GREATEST VOYAGE IN NATURAL HISTORY

The Amazon is a living labyrinth of forests, wildlife and people, all bisected by a storied river meandering 4,200 miles across South America. Cloaked in mist, boasting every shade of green, the heart of the Amazon is a wilderness that has pulled at the spirits of adventurers for centuries. Over the 33 years that International Expeditions has been exploring the Amazon, our guests have enjoyed unrivaled access to the rainforest's most pristine areas and the company of the river's most knowledgeable guides. Leaving behind only the diminishing wake of our riverboat, IE can transport you to the Amazon of your imagination to discover a rainforest that pulsates with diversity of life.

The 161 Society of the AACA Museum offers you this opportunity to explore Cuba.

APRIL 23-MAY 1, 2015
Let the Rhythm Move You!

Pulsating rhythms wrap you like a blanket as the sounds of Cuba — salsa, rumba and jazz — carry from almost every street corner and club, day and night. To truly be immersed in the daily lives of Cuban people, you must first listen. And listen to the music — mingled with laughter — spilling from a local club serving as a warm invitation to join into the daily lives of locals.

Why People-to-People Travel?

IE’s people-to-people travel license affords you an immersive opportunity to connect directly with the Cuban people, learning more about each other through direct contact and cultural exchange. Our license mandates that you participate in a daily slate of engaging activities focused on education and cultural exchange.

“Cuba was fabulous, and the genuine people-to-people experiences — the choir, the art/music school, the tobacco factory, etc. — were wonderful. I loved observing a dramatically different social, economic, and political environment, especially at this time in Cuba’s history.” — Fred Schauer of Charlottesville, Virginia
brush aside the Cuba that you “know” from history books and current events, and there is an unfiltered view of this vibrant island found only through the eyes of its people. While traversing the countryside and sipping coffee in small cafés, IE guests encounter working-class locals eager to share, learn and ensure lives and options are transformed.

With music, art and athletic prowess, Cuba has long demonstrated to the world that it is bastion of talent and style. From the Tropicana nightlife to the Buena Vista Social Club, Cubans have entertained us. Cuba’s vices are legendary — mellow cigars of renown quality, lavish cabarets, Salsa dancing and smooth rum. This has always been a playground for inspired eccentrics. Author and adventurer Ernest Hemingway whiled away his time in Cuba, but it was the writings of Jose Marti that best defines Cuba’s hunger for freedom and independence.

Despite governing policies, Cuba’s culture thrives, while nature pays no attention to political differences.

**Historic Connection:**
**People-to-People Travel**

After World War II, President Eisenhower wanted to bring people together, recognizing that lasting peace could be advanced by engaging with people of other cultures. Groups of citizen ambassadors traveled on programs designed to engender a mutual understanding and appreciation. People-to-people travel continues to enable U.S. citizens to travel with a purposeful objective — to gain insight and understanding for people living in different societies.
Day 1 – THURSDAY, APRIL 23  MIAMI  Our Cuba people-to-people travel program begins in Miami with a briefing and welcome reception before an overnight at a hotel near the Miami Airport.

Day 2 – FRIDAY, APRIL 24  MIAMI / HAVANA  Board our charter flight to Havana. Discuss Havana's past and future with our local guide while stopping at iconic sites such as Revolution Square. This evening visit La Casa del Habano, one of Havana’s top cigar shops, inside the exclusive beachfront Club Habana. Over dinner share our mutual love of classic cars with special guests, Eduardo Mesejo, Director of Deposito del Automovil, a repository of classic and historic cars, as well as guests from Amigos de Fangio, a local club of classic car enthusiasts. Spend four nights at the modern Hotel Melia Cohiba. (D)

Day 3 – SATURDAY, APRIL 25  HAVANA  Stroll through the atmospheric squares of Old Havana, calling on artists in their studios as we pass. These parks and plazas are popular with locals who frequent the stalls selling books along the edges of the park while musicians fill the air with sound. Stop at a community social project — Arte Corte. The Arte Corte project began as a vocational program training hairdressers and barbers, but now supports a senior home and children’s park. Visit Hotel Ambos Mundos, where Ernest Hemingway kept a room for years. The hotel served as a refuge for writing such works as For Whom the Bell Tolls and as a base for frequenting his favorite bars. Drive along the Malecon and across the bay for views of sunset and of Havana coming to life in the evening. Enjoy dinner at La Divina Pastora, a private restaurant (paladar). Paladar owners are truly Cuba’s new breed of entrepreneurs, and while dining you meet the owners and families to discuss the impact of private business on Cuba’s economy. Stroll to the famed Floridita bar, a favorite haunt of Hemingway known as the “Cradle of the Daiquiri.” Our path takes us along a lively pedestrian boulevard, where we mingle with locals out for an evening walk. (B,L,D)

Day 4 – SUNDAY, APRIL 26  HAVANA / VINALES VALLEY DAY TRIP  Head west this morning into the province of Pinar Del Rio to the famed Viñales Valley. Viñales boasts Cuba’s most strikingly beautiful landscapes and is where the island’s best tobacco is grown. At a family-run tobacco farm, the family discusses their lives and why their crop is among the world’s best. The valley is punctuated by huge limestone caves that form inside one of the many spectacular mogotes – limestone karst outcappings. A small boat takes us on a river running inside the cave. Sample the homegrown vegetables grown at an organic farm while meeting the family who is responsible for the land and prepared our lunch. Cap-off our day by meeting locals in the small community of Viñales before returning to Havana. (B,L,D)

Day 5 – MONDAY, APRIL 27  HAVANA  Learn more about the classic cars of Cuba and how they are maintained, repaired, bought and sold. There is a local saying that “Cuban mechanics work magic” and we have a full schedule of activities and visits devoted to this end that are coordinated by our new friends at the Deposito de Automovil and Amigos de Fangio.
de Fangio. Time permitting, visit the Rum Museum in Old Havana. Get ready for a surprise courtesy of the AACA Museum starting with drinks at the historic Hotel Nacional. En route to dinner, drive along the Paseo del Prado, a wide avenue separating Old Havana from the central city. Paved in marble, this promenade is a popular place for locals to relax while children play. Pass numerous art deco buildings, including the famous Barcardi Building. Say goodbye to Havana with dinner at the elegant Café Del Oriente in Old Havana followed by Cuban music at Café Taberna with the Buena Vista Social Club revue. (B,L,D)

Day 6 - TUESDAY, APRIL 28  HAVANA / FINCA VIGIA / BAY OF PIGS  Pay homage to Hemingway at his former home Finca Vigia, preserved as it was on the day of his death, and discuss his life with Cuban experts and researchers. Stop to chat with the farmers at a sustainable garden which supplies one of Cuba’s best private restaurants — Il Divino — where we enjoy lunch. Continue east into Matanzas Province and then turn south to the Bay of Pigs. Browse through an small museum housing weapons used during the invasion. The Bay of Pigs borders the Zapata Peninsula which is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve encompassing Cuba’s most important wetland area. There are around 900 species of flora, 171 species of birds (18 endemics), 31 species of reptiles and many mammal species. Spend tonight at the simple Hotel Playa Larga on the Bay of Pigs. (B,L,D)

Cuba Guests’ Experiences

“Cuba was fabulous, and the genuine people-to-people experiences — the choir, school, tobacco factory — were wonderful. I loved observing a dramatically different social, economic and political environment, especially at this time in Cuba’s history.” Fred S.
Day 7 – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29  BAY OF PIGS / AUSTRALIA / MATANZAS  Begin our day at the Korimakao Project. If the staff is not traveling, we sit in on their practices before a discussion on the transformative power of art. The project houses some of Cuba’s finest musicians and artists, who refine their skills before traveling to remote villages to perform and teach. Present art, music and dance supplies to Yander, the director. In Boca de Guama, learn about the fate of the fish in the famous Treasure Lake, once thought to be the home of world’s record largemouth bass. After lunch, explore the small town of Australia, once an important sugar-production site and the location of Castro’s command center during the Bay of Pigs invasion. While the Varadero Peninsula is known for its beautiful beaches, our time here will focus on the area’s people! Matanzas was Cuba’s major colonial-era port, exporting coffee, tobacco and sugar, and it also served as a slave trading port. The bay is the deepest in Cuba and during one battle in 1628 more than twenty Spanish galleons were sunk here by a Dutch admiral. Dinner tonight is in our hotel, the Iberostar Varadero, Melia Varadero Resort or similar. (B,L,D)

Day 8 – THURSDAY, APRIL 30  MATANZAS & VARADERO  Discuss the history of traditional dance with the young musicians and dancers at Las Munequitos de Matanzas and the School of Arts. Enjoy a taste of the area’s history at a colonial pharmacy. Also on our agenda is a stop at the Varadero Art Museum. Dinner is served on the terrace of the storied Xanadu Mansion, built by Irene Dupont de Nemours. (B,L,D)

Day 9 – FRIDAY, MAY 1  HAVANA / MIAMI  Return to Havana, where we check in for our charter flight to Miami. (B)

A Note About Accommodations
IE has carefully sought out accommodations that provide the best service and location available; however, Cuban hotels outside of Havana may not reflect the same standards and amenities found on other IE journeys. Whether it comes to changes in your accommodations or our daily schedule, travel to Cuba requires flexibility and a sense of adventure.

WHAT’S INCLUDED
- Full schedule of engaging people-to-people activities
- Full escort by IE leader, Cuban expedition leader & local guides
- Visit a car museum and attend a meeting with Havana’s Classic Car Club
- Visit to Hemingway’s former home, Finca Vigia
- In-studio discussions with a variety of Cuban artists
- Sampling of local fare at privately owned paladares
- Tour galleries & museums under the guidance of experts in local history & art
- Cuban visitor visa
- 20 meals
- Excursion to hear Buena Vista Social Club
- Hotel in Miami prior to charter flight
- Welcome reception in Miami
- Choice of local beer or soft drink – at group lunches & dinners
- Bottled water on transfers & excursions
- Cuban-government mandated medical insurance
- Tips to porters, day guides & waiters for included meals

EXPERIENCE PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:
- Airfare, passport fees, items of a personal nature, and tips to Cuban government guide, driver & expedition leader.
- Deposits & Payments: $600 deposit due at time of application. Final payment due 90 days prior to departure.
- Cancellations: $300 from time of booking until 90 days prior to departure. 50% of trip price from 89-61 days prior to departure. 100% penalty 60-0 days prior to departure.
International Expeditions, Inc. is licensed (CT-2013-299822-1) by the United States Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control to engage, organize and conduct authorized people-to-people travel to Cuba that engages participants in meaningful interactions with individuals in Cuba.

For more information on joining International Expeditions’ journey contact:

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CUBA
PEOPLE, CULTURE & CLASSIC CARS