Cuba Photography Tour January 2016
People-to-People Experience

Hosted by:
Denis Defibaugh
Dawn Tower DuBois
Partnered with Authentic Cuba Travel

Travel arrangements, registration and payments are coordinated by Authentic Cuba Travel. Tour dates are Thursday, January 7th – Thursday January 14th 2016

**TOTAL COST:** $3600.00 USD based on double occupancy
Single Room Supplement (optional): $389 USD

**DEPOSIT:** $300.00 USD non-refundable deposit per person is required by June 25, 2016.

**BALANCE:** Due date for balance is NOVEMBER 15 (45 days prior to departure).

*Please follow the link below to sign up for the trip. It is a two-step process.*

**Step 1:** create an account at:
http://www.authenticubatours.com/cuba-travel-account/travellers.htm?Tour_ID=127&Tour_Name=Private%20Cuba%20Photography
Hint: Hit ‘Create New’.

**Step 2:** log into the account you just created to start a booking form (it is a button you push once you’ve logged into your account)
Let us know if you have additional questions and we will be happy to help.

Authentic Cuba Travel accepts tour payments by personal or business check, postal money order, or bank draft. Note: Allow 7-10 days for checks to arrive from USA. Checks should be made payable & mailed to:

Bella Travel Group Ltd.
Marina del Ray Professional Center
513-2275 Lakeshore Blvd. West
Toronto, ON M8V3Y3
Canada
Services Included:

- Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) License.
- 5 nights at Hotel Nacional with breakfast included.
- 2 nights at Hotel Los Jasmines with breakfast & dinner included.
- 15 Meals: 7 breakfasts, five lunches, and three dinners included.
- Luxury air-conditioned coach transportation and professional driver.
- All activities, speakers, meetings and meals as described in itinerary except those noted as “optional” or “not included in cost.”
- An expert Cuban English speaking guide and translator throughout the program, together with ongoing support from Authentic Cuba Travel’ staff in Cuba and Canada.
- Official Asistur Cuban health insurance coverage.
- Roundtrip air from Toronto to Havana

Services Not Included:

- Activities listed as “optional” or “not included in cost” in itinerary.
- Gratuities for Cuban tour guide, bus driver, chambermaids, restaurant staff, porters, etc.
- Cuban airport departure tax of 25.00 Cuban convertible pesos.
- Optional travel interruption and cancellation insurance.

FOR QUESTIONS OR INFO CONTACT:
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Authentic Cuba Travel  support@authenticcuba.expert

Tentative FLIGHT ITINERARY:

Flight AC1748 departs Toronto day Thursday, January 7th at 5:45 pm and arrives Havana at 9:25 pm

Flight AC1749 departs Havana Thursday, January 14th at 7:30 am and arrives Toronto at 11:30 am

Note: Only 20 seats available. We anticipate the tour will fill quickly.
DAY 1. Hello Cuba!

Arrival at Havana International Airport.

Group welcomed by your Authentic Cuba Travel tour guide.

Private transfer to your Hotel Nacional de Cuba located at the cultural center of Havana City.

The hotel's long list of famous guests includes Rita Hayworth, Fred Astaire, Ernest Hemingway, Walt Disney, Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Errol Flynn, Winston Churchill, Ava Gardner, Lucky Luciano, Harry Belafonte, Robert de Niro, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jimmy Carter, Francis Ford Coppola, Muhammad Ali, Kevin Costner, Jodie Foster, Oliver Stone, Steven Spielberg....

Private group check-in.

DAY 2. UNESCO World Heritage Site, Old Havana
*Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Morning: Meeting with our guide for the morning, architect Miguel Coyula from the Group for the Comprehensive Development of Havana City at the Scale Model of Old Havana.

Followed by guided walking tour of Old Havana, UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Visit to Plaza Vieja, the only civic square of colonial times. Notice it doesn't have a church or government building around.

Visit to San Francisco Square, named after the Convent of San Francisco, this square was conceived in 1628, with the objective of supplying water to the ships trading with the metropolis. For many years it also served to stockpile the goods arriving from the harbour. Chronicles of the time say that the square had a busy commercial life. The people, in humble carts or afoot, sold and bought a variety of goods. It’s important to know that through this place the Spanish immigrants arrived to Cuba.

Continue walking tour onto Square of Arms, ancient military parade ground for Spanish soldiers and surrounded by impressive buildings.

Lunch at El Templete restaurant.

Afternoon: visit to Taller Experimental de Gráfica (Experimental Printing Workshop), a cooperative of artist involved in experimental printmaking, for a meeting with its Director Luis Lara. The variety of colors, sizes, and content of the prints is wide, including pieces with recognizable Cuban icons, bold black and white woodcuts.
Visit to the Cathedral Square, the most beautiful and private 18th century colonial plaza of Cuba, named after the masterpiece of Cuban baroque architecture: the Cathedral of Havana built by the Jesuit order.

Free time in the famous handicraft market of Old Havana where you can purchase all sorts of crafts and souvenirs by local artisans.

Evening: There's a new wave of private restaurants that has swept the Cuban capital offering exciting cuisine in atmospheric surroundings. Today we'll enjoy a welcome dinner at the family-run restaurant paladar ‘La California’. You’ll have the opportunity to ask questions to the owners about their experience running a private business in Cuba.

Next we attend baseball game at Latino Americano Stadium, popularly known in Cuba as “The Colossus of Cerro” is home of Ciudad Habana Industriales. The stadium holds 55,000 people. In 1999, it hosted an exhibition series between Cuban National Team and the Baltimore Orioles. (TBC)

DAY 3. Havana
*Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Morning: Visit to Cuba’s premier photographic organization Fototeca de Cuba for a meeting with its Director Nelson Ramírez. This art institution was created in 1986 to preserve, study, and promote the country’s photographic patrimony and open a space for the promotion of international photography.

The Fototeca is an archive with a vast and valuable collection of documents; it is also a museum with the widest and most valuable collection of Cuban photography known and it functions as a gallery with rooms for temporary exhibitions in which works that do not belong to the permanent collection are generally exhibited.

Next we visit the Cristobal Colon Cemetery, Cuba's largest cemetery. Laid out like a mini city in the 1870s, the cemetery is world famous due to its stunning sculptures and decorative mausoleums.

Continue on a guided panoramic motor coach tour around the Miramar neighborhood. Lunch hosted by Jose Fuster, one of the most important Cuban ceramists and painters today.

Fuster has turned an entire neighborhood in western Havana into a giant art installation that involves locals and their actual homes as part of the exhibit. He's engaged and trained many neighborhood residents as artisans, especially youth. This is art for and by the people on an epic scale!

Afternoon: Visit the studios of important Cuban contemporary photographers such as Juan Carlos Alom, Roberto Salas, and Rene Pena and other young prominent artists.

Photo session on the Malecon, Havana's evocative 8km-long sea drive.

Dinner at the family-run restaurant paladar ‘El Litoral’.
DAY 4. Havana
*Breakfast and lunch included

Morning: visit to Partagas Cigar Factory, founded in 1845 by Spaniard Don Jaime Partagas. Don Jaime owned many of the best plantations in the Vuelta Abajo tobacco-growing region of Cuba and being able to choose from among the finest tobaccos on the island made the brand Partagas incredibly successful.

Don Jaime is also believed to have experimented with various methods of fermenting and aging tobacco and is legendarily credited with hiring the first lector to read to and entertain the cigar rollers as they worked. Before and after the Revolution, the Cuban-produced Partagás has been one of the most revered and highest-selling brands of cigars in the world.

Lunch at the stylish ‘Cafe Laurent’, a family-run restaurant located in the penthouse atop a small 1950s apartment building.

Afternoon: Meet museum specialist Omar Díaz Liria for a guided tour of the Museum of Fine Arts’ Cuban Collection. We’ll see the evolution of Cuba’s visual arts over the last 300 years. The collection accounts for the richness of the island’s Spanish, French, Chinese, and African cultural roots.

Evening: enjoy Afrojazz, Cubajazz and Sonjazz at Club La Zorra y El Cuervo, Havana’s most famous Jazz club. The club features great performances by island bands and soloists! (Optional, not included)

DAY 5. Havana
*Breakfast included

Morning: Visit to Finca Vigia, a hilltop villa 20 kilometers east of Havana, where famed author Ernest Hemingway lived from 1939 to 1960. It is here where the writer completed some of his greatest works, including The Old Man and the Sea, Across the River and into the Trees, and Islands in the Stream.

We’ll meet with museum Director Ada Rosa Alfonso.

The villa has been maintained as a museum for the past 49 years. It contains original book and short story manuscripts, letters, over 3000 photographs, Hemingway’s fishing tackle and gun collections, furniture, priceless art collection, and a 9000 volume library that contains rare first editions of his books and those of other famous writers.

Finca Vigia has made both the World Monuments Fund List of 100 Most Endangered sites, and The National Trust for Historic Preservation's 11 Most Endangered Places.

Guided tour around Cojimar fishing village, where Hemingway kept his boat Pilar. The writer is remembered by the town with a small gazebo that encircles a commemorative bust, sculpted from the melted down propellers donated by local fishermen.
Lunch in Cojimar fishing village (optional/ not included in costs).

Afternoon: Free time at Santa Maria Beach and visit to nearby village to photograph.

Remainder of the afternoon and evening are free to relax by the swimming pool of your hotel or conduct personal explorations of the city on your own.

**DAY 6. UNESCO Heritage Site, Viñales Valley.**
*Breakfast, lunch and dinner included*

Morning: Departure to Viñales Valley, containing the most spectacular scenery in Cuba and some of the most interesting and varied geological formations on the island. The valley is particularly famous for its great freestanding rock formations called mogotes.

Visit local tobacco growing farms and meet with local farmers that have been passing from generation to generation the secrets of growing the best tobacco in the world.

Lunch at ‘Palenque de los Cimarrones’ restaurant.
After lunch we will visit the Cueva del Indio, used by the Guanahatabey Amerindians as a burial site in ancient time, and as refuge from the Spaniards for both Indians and Black slaves alike. We’ll take a short boat ride on the subterranean river running through the cave.

Explore Viñales town at your leisure: its open-air craft market, Parque Marti, town church, and other interesting sites of this charming colonial hamlet.

Check-in at Los Jasmines Hotel with breakfast and dinner included.

Rest of the day is free day to do trekking path, bird watching trails, and other outdoor activities around the hotel (all activities are optional to be arranged in site with tour desk with the assistance of your tour guide).
DAY 7. Vinales Valley – Havana
*Breakfast and lunch included

Morning: Walk in the Vinales Valley.
Transfer to Havana City.
Check in at the Hotel Nacional.

Lunch at one of Havana's most popular restaurants: El Aljibe!
Afternoon: Ferryboat ride across Havana harbor for a photo session in the municipality of Regla. This Afro Cuban community has a long, rich and still active tradition of African-inspired religions. The town's church is dedicated to the black “Virgen de Regla” Yemayá, the African goddess of the sea in the santeria religion and the patron saint of sailors. (Optional)

Free evening.

DAY 8. Good Bye Cuba!
*Breakfast included
Transfer to Havana International Airport for departure.

Endorsements from previous Cuba Tours

- The trip to Cuba was A trip of a lifetime. Thanks to your diligence in getting the people to people permit, we were able to go. Dawn and Denis are such wonderful individuals and so kind, patient, caring and helpful.
- The trip was amazing, I thought the whole team did such a fantastic job on the whole trip.
- Cuba is amazing. I have been lucky to go a lot of places, but none like Cuba. Their lifestyle is simple and primitive. Some of the nicest and happiest people. Beautiful in the most simple run down way. I am so glad I got to experience a country that is cut off from major world dominating countries.
- The magic of the trip was the leaders. Can't get better than Denis, Dawn, & Jorge. They made the trip fascinating & simple. They were just wonderful.

Dawn Tower DuBois is a retired professor from NTID/RIT. She has traveled extensively team teaching workshops and classes in Paris, Oaxaca, and Cuba. She co-coordinated over 30 of RIT’s Big Shot events. Dawn has a BS in Biomedical Photographic Communications and a MS in Print Technology from RIT.

Denis Defibaugh is a professor at SPAS/RIT. He has presented numerous workshops in Mexico, Brazil, Korea, and Paris. Denis is also an accomplished artist with over 50 exhibitions and numerous publications.