

Just the Havana jazz festival

Day 1 • Tuesday • Say hello to the city of music

- Arrivals at Havana's José Martí International Airport
- Collect your luggage and proceed through Cuban customs to the arrivals lobby
- Our airport concierge or your tour guide will arrange tour bus or private taxi transfers from the airport to your hotel located in Old Havana, the heart of Havana's historical district. Your hotel check-in is pre-arranged, you simply present your passport
- Time at hotel to settle in and freshen up
- Dinner is served at a local private restaurant.
- Time to explore Havana's vibrant nightlife, and make new Cuban friends. We'll keep you posted on evening entertainment options.
- Havana Jazz Festival Performances, choose among events taking place at several different venues (transportation to one venue INCLUDED)

Day 2 • Wednesday • Old Havana, History

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel
 - Followed by a private walking tour of Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We'll visit four historic plazas that make Havana unique in the western hemisphere. Together they contain the largest collection of remaining Spanish colonial-era architecture in the world
 - Cathedral Square, the most beautiful and private 18th century colonial plaza on the island. Named after the masterpiece of Cuban baroque architecture, 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
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- We continue onto 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
- On to Plaza Vieja, the only civic square of colonial times. Absent are churches and government buildings. The plaza is surrounded by opulent aristocratic 17th century residences.
- Later on, we'll visit Cuba's National Capitol Building, a Latin American architectural treasure. Its size and appearance are similar to Washington's Capitol Building, but the Pantheon in Paris inspired its opulent neoclassical form and art nouveau flourishes. Cuban architects Raúl Otero and Eugenio Rayneri Piedra designed the colossus in 1925, and construction began in 1926 by the U.S. firm Purdy and Henderson. Completed in 1929, it served as the seat of Congress until 1959 when Fidel and fellow rebels chose less bourgeois digs to conduct revolutionary affairs.
- Welcome lunch at the private restaurant Mojito-Mojito. Ideally situated in Plaza Vieja, its friendly atmosphere, and delicious food makes it rank high on TripAdvisor. The restaurant's slogan: "A single mojito is not enough."
- Return to your hotel and freshen up
- Welcome dinner at the private restaurant Le Petit. An attractive, elegant and casual restaurant, located in the oldest area of Havana.
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Day 3 • Thursday • Cuban dance, HAVANA JAZZ FESTIVAL PERFORMANCES

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel
 - Morning visit to one of the best Cuban dance companies. We'll visit and meet the troupe during their practice performances.
 - Lunch included at the private paladar Atelier where President Obama, First Lady Michelle, and daughters Malia and Sasha dined in 2016.
 - Return to your hotel and freshen up
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- Dinner not included in tour cost. An occasion to sample Havana's stellar private eateries and taste the diversity of the island's distinctive cuisines. We'll provide suggestions for restaurants most popular with Cubans and our travelers
- Havana Jazz Festival Performances, choose among events taking place at several different venues (transportation to one venue INCLUDED)

Day 4 • Friday • Cigar and rum, shopping, HAVANA JAZZ FESTIVAL PERFORMANCES

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel
 - Visit a cigar factory which makes internationally famous Cuban cigars. Rollers receive their carefully portioned leaves for their blends from the storeroom. 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. (Included)
 - Time flies when you're having rum! Cuba's golden elixir spans nearly five hundred years of brewing. You'll learn the fascinating history and art of distillation of the island's (and Hemingway's) most popular spirit. The Havana Club Museum of Rum opened in the year 2000 within a grand private palace. It houses incredible artifacts used in the rum-making process, as well as an expansive Rum inventory, and a chance to sample this liquid ambrosia.
 - Lunch will be served today at La Moneda Cubana.
 - Visit Centro Cultural Antiguos Almacenes de Depósito San José. This marvelous restoration of an old dock warehouse has resulted in a gigantic market fair exhibiting the wares of hundreds of Cuban artists and crafts workers. It's an amazing shopping opportunity for memorable Cuban gifts and souvenirs
 - Return to your hotel and freshen up. Explore the city with your tourmates and new Cuban friends
 - Dinner not included in tour cost. An occasion to sample Havana's stellar private eateries and taste the diversity of the island's distinctive cuisines. We'll provide suggestions for restaurants most popular with Cubans and our travelers
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Day 5 • Saturday • AfroCuba, Hemingway, HAVANA JAZZ FESTIVAL BANDS

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel
 - Visit to Callejón de Hamel, a magical section of Old Havana filled with AfroCuban murals and art.
 - We're off to visit Finca la Vigía [Lookout Farm] where North America's literary titan Ernest Hemingway spent twenty-one of his most important and productive years adding to the building blocks of English literature. Claimed by both the United States and Cuba as a native son, it was Hemingway himself who declared Cuba to be his true home. His house has been preserved just as it was when he lived in it. You'll see his eclectic personal objects, thousands of books, manuscripts and photographs, as well as some animal trophies he bagged on his safaris to deepest Africa
 - Tour highlight. We have a special lunch arranged for you by our friends at Ajiaco paladar [private restaurant]. It's considered the best in Cuba. It's a mandatory dining stop located off the beaten path in the romantic coastal fishing village of Cojímar. Ajiaco is noted for fantastic service, atmosphere and scrumptilicious country Cuban cuisine. All their ingredients are fresh and organic, supplied by nearby private gardens to give every dish a delightfully aromatic flavor you'll never forget
 - We'll visit the village of Cojímar, the setting for Ernest Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea." Here adoring local fishers cast a bronze bust from old anchors, props and tools. They had no money for new materials. Its inscription reads, "In loving memory of the people of Cojímar to the immortal author of Old Man and the Sea." A plaque below the bust reads: Sculpted with the contributions of the Fishermen Cooperative of Cojímar
 - Return to your hotel and freshen up
 - Dinner not included in tour cost. An occasion to sample Havana's stellar private eateries and taste the diversity of the island's distinctive cuisines. We'll provide suggestions for restaurants most popular with Cubans and our travelers
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Day 6 • Sunday • Art, history and HAVANA JAZZ FESTIVAL CLOSING FINALE

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel.
- Later on, we'll examine Cuba's greatest visual masterpieces spanning three centuries at Havana's world class museum of modern art – Palacio de Bellas Artes. It's exhibits display the richness of the island's Spanish, French, Chinese, African and Aboriginal cultural influences. Notable works include those of René Portocarrero and Wilfredo Lam.
- Lunch today is included in a private restaurant.
- This afternoon is for you to explore the city on your own with your tourmates and new Cuban friends.
- Return to your hotel and freshen up
- Attend a big jazz event this evening (transportation included).
- Farewell group dinner at local restaurant, included

Day 7 • Monday • Say goodbye to Cuba – for now

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel
 - Check-out of your Havana hotel
 - Transfer to José Martí International Airport in Havana for flights home
 - We'll miss you and hope you will return soon. In Cuba we say: A true friend remembers the song in your heart when you have forgotten the lyrics
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