



**Volunteers in Medicine national office
Educational Tour of Cuba
Itinerary: December 8-15, 2017**

December 8, 2017

Morning Meet your **Intercultural Travel representative** in Florida (city to soon be determined) for our short flight to Havana's Jose Marti International Airport.

Upon arrival in Havana, board our air-conditioned bus, and head towards our hotel. Stop at the **Revolution Square**, the gathering place for political demonstrations and the home to many important government offices.

3 pm Check-in at local accommodations (TBD).

5 pm **Discussion with Dr. Marcelino Feal**, a Professor of General Surgery at the University Hospital Calixto García for an overview of the Cuban health care system.

7 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.

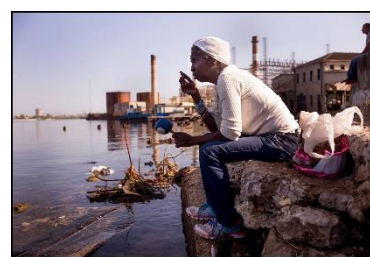


December 9, 2017

9 am **Meeting with the director(s) of MEDICC** (Medical Education Cooperation with Cuba), to discuss the country's health care system, and cooperation between the U.S. and Cuba.

10:30 am **Community Health tour of Old Havana with Barrio Habana**, a nonprofit organization that leads a community sports, health and art initiative for citizens of all ages. **Visit to local pharmacy and nursing home** and discussion with locals about community health programs.

12:30 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's location in the beautiful cathedral square is unbeatable.



2 pm

Walking tour of the Old City. Visit **Plaza de la Catedral de San Cristóbal de La Habana.** 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 18th 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 18th and 19th centuries.



4:30 pm

Visit to the Litz 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 impressive.



Evening free

December 10, 2017

9 am **Discussion with Carlos Alzugaray**, former Cuban diplomat and expert on U.S.-Cuba relations, to learn about the bilateral relationship and Cuban foreign policy.

11am **Visit to the Latin American Medical School**, where Cuba trains thousands of doctors from all over the world.

1 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. We will be **joined by physicians and medical students** for a discussion and interaction.



Free time

6 pm **Visit the home and studio of a family of artists**, at AltaMira art loft. Enjoy an informal discussion with the family about art, culture and daily life on the island.

7 pm



Visit the home of Frank Delgado, renowned singer and songwriter, for a discussion about the *nueva trova* movement in Cuba and a private performance.

December 11, 2017

8:30 am Check-out and **depart for 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.

- 11:30 am **City tour of Cienfuegos**, including visits to the main square, the beautiful Palacio Del Valle and Punta Gorda.
- 1 pm **Lunch at las Mamparas**, a family run paladar. Quick and simple, the food is extraordinary and the family that runs it even better.
- 2:30 pm **Visit a health clinic** to learn about the health care system. We will receive a tour of a typical neighborhood health clinic and have the chance to ask questions to doctors and nurses.
- 4:30 pm Continue to **Trinidad**, a UNESCO world heritage site, known for its cobble stoned streets, pastel colored homes and small-town feel.
- 6 pm Arrive to Trinidad. **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.
- Evening Enjoy a home cooked meal at your casa particular.



December 12, 2017

- 9 am **City tour 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.
- 11 am **Visit with local artists and entrepreneurs.** Learn about the city traditions: arts and crafts, embroidery and pottery.
- 12:30 pm **Lunch at Bar Restaurant Esquerra**, located in the very heart of the historic center, it offers a great meal and the ambiance to match.



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.

Late afternoon and evening free

December 13, 2017

- 8:30 am **Check out and depart for Havana.**
- 12:30 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. The setting brings many back to the 1950s, when the mafia held its annual meetings at this historic hotel.

2:30 pm Visit to a home in Central Havana for a **discussion with Magia López and Alexey Rodriguez of the hip-hop/jazz duo Obsesión** about their experiences and views on race and gender equality in Cuba.

Afternoon free

8 pm **Dinner reservations 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 world.

Following dinner, enjoy live music, art and dancing at La Fábrica de Arte Cubano. Rock star X Alfonso has turned this into meeting spot for a young, eclectic crowd of Cubans and foreigners.

December 14, 2017

Morning **Discussion with journalist Marc Frank.** Author of *Cuba Revelations* and one of the longest-serving foreign correspondent in Cuba, Frank writes for Reuters, the Financial Times and the Economist, and is an authority on the Cuban economy. He will offer insight into important economic, political and social issues on the island and share colorful stories about being a reporter in Cuba.

Afternoon Free to explore the city on your own

6 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 on the second floor of a beautiful Vedado home, where the walls are lined with captivating art work.

8 pm Farwell dinner at **Café Laurent**, a paladar located in the beautiful Vedado district. Blocks from the Hotel Nacional, this penthouse apartment was converted into a lovely rooftop restaurant.

December 15, 2017

Hotel Check out, and depart for Jose Marti International (flight TBD)