

# HISTORY NEWS NETWORK

## JOURNEY TO HAVANA, CIENFUEGOS, AND TRINIDAD, CUBA

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DECEMBER 13-20, 2017



### Wednesday, Dec 13

- Midday      Arrival into Havana
- 4 pm        Check-in at the four-star NH Capri Hotel de Habana, an historic, art-deco hotel located in the thriving Vedado district of Havana
- 5:30 pm    **Afternoon discussion with a local historian** about early Cuban History, the Conquest and Colonization of Cuba by the Spanish Empire in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, and specifically of San Cristobal de La Habana village.
- 7:30 pm    **Welcome dinner at Paladar San Cristobal.** Located in the heart of Central Havana, this paladar has a reputation of excellence in both atmosphere and local cuisine. The staff is particularly proud of their photos with President Obama, who ate here during his historic visit last year.

### Thursday, Dec 14

- 9 am        **Guided walking tour of the Old City led by a specialist from the City Historian's office.** Wander through the **Plaza de Armas**, a scenic tree-lined plaza formerly at the center of influence in Cuba. It is surrounded by many of the most historic structures in Havana as well as important monuments. See the **Plaza de San Francisco**, a cobbled plaza surrounded by buildings dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, dominated by the baroque Iglesia and Convento de San Francisco dating from 1719. Visit the **Plaza Vieja**, surrounded by sumptuous houses of the Havana aristocracy from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Visit **Plaza de la Catedral** and the Catedral de San Cristóbal de La Habana.
- 12 pm      **Lunch at Doña Eutimia paladar.** Famous for its *ropa vieja* and frozen mojitos, this cozy paladar made Newsweek Magazine's top 100 restaurants in the world in 2012. The restaurant is situated in the scenic cathedral square.

- 2 pm      **Socio-economic discussion with urban planner Miguel Coyula**, whose presentation will touch on housing, infrastructure, investment, and restoration programs in the city. The talk will help contextualize your earlier walking tour of Old Havana and leave you with a better understanding of why Havana looks the way it does today and what to look for as the city moves forward
- 5 pm      **Visit to Fortaleza de San Carlos de la Cabana and El Morro Castle**, built in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. These are two of the earliest constructed and most important Spanish forts in the Americas, featuring wonderful views of the Havana city landscape.

*Evening free*

## Friday, Dec 15

- 9:00 am      Depart for **Trinidad**, a UNESCO world heritage site, founded in 1514 by Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar. The town is known for its cobble stone streets and pastel colored homes. Trinidad is one of the best-preserved cities in the Caribbean.
- 1 pm      Arrive in Trinidad. **Enjoy lunch at Paladar San José**, a wonderful restaurant with a diverse menu, which features locally sourced seafood.
- 2:30 pm      **Check-in at bed and breakfasts, known as “casas particulares,” or “private homes.”** Since the 1990s Cuban families have been permitted to rent rooms out of their family homes to foreigners. The accommodations offer comfort and privacy, and will allow you to interact with ordinary Cubans.
- 4 pm      **Visit to the Museum of Colonial Architecture**, housed in the former home of the sugar barons of the Sánchez Iznaga family.
- 5 pm      **City tour with a local architect, historian, and restoration specialist**, who will provide an overview of the city’s history from an architectural, economic and infrastructural point of view.

*Evening free*

## Saturday, Dec 16

- 10 am      **Visit to the archeological site San Isidro de los Destiladeros**, near the city of Trinidad, a typical sugar plantation, operated with slave labor in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Remnants of this thriving and historically underappreciated industrial heritage survive: an impressive owner’s house, three-story tower, cistern, main sugar factory, ancillary buildings, and dikes. Almost all are in ruins or in imminent danger of collapse. We will discuss the sugar cane industry in Cuba and the role of slavery in the city’s economic prosperity.

*Afternoon free to explore Trinidad or the nearby Playa Ancon.*

- 7:30 pm      **Trinidad farewell dinner at Los Conspiradores paladar**, located at the foot of the main plaza and the lively Casa de la Musica.

## Sunday, Dec 17

- 9 am Check-out of casas and depart to Havana.
- 10:30 am **Stop in Cienfuegos**, one of the country's oldest and most beautiful cities, which combines both French and Spanish architecture. **Tour of Cienfuegos by the City Historian's Office**, including visits to the main square, the beautiful Palacio Del Valle and Punta Gorda.
- 12:30 pm **Lunch at las Mamparas**, an interesting family run paladar. The food is traditional as is the family that runs it.
- 2 pm Continue to Havana.
- 5:30 pm Arrive in Havana. Check-in at Hotel.

*Evening free*

## Monday, Dec 18

- 9 am **Tour of the Vedado neighborhood with architect Pedro Vazquez.** Vedado, or "forbidden" in Spanish, was built after the Old City. We'll explore the differences in architecture from this neighborhood and others in Havana and analyze the unique aspects of this part of the city. Stops include:
- **Cristobal Colon Cemetery**, a National Monument and one of the most valuable in Latin America
  - **University of Havana**: the country's oldest and most prestigious university.
  - **Revolution Square**, the most important political meeting place in the capital.
- 10:30 am Visit the **Miramar neighborhood**, a residential district of the municipality of Playa, where many embassies are located including the landmark Russian embassy. Drive along the famous **Quinta Avenida** (Fifth Avenue) and see the mansions that used to belong to many of Havana's upscale residents prior to the Revolution.
- 12 pm **Lunch at El Figaro.** Located in the Barbers Alley, it offers a "hairless" food (so says its slogan) and cuisine that is stylized and has the seal of the Smith family.
- 1:30 pm **Visit the Museum of the Revolution**, which holds hundreds of artifacts from pre- and post-revolutionary times, and highlights the tense relationship between the U.S. and Cuba.
- 3 pm **Visit a site at La Cabana Fortress displaying Soviet-made Cold War relics**, including deactivated missiles from the "October Missile Crisis".
- 4:30 pm **Discussion with a local Historian** about the post-Revolution period in Cuba.

*Evening free*

## Tuesday, Dec 19

- 9 am **Discussion with Rafael M. Hernández**, a writer, political scientist, researcher, and professor. He is the Chief Editor of *Temas*, Cuba's leading magazine in the social sciences. He has been a professor at the University of Havana and has published on Cuban and U.S. policies, inter-American relations, international security, migration, and Cuban culture and civil society.
- 10:30 am **Visit to the home of a Cuban Family. Discussion about the "Special Period"** and its impact on the Cuban economy and society. The presentation will also focus on the daily lives of regular Cubans.
- 12:30 pm **Lunch at Paladar Atelier.** This restaurant is equally known for its atmosphere and exquisite cuisine. The lighting and textures of the house, which was home to a pre-revolutionary senator, coupled with walls adorned in modern art, create a cozy, but modern setting. Prior to the meal **enjoy a discussion with** Atelier's owners, **Niuris Higuera and Yamina Vicente**, head of Decorazon Party Planning, **about running private businesses in Cuba**
- 2:30 pm **Visit with the Reina y Real**, a female hip hop/jazz duo. The group's music and community activism focuses on breaking down gender and racial stereotypes in Cuban society. The duo will open their modest home, share their music, and discuss the challenges young Afro-Cubans currently face.
- 4 pm **Visit to the Liza Alfonso Academy, a women-led dance company and school for local youth**, specializing in various types of dance. We will watch a private performance by the adolescent dance group, and sit with the dancers afterward to discuss how they came to join the school and the impact it has had on them. The talent and work ethic at this school is remarkable.
- 6:30 pm **Private musical performance by** renowned singer and songwriter **Frank Delgado at Café Madrigal.** Café Madrigal, owned and run by film director Rafael Rosales, is housed in a beautiful colonial mansion with walls lined with fascinating artwork. Enjoy tasty tapas and cocktails while discussing the *nueva trova* movement in Cuba.
- 8 pm **Farewell dinner at El Cocinero.** This charming restaurant is housed in a former cooking oil factory.

## Wednesday, Dec 20

- 9 am **Morning discussion with** Cuban diplomat, essayist, educator and political analyst **Carlos Alzugaray**, about the history of U.S.-Cuba relations.
- TBD Check-out of the hotel and depart for the airport. (flight information pending)