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## The Bar Association of the District of Columbia (The Voluntary Bar)

In Cuba from Tuesday April 23rd to Saturday April 27th, 2019

### Day 1 – Tuesday :: Arrival Cuba and welcome dinner

- Depart to Havana via your arranged flights.
- You should plan arriving Havana by early afternoon. It will take you about 2 hours to clear Cuban immigration, get your bag and go through customs. You will be met in the arrival hall, after clearing customs, by our Cuban representative holding a 'Cuba Explore' sign to take you to your hotel. They will have your name and will be monitoring your flight arrival in case there is a delay. We will send you your guide's name and photo closer to your departure from the States. Your first tour activity will be dinner around 6:30, but your guide will finalize details with you. On departure you will be asked to be at the airport 3 hours in advance.
- Arrival at Havana's José Martí International Airport. Proceed through Immigration, collect your bags and go through Customs, giving them your blue customs form. Participant's arrival times may vary throughout the day. Airport transfers will be arranged for each flight of arriving participants.
- Havana's International Airport arrival hall does have bathrooms. They may not have seats or tissue. This is normal in Cuba, so you may wish to bring packets of tissues. It is suggested to use the restroom on the flight before landing.
- Give your 'Health' forms to the nurses in white uniforms after you go through immigration & screening. The important question they will ask is if you have been in Africa and exposed to Ebola.
- You will be welcomed at the airport exterior lobby by your guide after you exit Cuban customs. Look for signage of "Cuba Explorer". They will have your flight number and arrival time and will be waiting for you.
- Quote from Lonely Planet: "No one could have invented Havana. It's too audacious, too contradictory and – despite 50 years of withering neglect – too damned beautiful. How it does it is anyone's guess. Maybe it's the swashbuckling history still almost perceptible in atmospheric colonial streets; the survivalist spirit of a populace scarred by two independence wars, a revolution and a US trade embargo; or the indefatigable salsa energy that ricochets off walls and emanates most emphatically from the people. Don't come here with a long list of questions. Just arrive with an open mind and prepare for a long, slow seduction."



- Private transfer to Hotel Capri check in. An iconic 1950's hotel once owned by Santo Trafficante of American mobster fame. Actor George Raft was retained to be the public face of the casino. It closed immediately New Year's Eve, December 31, 1958 when it was obvious the Revolutionaries had toppled President Batista's forces. The Capri was recently remodeled for top class accommodations. Your hotel is in the heart of today's Vedado action. (Included)
- Enjoy a welcome cocktail (Included) after your private check-in with assistance from your guide.
- Free time to settle in and get oriented to your historic hotel.
- This evening you will enjoy a welcome dinner at restaurant Café Del Oriente in Old Havana. This is the restaurant where Secretary of State John Kerry visited in 2015 and Raul Castro entertained Jimmy Carter in 2011. (Included)
- Evening is free to explore the sights and sounds of the city.

## Day 2 – Wednesday :: Old Havana, professional awareness programs

- Breakfast in hotel. (Included)
- On the short coach ride to Old Havana your Cuban guide will have an interactive discussion on the Cuban legal system and the personal use/needs of a lawyer. (Included)
- Presentation by Prof. Carlos Alzugaray, former director of the Institute of Foreign Relations and former Cuban Ambassador to the European Union at the Hotel Florida. He has an exceptional understanding of US-Cuba relations. He will cover the historic relationship of the two countries and follow a timeline to the current political landscape.
- Walking tour of Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. You will visit the historic plazas that make Havana unique in the western hemisphere. It contains the largest collection of remaining colonial-era architecture. This is a private tour led by your Cuba Tours' guide. (Included)
- Cathedral Square, the most beautiful and private 18th century colonial plaza on the island. Named after the masterpiece of Cuban baroque architecture: the Catedral de San Cristóbal de la Habana was built by the Jesuit order.



- Square of Arms, an ancient military parade ground for Spanish soldiers, surrounded by impressive buildings such as:  
Palacio de los Capitanes Generales, former seat of colonial government. Today the building houses the Museum of the City.  
Palacio del Segundo Cabo [Palace of the Second Lieutenant] dates from 1770. Today it houses the Center for the Interpretation of Cultural Relations Cuba-Europe.
- See the Museum of Chocolate, a small shop with intriguing artifacts relating to the history of chocolate production in Cuba. You can see where chocolates are made at the back of the premises while one sips on a warming cup of hot chocolate or a soothing glass of cold chocolate. The Museo del Chocolate also sells artisanal chocolates singly or boxed.
- You will continue on to San Francisco Square, one of the oldest plazas in the historical quarter. The square is named after magnificent Iglesia y Monasterio de San Francisco de Asís dating from the 16th century. The basilica is a striking example of Cuba baroque architecture.
- As you stroll through the historic cobblestone streets you will see the area Ernest Hemingway would walk when he stayed in the city.
- Then on to Plaza Vieja, the only civic square of colonial times. Absent are churches and government buildings, and is in contrast surrounded by opulent aristocratic 17th century residences.
- During the Tour you will break for lunch at El Figaro, a hidden gem on a small side street in Old Havana. A portion of the profits go to the community project of restoration, senior services and vocational training. Excellent food. (Included)
- Presentation by members of Unión Nacional de Juristas de Cuba - UNJC (Cuban National Union of Lawyers) at their offices. Subjects: Cuban economy, Cuba's investment laws and Cuba's private business structure. (Included)
- Return to hotel.
- A very short walk from your hotel is Hotel Nacional. At your leisure feel free to visit and stroll by cannons of battles from the 1800's and visit the bunkers used during the Cuban Missile Crisis, built overlooking the Malecon and the Straits of Florida to Key West. For 13 days in October 1962 the world hinged on the brink of a nuclear war. The epicenter of the conflict was on the island you will be standing. Diplomatic understandings were formulated, treaties were contemplated, blockades occurred, embargoes were strengthened and international legal precedent was challenged. You may go through the bunkers and trenches and be briefed on the happenings of that complex time. (Optional)



- Dinner (Not Included). This is a perfect evening to explore Cuba's famed paladares or visit one of the many cafes within easy walking distance of your hotel.

### Day 3 – Thursday :: Cigar Factory, Revolution, Capitol, vintage American cars

- Breakfast in hotel. (Included)
- Visit the Partagas Cigar Factory, the factory that makes the internationally famous Partagas cigars. It employs 400 people and produces about 25,000 cigars daily. Rollers receive their carefully portioned leaves for their blends from a storeroom at the front. A small quality-control area sits off to the side, where draw machines test the finished product for the day. As in all Cuban cigar factories, a podium is set up for a lector who reads the news to workers. Two half-hour-long periods later in the day are devoted to novels, or fiction books which the workers select.
- Visit the Museum of Revolution housed in the palace of former dictator Fulgencio Batista. Behind the palace and a part of the grounds is the refurbished glass enclosure which houses Granma, the boat which took Fidel Castro, Raul Castro, Che Guevara and their revolutionaries from Mexico to Cuba for the Revolution. There is a surface-to-air missile of the type that shot down a U.S. Lockheed U-2 spy plane during the Cuban Missile Crisis and the engine of the American U-2 airplane itself. It is an amazing look at history through the eyes of Cuban Revolutionaries. (Included)
- Dramatic shifts in Cuba's modern history had its starting point with the Revolution. A Tour of the Museum will help you have a better understanding of that and the 60 complex years of U.S./Cuban relations. (Included)
- Lunch at El Aljibe, which features a 62-year-old secret recipe for roast chicken that has drawn the likes of Hollywood star Jack Nicholson and former President Jimmy Carter. It is one of the busiest restaurants in Havana during lunchtime. The recipe includes garlic and bitter orange as well as other secret ingredients.
- Visit to El Capitolio, the national Capitol building for the Republic of Cuba. Construction began in 1926 and was completed in 1929. The building was the seat of government until after the Cuban Revolution in 1959. When the Cuban Congress was abolished after the Revolution the Ministry of Science Technology and the Environment eventual moved in. Though there is a striking resemblance to the U.S. Capitol it is not a replica. Restoration began in 2013 with the intent to have it completed by 2019, the 500 year anniversary of Havana's founding. The intent is to have the Cuban National Assembly once again occupy the Capitol. During restoration, public tours may be arranged. (Included)



- Early evening you will have the opportunity to caravan in iconic 1950's Vintage American cars, a fascinating experience of nostalgia. You will cruise the Malecon (Seawall), stop for photos and be dropped off for dinner. (Included)
- Wonderful dinner at Atelier a private restaurant in a home built in 1928. When President Barack and Michelle Obama visited Cuba the First Lady and a group enjoyed lunch at Atelier. (Included)
- Evening is free to explore the sights and sounds of the city.

### **Day 4 – Friday :: Hemingway by the Sea, Hemingway's home, evening free to explore**

- Breakfast in hotel. (Included)
- On the coach ride to Cojimar there will be an engaging discussion on the euphemism “Special Period” in Cuba’s history of when the Soviet Union fell, the U.S Embargo was maintained and the economic stress it placed on the Cuban people: what regulations and life styles were changed. (Included)
- Travel to Cojímar, a small fishing village approximately 7 miles east of Havana. It was Ernest Hemingway’s favorite fishing port in Cuba and the basis for Old Man and the Sea. This is the harbor where Hemingway’s boat Pilar was moored and where Papa and Gregorio would depart to marlin fish or hunt German Submarines. On water’s edge see Hemingway’s bust made from metal, donated by the local fishermen, and get photos in front of the 17th century Spanish Lookout Fort. (Included)
- Lunch at El Ajiaco, a humble paladar visited by food networks from around the world and a number of notable celebrities such as Kevin Bacon and Sigourney Weaver. (Included)



- Visit Finca La Vigía, home and farm of Ernest Hemingway. He lived longer in this residence than any of his other homes. It was here he accepted the Nobel Peace Prize for Literature and wrote A Moveable Feast and The Old Man and the Sea, among other works. He left the island in 1960 This unique National Museum also includes his boat Pilar (in part made famous from his book Old Man and the Sea), the graves of some of his dogs and inside the fully furnished home displays his library, manuscripts and personal effects which you will be able to see. (Included)

Traveling back through Old Havana you will visit Centro Cultural Antiguos Almacenes de Depósito San José, a giant craft market offering some of the most iconic objects of Havana: garish-colored paintings by local artists, guayaberas (short-sleeve, open-neck Cuban shirts), sculptures, leather, jewelry, and various trinkets & gadgets bearing the image of Che Guevara. The souvenirs are high quality, which is why you will see as many locals as tourists among the shoppers. The metal-framed structure itself, an old, fully renovated maritime warehouse, very retro and Art Deco, is worth the visit alone. (Optional)

- Return to hotel.
- Dinner (Not Included). With all the great food you have experienced this week it is your chance to re-visit one of your favorite restaurants or check out a paladar you may have heard about. Your Cuban Guide and will be glad to help. Plan ahead if you want reservations.
- Evening is free to explore the sights and sounds of Havana. It's your last night in the Republic of Cuba so Enjoy!
- Tropicana, Buena Vista Social Club and Jazz Café are a few options for later evening entertainment. (Optional)

## Day 5 – Saturday :: Havana and home

- Breakfast in hotel. (Included)
- Hotel check-out.
- Transfer to José Martí International Airport in Havana for flight home. (Included)
- You need to be at your departure airport 3 hours before takeoff. Please prepare accordingly. Your guide will meet you in the lobby of your hotel.



- After you clear Cuban Immigration, you will be screened and your carry on will be scanned. In the departure hall there is a duty free shop, places to buy snacks and drinks, as well as souvenirs, so you may want to have some Cuban Currency (CUC). There is a currency exchange in the departure hall (1) if it is open and (2) if they have USD \$ to exchange for you. They do not take CUC coins.
- When arriving to your U.S. entry airport you will need to clear U.S. Immigration and U.S. Customs. If questioned by an Immigration Officer about your trip to Cuba, note that you were on a sanctioned Tour of “People to People Activities.” If asked what that is, tell the truth and explain it was an opportunity to directly engage with Cuban people, learn about their life and country. To be clear: You were not on a vacation.
- Memories of a wonderful visit to the Pearl of the Antilles: Cuba! (Included)

Cuba travel is a challenge. Our staff and Cuban partners work super hard to make your tour unfold seamlessly despite Third World conditions on the island. Sometimes things don't go as planned. Flexible travelers understand this is part of their Cuban adventure.