios and troupes they've trained with since childhood. Today, you'll support their individual artistic journeys as they share their passion and guide us through the rhythms of salsa. You may even try a few steps yourself! (Mild - Moderate)

Have dinner together at the Claxon Hotel tonight. Discuss today's vivid experiences that have brought Cuba's art, rhythms and social fabric to life.

Day 7 | Havana | Rural Cuba

Paseo 206

B | L | D

People-to-People: Las Terrazas. Today, travel outside Havana again into Cuba's lush countryside, where the rhythms of daily life are intimately tied to the land. Admire the scenic views of lush, untamed landscapes on the drive to Las Terrazas, a model socialist community established in the early 1970s as part of an ambitious reforestation project aimed at restoring the surrounding landscape. Today, the residents of Las Terrazas are deeply engaged in sustainable development, eco-tourism and cultural initiatives, embodying a harmonious balance between people and nature.

During your visit, meet community members and gain firsthand insight into their conservation efforts and daily life. Visit a local daycare center and a doctor's office, stroll through the village to enjoy coffee at a café and visit an artist's studio to witness creativity flourishing within this verdant setting. Conclude your visit with a leisurely lunch at a nearby restaurant, featuring fresh, locally grown, organic vegetables, before returning to Havana. (Moderate)

Enrichment: The Rhythms of Cuban Music . Join Cuban ethnomusicologist Alberto Fayas for an illuminating talk about Cuba's vibrant music scene, rooted in the rhythms of Spain and West Africa.

Farewell Dinner. Share highlights of your immersive and enlightening Cuban experience with fellow travelers during a special dinner tonight at a local restaurant.

Day 8 | Depart for Miami, Florida | Return to gateway city

B

After breakfast, check out of the hotel, bid farewell to enigmatic Cuba, and transfer to the airport for your return flight to Miami, with a connection to your home city. Your Travel Director will provide the details.

Note: Itinerary may change due to local conditions. Cuba and its People

Explore Cuban culture through interaction with local Cuban residents, artists and artisans, musicians, writers and entrepreneurs, which will directly benefit and support the Cuban people. This exclusive program, developed by AHI Travel, is operated in accordance with a People-to-People general license established by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control pursuant to 31 CFR section 515.565.

Air Program: 8 days/ 7 nights

Land Program: 8 days/ 7 nights

Breakfasts: 7 | Lunches: 6 | Dinners: 4

B | L | D denotes included breakfasts, lunches and dinners.

- This itinerary is subject to change due to operational conditions.
- Activity Level ratings indicate each excursion's physical expectations. To make the best personal choice, please evaluate each excursion's rating and your ability to meet the tour's physical demands. Please note, excursions on this program require: walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths and uneven surfaces and getting on/off motor coaches.

Mild: Walk under 1 mile on mainly flat terrain; navigate under 50 stairs; stand under 1 hour

Moderate: Walk 1-3 miles on flat/uneven terrain; navigate 50-100 stairs; stand 1-2 hours

Active: Walk 2+ miles on flat/uneven terrain, including up and down inclines; navigate 100+ stairs; stand 3+ hours

Day 1 | Depart gateway city | Miami, Florida | Havana, Cuba

Paseo 206

D

AHI FlexAir passengers depart for Havana, Cuba, via Miami, Florida. Arrive in Havana and proceed through immigration to the baggage claim area and retrieve your luggage. After completing customs, exit the baggage claim area and proceed to the Arrivals Hall, where an AHI Travel representative will meet you.

Transfer with your group and check in to the first-class Paseo 206, a privately owned boutique hotel located in the heart of Havana's vibrant, historic El Vedado neighborhood.

Welcome Dinner. Meet your fellow travelers tonight during a festive Welcome Dinner at a privately owned and operated local restaurant. During a reform period in the 1990s, many Cubans were allowed to open their own restaurant, each offering its own unique setting and an authentic, regional cuisine menu. Relish this opportunity to meet and mingle with your fellow travelers and local Cubans while supporting Cuban entrepreneurialism on your first night here.

Day 2 | Havana

Paseo 206

B | L

Each morning, enjoy breakfast at the hotel to prepare for a day of exploration and discovery.

Enrichment: Havana's Architecture. Join Miguel Coyula, a distinguished professor at the University of Havana, for an engaging discussion that unpacks the city's architectural heritage—a vivid tapestry of colonial grandeur, art deco elegance, and revolutionary modernism woven into Havana's urban fabric.

Enigmatic La Habana Vieja. Founded by Spanish colonists in 1519, Old Havana is a UNESCO World Heritage site that pulses with centuries of history and life. Begin your exploration on a guided walk through its four principal squares: Plaza de Armas, the city's oldest; Plaza de San Francisco, graced by the 19th-century Fountain of Lions; Plaza de la Catedral, dominated by the majestic Cathedral of Havana; and Plaza Vieja, Havana's most architecturally diverse square.

Here, daily life unfolds like a living stage. Each square carries its own rhythm, yet all share a spirit of artistry, resilience and community. Street performers tune guitars and rehearse dance steps beneath grand balconies adorned with fluttering laundry and flags. Artists display vivid works in colorful stalls, antique books lie beneath sprawling banyan trees, children chase pigeons around fountains, and locals engage in animated games of dominoes and chess, debating politics as they play.

Continue to Dador, an independent boutique founded by three Cuban women, where conversation with the staff illuminates the challenges, ingenuity and determination behind running a female-led business in Cuba. (Moderate)

A casual group lunch in Old Havana provides a moment to savor the city's flavors before visiting the storied Hotel Nacional de Cuba, dating to 1930, to tour its historic property and absorb its timeless elegance, before returning to your hotel.

Enrichment: The Cuban Economy. Attend an engaging discussion on the Cuban economy with Camilo Garcia López-Trigo, esteemed professor at the University of Havana. Gain firsthand perspective on the country's economic landscape, challenges and opportunities from a leading Cuban scholar.

Dinner is at your leisure tonight. Your AHI Travel Director can recommend restaurants. Dining at a local restaurant of your choice allows you to savor authentic Cuban cuisine while supporting entrepreneurs striving to make a living in the private sector.

Day 3 | Havana

Paseo 206

B | L

Norma Guillard. This morning, meet the remarkable Norma Guillard, a distinguished Cuban social psychologist, activist and advocate for LGBTQ rights. An adjunct lecturer at the University of Havana, she teaches courses on psychology and gender while remaining at the forefront of Cuba's social and cultural discourse. Guillard's extraordinary career began at just 15, when she joined the Cuban Literacy Campaign, helping teach more than 700,000 people to read and write—a story captured in Catherine Murphy's short documentary *Maestra*, in which she is featured as one of the protagonists.

During your visit, watch *Maestra* and hear Guillard recount her experiences as a teenage literacy worker, her pioneering work founding an LGBTQ rights group, and her leadership in sexual health workshops for women in underserved neighborhoods. She will also share insights

from her writings on gender, race, sexual orientation and identity in a Cuban and Caribbean context. Engage in a thoughtful discussion with ample opportunity for questions, gaining a rare, firsthand perspective on the social movements and cultural currents that have shaped modern Cuba. (Mild)

National Museum of Fine Arts. Depart the hotel to meet Wilfredo Benítez Muñoz, Executive Director of the Ludwig Foundation, at Havana's National Museum of Fine Arts. Muñoz will provide illuminating commentary on the museum's diverse collection, which spans colonial-era, 19th-century, modern and revolutionary art. Then, enjoy a tour of the museum's galleries. (Moderate)

Discover the flavors of Cuba during a shared lunch at a local restaurant.

Vintage Convertible Ride. Climb into one of Havana's legendary 1950s American convertibles—mechanical marvels that continue to roam the streets thanks to the ingenuity and perseverance of their owners. Feel the wind in your hair as you cruise along the Malecón, Havana's iconic 4.3-mile-long seaside esplanade, alive with the rhythms of the city. Along the way, pass historic landmarks, architectural gems, and striking monuments, engaging with your driver and discovering the clever solutions Cubans devise to keep these classic cars running. For car enthusiasts, peeking under the hood reveals both mechanical ingenuity and a broader lesson in resourcefulness. (Mild)

Enrichment: The Cuban Health Care System. Health care in Cuba is considered a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of national policy. Through a focus on prevention, primary care, and community-based services, the system achieves remarkably high health outcomes despite economic limitations. In a “local insight” discussion with Alberto Roque, gain an insider's perspective on how these principles shape daily life and reflect Cuba's commitment to social welfare.

As the evening unfolds, venture out to explore Havana's dynamic culinary scene at your leisure, selecting from an array of vibrant eateries and supporting local entrepreneurs while immersing yourself in the city's flavors and rhythms.

Day 4 | Havana | Cojímar

Paseo 206

B | L | D

Enrichment: Empowering Cuban Women. Sociologist Dr. Marta Núñez enlightens us with an insightful talk about gender relations and the role of women in Cuba. Learn about Cuban women's involvement in government, science fields and other professional positions, and discuss the challenges that still need to be overcome to achieve gender equality.

Cuba's Jewish Culture & Cuban Dance. Begin today at the Ashkenazi Community Center in downtown Havana to gain insight into Cuba's Jewish culture from a representative of Havana's Jewish Community. Next, visit Malpaso, a contemporary dance studio that brings in internationally recognized choreographers to work with its dancers. Get a behind-the-scenes look into Cuba's infectious dance scene as you meet some of the studio's elite dancers and engage in a discussion with them about their experiences, passion and commitment to their art and training. (Moderate)

Take a break over a group lunch at a local restaurant.

Hemingway's “Lookout Farm.” Head outside Havana this afternoon to the small fishing village of Cojímar for a visit to La Finca Vigia, the museum and former home of Ernest Hemingway. The Nobel Prize-winning author purchased the property in 1940 and lived there for 20 years, during which he wrote the novella, “The Old Man and the Sea,” set in a Cuban fishing village. (Moderate)

Ludwig Foundation of Cuba. Gather on the terrace of the Ludwig Foundation of Cuba, founded in 1995 by Peter and Irene Ludwig as a non-governmental, nonprofit art and cultural institution dedicated to protecting and promoting Cuban artists in Cuba and internationally. The Foundation works with emerging artists working in various media, from mobile app development to graphic design and more. During tonight's event, meet independent local artists and learn about their desire and commitment to pursue artistic ventures. (Mild)

Day 5 | Havana | Matanzas

Paseo 206

B | L | D

Matanzas unfolds like a living tapestry of Cuba's cultural soul. Founded in the late 17th century, the city quickly grew into a bustling port where Spanish elegance, African resilience, and Caribbean vitality converged, forging a distinctive identity that resonates through its streets and plazas. Here, the rhythms of rumba and the refined steps of danzón—the nation's emblematic dance—still echo, alongside

the drumming of Santería rituals, tracing the enduring legacy of Afro-Cuban communities descended from enslaved Africans who shaped the island's sugar economy.

As you stroll through the historic center, the city's intellectual and artistic heritage is palpable. In the 19th century, Matanzas nurtured poets, playwrights, and philosophers whose voices animated its salons and theaters. The Teatro Sauto, a neoclassical gem, remains a testament to this golden age, its stage having hosted world-renowned performers and countless celebrations of the performing arts. In every corner, from shaded boulevards to bustling squares, Matanzas offers a rare fusion of history, rhythm, and intellect—a city that preserves Cuba's African roots while celebrating its cosmopolitan spirit.

Matanzas Panoramic & Walking Tour. Today, venture beyond Havana to discover the cultural jewel of Matanzas. Traveling east along Cuba's northern coast, the drive of some 56 miles offers glimpses of rural life and sweeping coastal vistas. En route, pause at the Puente de Bacunayagua, Cuba's longest and highest bridge, straddling the provinces of Mayabeque and Matanzas. From its vantage point, take in the dramatic panorama of the lush Yumurí Valley, a verdant canyon long celebrated in Cuban art and poetry.

Arriving in Matanzas, set on a hillside above its tranquil bay, you enter a city renowned as the "City of Bridges" for the graceful spans that cross its three rivers—the Yumurí, San Juan and Canimar—as well as its many canals and causeways. The city exudes a distinctive rhythm: a blend of colonial heritage, Afro-Cuban traditions, and 19th-century grandeur shaped by the sugar economy.

Drive through the leafy boulevards of the Barrio de Versalles, once the city's French Quarter, where elegant architecture and lush gardens recall the influence of French émigrés who settled here. Though time has weathered many of the grand colonial mansions, they still stand as eloquent markers of the wealth and cosmopolitan spirit of Matanzas' golden age. Crossing the Yumurí River by way of the Puente de la Concordia—built during Spanish colonial rule to link Versalles with the city center—you continue into the heart of Matanzas. Here, visit the storied Sauto Theater, a neoclassical gem from the 19th century and one of the oldest and most distinguished theaters in Latin America, still evoking an era when Matanzas was celebrated as a cradle of poetry, music and the performing arts.

Pause for lunch at a nearby restaurant, where a spirited local choir will perform for you. Afterward, enjoy the opportunity to engage with the performers and gain a personal glimpse into Cuba's choral traditions.

After lunch, take a guided walk of Matanzas' historic center, where centuries of history, architecture and culture converge. Along its colonial-era streets stand elegant mansions, museums and cultural institutions that recall the city's 19th-century golden age, when it flourished as a hub of poetry, music and Afro-Cuban traditions shaped by the sugar boom. Pause in the storied La Libertad Park—its name, "freedom," a tribute to Cuba's independence struggles—where statues and monuments honor the nation's heroes. Visit the Museo Farmacéutico, a rare 19th-century French-style apothecary founded by Ernesto Triolet in 1882. Its treasures include delicate French porcelain jars and striking North American stained-glass medicine bottles. (Moderate)

Return to Havana and conclude the day with a relaxed dinner at a nearby restaurant, savoring the city's flavors in a welcoming, local setting. (Moderate)

This evening, dine with your group at a local restaurant.

Day 6 | Havana

Paseo 206

B | L

Enrichment. Race and the Cuban Revolution. Begin the day with a thought-provoking discussion led by Dr. Rosaida Ochoa, exploring the intersections of race and the Cuban Revolution. Gain rare insight into the social, historical and cultural forces that have shaped modern Cuba.

Afro-Cuban Art & Culture. Step into the rhythm of Havana with a guided morning walk to a bustling agromercado, a street market where vendors display a vibrant array of fruits, vegetables, meats, rice and beans. Observe the everyday rhythms of Cuban life as locals shop and barter, immersing yourself in the sights, sounds and scents of a traditional market.

Continue to El Callejón de Hamel, Cuba's oldest community art project. Wander down this paint-splattered alley, alive with murals, sculptures, recycled art, rumba drummers and dancers, reflecting the rich fusion of African, European and American influences that define Afro-Cuban culture. Along the way, learn about the religions, rituals, and cultural traditions that continue to shape life in Havana.

Next, visit Casa Fuster, the home and studio of celebrated Cuban painter and sculptor José Fuster, whose work is inspired by the art of Pablo Picasso. Admire his vibrant mosaics, hear the story of his artistic journey and share an enriching group lunch amid this uniquely creative environment before returning to the hotel. (Moderate)

Afro-Cuban Dance. In the afternoon, visit Casa de la Cultura, a center devoted to nurturing Cuba's art and heritage. Meet the staff and engage directly with teachers and children who are learning dance and theater through the center's workshops, witnessing firsthand how Cuba's art and culture are preserved and passed on to the next generation. (Moderate)

Learn to Salsa! Conclude the day with an intimate gathering at the hotel with local dancers born and raised in Havana. With years of experience in dance troupes and studios, they share their passion for salsa, guiding you through the steps and rhythms that have been part of their lives since childhood. Take the opportunity to try a few moves yourself and feel the music in your own body. (Mild – Moderate)

After a day rich in culture, art, history, and rhythm, relax and enjoy dinner on your own this evening, reflecting on the vivid experiences that have brought Cuba's art, music and social fabric to life.

Day 7 | Havana | Rural Cuba

Paseo 206

B | L | D

Rural Cuba. Today, travel outside Havana again, where the rhythms of daily life are intimately tied to the land. As you travel, take in sweeping views of tobacco and sugarcane fields, verdant valleys and authentic villages, each offering a glimpse of the island's agricultural heritage. Your destination is Las Terrazas, a model socialist community established in the early 1970s as part of an ambitious reforestation project aimed at restoring the surrounding landscape. Today, the residents of Las Terrazas are deeply engaged in sustainable development, eco-tourism and cultural initiatives, embodying a harmonious balance between people and nature.

During your visit, meet community members and gain firsthand insight into their conservation efforts and daily life. Visit a local daycare center and a doctor's office, stroll through the village to enjoy coffee at a café and visit an artist's studio to witness creativity flourishing within this verdant setting. Conclude your visit with a leisurely lunch at a nearby restaurant, featuring fresh, locally grown, organic vegetables, before returning to Havana. (Moderate)

Enrichment: The Rhythms of Cuban Music . Later, join Cuban ethnomusicologist Alberto Fayas for an engaging discussion on the island's rich musical traditions, tracing the interplay of Spanish and West African rhythms that give Cuban music its infectious vitality.

Farewell Dinner. This evening, gather for a celebratory Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant, raising a toast to the sights, sounds and experiences that have made your journey through Cuba unforgettable.

Day 8 | Depart for Miami, Florida | Return to gateway city

B

After breakfast, check out of the hotel, bid farewell to enigmatic Cuba, and transfer to the airport for your return flight to Miami, with a connection to your gateway city, carrying home the indelible impressions of a journey steeped in culture and connection. Your Travel Director will provide the details.

Note: Itinerary may change due to local conditions.



What's Included

Program Overview

- Small group: Sized just right at 12 guests.
- Round-trip flights between Miami and Cuba.
- 7 nights Havana, Cuba, at the first-class Paseo 206, a privately owned boutique hotel.
- AHI Sustainability Promise: We strive to make a positive, purposeful impact in the communities we visit.
- Complimentary travel mementos.

Meal Program

- 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 4 dinners.
- Welcome and Farewell Dinners to mingle with fellow travelers.
- Tea or coffee with all meals, plus a local beverage with dinner.

On-site Features

- Deluxe motor coach transfers during the Land Program with baggage handling.
- Enrichment by expert speakers enhances your insight into the region.
- Engaging excursions showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
- Cuban Visa.



FlexAir Travel Program

Need assistance booking your travel arrangements? Our experts are here to help. Our air program offers the following benefits.

FREE Economy Air

- Includes FREE Economy Air
- Special air add-on rates available from other gateways (please call for details)
- Our promise to keep your comfort in mind when selecting your flight route

Trip Transportation

- Assistance in the event of schedule changes or delays
- Arrival and departure transfers on group dates

Price Guarantee

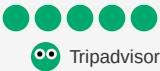
–

Price guarantee to protect you from fuel surcharge increases
after ticket purchase

Travel and Hotel Accommodations

Paseo 206 Boutique Hotel

Located in the tree-lined neighborhood of El Vedado, this privately owned boutique hotel dates from 1933 and embodies a delightful essence of Cuban and Italian charm. Indulge in homemade Cuban-Italian dishes at the property's top-rated restaurant, Ecléctico, or enjoy an aperitif in the library room before heading out to explore Havana. After a day of incredible sightseeing, settle in your cozy suite, enhanced with contemporary Cuban artwork, Italian-designed furniture and luxurious Frette linens.



Pricing

\$500 Full Payment Discount expires September 29, 2026

Category/Deck	Base Price	Full Payment Discount*	Special Price
PR-Rooftop suite	\$7,045	-\$500	\$6,545
PM-Master suite	\$6,545	-\$500	\$6,045
XJ-Junior suite	\$6,245	-\$500	\$5,745
PS-Standard	\$6,045	-\$500	\$5,545

Package rates are per person based on Double occupancy from Land Only. Prices include all service charges; port charges when applicable; US government taxes and fees. The minimum deposit is \$1000.00 per person. Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage. Please contact your airline or refer to its website for detailed information regarding your airline's checked baggage policies. To view Program Terms and Conditions, close this window and scroll to the bottom of the page.

** Full Payment Discounts are only available at the time of booking with initial payment 150+ days prior to departure. This offer only applies to full payment at the time of reservation. Details on how to qualify for this savings will be included when your reservation request is confirmed.

