

Cuba Photography Trip with Alan Ross
January 15-24, 2019



About Us

Cuba Educational Travel (CET) is a leader in cultural travel to Cuba. CET unlocks the best of Cuba by providing access to the country's top artists, academics, tastemakers, and cultural figures. CET's tailor-made programs enable clients to experience Cuba's vibrant culture and gain a deeper understanding of the island, while ensuring full compliance with all U.S. regulations.

CET has been on the frontlines of cultural collaboration, helping to bring Cubans to the U.S. and Americans to Cuba. From Yoga retreats to concerts to dance performances, CET has wide-ranging experience and contacts. Recent highlights include organizing the Diplo Major Lazer concert in Havana, which drew a crowd of over 500,000 people and bringing Liza Alfonso Dance Cuba, the country's top dance group, to perform at the Latin Grammys.

www.cubaeducationaltravel.com

Our Value Proposition

By leveraging this expertise and curated travel capabilities, Cuba Educational Travel offers a product that is unrivaled. Our strong presence on the island and in important cultural circles gives us unparalleled access and knowledge. This combined with the beauty and intrigue of Cuba and its people make for truly unforgettable experiences.



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Tuesday, Jan 15

- Midday Arrival to Havana. (flight information pending)
- TBD **Check-in at accommodations.**
- 4:45 pm **Orientation meeting** with your photography leader and Cuban guide.
- 5:30 pm **Sunset photo shoot at Morro Castle**, one of the earliest constructed and most important Spanish forts in the Americas.
- 7 pm **Welcome dinner at Río Mar**, located in the luxurious Miramar neighborhood, it has a whole terrace overlooking the where the Almendares river flows into the sea.

Wednesday, Jan 16

- 9 am **Behind the scenes photo walk of Old Havana.** Walk around the back streets of the old city to witness Cuban life first-hand. Visit to local bodegas, markets and the popular gathering places where locals play dominos and discuss about sports, transportation, jobs and other topics of their daily life.
- 11 am **Visit to 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.
- 12:30 pm **Lunch at La Makina Gastro Bar**, located near the Museum of the Revolution and the Museum of Fine Arts in the heart of Old Havana, it is known for the exquisite cuisine dishes and a charming ambiance.
- 2 pm Take the tunnel under the bay and head to Eastern Havana. **Visit to the picturesque fishing village of Cojímar.** Ernest Hemingway loved this little town. He kept his boat, El Pilar, in harbor of Cojímar, and he used this village setting for his story *The Old Man and the Sea*, which won him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954.
- 6:30 pm **Rum and cigar tasting at Café Madrigal.** A local expert will explain the qualities and traits of fine Cuban rum and cigars, pairing them together for the perfect match. **Café Madrigal**, owned and run by film director Rafael Rosales, is housed in a beautiful colonial mansion with the walls lined with captivating artwork.
- 8 pm **Dinner reservation at El Del Frente**, one of the coolers restaurants in town, it is located on a spacious rooftop terrace/bar surrounded by Old Havana's historic architecture. O'Reilly no. 303, Old Havana (not included – to be paid on the ground)

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Thursday, Jan 17

- 8:30 am Check-out of accommodations and **depart for Viñales**. Considered by many to be the most beautiful place in Cuba, the Viñales Valley National Monument holds stunning landscapes. The area is also famous for being the premier tobacco growing area in the world.
- 10 am On the way, **stop at Las Terrazas**, a small community and nature reserve in the Rosario Mountain Range, to the west of Havana. Take in a guided tour of Las Terrazas to photograph the best views of the forest and the community. Visits include the Buenavista Coffee Plantation and the San Juan River, set in a beautiful and peaceful setting.
- 12:30 pm **Enjoy lunch at El Romero**, a paladar that uses locally grown produce to create its meals – offering a true farm-to-table experience.
- 2 pm Continue on to Viñales.
- 4 pm Arrival. **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. Featuring comfortable accommodations and ample privacy, it’s a great way to interact with everyday Cubans.
- Late afternoon photo walk to catch the sunset.**
- Evening **Enjoy a home-cooked meal prepared by your host family.** Prior to the meal, join your hosts for a cooking demonstration.

Friday, Jan 18

- 6 am **Meet at one of the casas for sunrise photo walk.** We will meet two local residents of the community who will take us to the top of the hill, for a view of the sun rising over tobacco farms. Approximately 15-minute walk to location, 1-hour shoot, and 15-minute walk back to hotel.
- 9:15 am **Photos at the lookout at hotel Los Jasmínes** offering a panoramic view of the beautiful valley and the unique Mogotes that surround it.
- 10 am **Visit the home of Benito**, a local tobacco farmer who will teach us about the cultivation and production process, followed by a rolling demo. He might even light up a cigar or two for the group.
- 11:30 am **Visit to a private farm in the valley owned by the large family of Concha and Paco Hernandez.** The descendants of Concha and Paco have farmed the same plot of land for many generations and their land is involved in the production of a multitude of fruits, vegetables, grain and tobacco. Members of the family will give us a tour of this beautiful 40-acre farm before bringing us back to the farmhouse. **Enjoy lunch at the farm.**
- Spend the afternoon in the valley** for a sunset photo shoot.

Evening free

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Saturday, Jan 19

Early morning free to explore the valley and shoot on your own

- 10 am Check-out and depart for Havana.
- 12 pm On the way, **visit to Tungasuk Farm**, in Artemisa province. Enjoy a tour of the farm to see the crops and surroundings followed by an **organic farm to table meal**.
- 3 pm Continue to Havana.
- 4 pm **Enjoy a performance by Habana Compás Dance**, which encompasses the rich rhythm and flow of the island, performing traditional and modern dances born from their Spanish, Cuban and Afro-Cuban heritage.
- 5:30 pm Arrival to accommodations.
- 7:30 pm **Private tour of La Fabrica de Arte Cubano**, the brainchild of Afro-Cuban fusion musician X-Alfonso, this is one Havana's finest new art projects, an intellectual nexus for live music, art expos and fashion shows.
- 8 pm **Dinner at Tierra**, Havana's newest international dining spot. Located inside a container in the Fábrica de Arte Cubano, the restaurant mirrors the eclectic crowd, serving dishes from around the

Sunday, Jan 20

- 9 am **Photo shoot in Centro Habana by bicycle taxi**. Explore Chinatown, Reina Avenue and side streets. Stops include: a ration store, a church, popular gathering places and others.
- 11 am **Tour and photoshoot in Vedado neighborhood.**
- **Visit to agricultural market**, 19 y B, Vedado, to see where Cubans buy fruit, vegetables and produce.
 - **Tour of the Hotel Nacional**, the home to many important dignitaries during their visits to Cuba and the site of annual Mafia meetings throughout the 1950s. The beautiful grounds are unbeatable and take you back in time.
- 1 pm **Enjoy a traditional Cuban meal overlooking the Straits of Florida at the Hotel Nacional**. Tasty Cuban food served family style with a great view of the Havana sea wall and the old Spanish fortress.

Afternoon free to explore and shoot on your own

- 5:30 pm **Sunset photo shoot at the rooftop of La Guarida**, famous not only for its delectable dining, but also as the location for the film "Strawberry and Chocolate." It is housed on the third floor of a large, old town house carrying the charming ambience of the early 1900s. (drinks not included)
- 6:30 pm **Dinner reservation at La Guarida paladar**. (not included – to be paid on the ground)

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Monday, Jan 21

- 8:30 am Check-out and depart for **Cienfuegos**, one of the country's oldest and most beautiful cities, which is located approximately three and a half hours from Havana. Cienfuegos, referred to as the "Pearl of the South," is one of Cuba's only cities to display French and Spanish architecture. Housed on one of the country's largest bays, the city offers beautiful ocean front landscapes, and is deeply rich in culture.
- 12 pm **Lunch at El Lagarto.** With views and breezes from the bay of Cienfuegos, the location of El Lagarto is unbeatable.
- 1:30 pm **Tour of Cienfuegos by bicycle taxi.** Explore the outlying areas of the city, the local bodegas, train station, markets, etc.
- 3 pm **Walking tour with photographer Omar Garcia Valenti.** Some of his work is displayed in private collections in Cuba, the USA, Canada, France, and Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and more. He is well-known for the use of a technique called Silver Reverse. His work highlights the contemporary Cuban vision in the world around him, while trying to avoid touristic images and "kich." He focuses on the daily experiences of the subjects of his photos as they navigate the streets of Cuba. He will show some of his work and then lead a photo shoot in the downtown area.
- 4:30 pm **Visit to the Tomas Terry Theater**, one of the finest eclectic buildings of the city. It was in the last will and testament of Tomás Terry Adams, a wealthy sugar factory owner and mayor of Cienfuegos, to have this Italian-style theatre built after his death. World famous singers such as Italian tenor Enrico Caruso performed here.
- 5:10 pm **Continue to Trinidad**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, known for its rich architecture and history from Cuba's colonial times.
- 6:30 pm Arrival to Trinidad. Check-in at your casa particular.
- Evening **Enjoy a home-cooked meal** prepared by your hosts.

Tuesday, Jan 22

- 8:30 am **Breakfast discussion with Nancy Benítez**, a local architect, historian and restoration specialist. Ms. Benitez will provide an overview of the city's history from an architectural, economic and infrastructural point of view.
- 9:30 am **Morning walk of Trinidad's historic center**, known for its cobble stoned streets, pastel colored homes and small-town feel. Visit the main square "Playa Mayor", surrounded by some of the most outstanding buildings of the city from the 18th and 19th centuries, including the Church of the Holy Trinity.
- Visit to the city historic houses with Nancy Benitez.** Families will allow us throughout the homes, where we can snap photos of a number of antiques from the 1950s and well beyond.
- 12:30 pm **Enjoy lunch at Paladar San José**, a nice restaurant with a diverse menu featuring everything from lobster to pizza.

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- 2 pm **Visit to the Sugar Mills Valley** for breath taking photos of the valley, the ruins of the old sugar mills and the small surrounding villages.
- 3:30 pm **Visit to the archeological site San Isidro de los Destiladeros**, near the city of Trinidad, it was a typical sugar plantation, operated with slave labor in the late 18th and early 19th 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 about sugar cane in Cuba and slavery.
- Return to the city center*
- 5:30 pm **Sunset photo shoot.** Walk to the highest point of the city to shoot the sun rising over the bell towers and colonial homes of historic Trinidad.

Evening free

Wednesday, Jan 23

- 8:30 am **Morning excursion to Topes de Collantes** (40 minutes' drive), located in the Sierra Escambray rainforest, also known as the National Park of Guanayara. We will have a **guided tour through the community and park**, learn about the local flora and fauna and take photos at the gorgeous landscapes. We will also **visit a coffee plantation and museum and enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.**
- 2 pm Return to Trinidad.

Afternoon free to explore and shoot on your own

- 7:30 pm **Dinner at Real Café Restaurant**, located on Calle Real del Jigue.
- 9 pm **Enjoy a music performance by Trova Duo Cofradia.** Discussion with musicians Lia and Pachi about the Trova movement in Cuba followed by a private performance.

Thursday, Jan 24

- TBD Check-out and depart for airport in Santa Clara. (pending flight information)