

Havana jazz festival plus

Day 1 • Sunday • 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 boutique accommodation check-in is pre-arranged, you simply present your passport
- Time to settle in and freshen up
- Dinner is served at a private local restaurant, included.
- Havana Jazz Festival Performances, choose among events taking place at several different venues (transportation to one venue INCLUDED)

Day 2 • Monday • Old Havana, architecture, and 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
- 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."
- This afternoon is for you to explore the city on your own with your tourmates and new Cuban friends.
- Return to 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.
- Behold a most dramatic ceremony – El Cañonazo – the Firing of the 9 PM Cannon at the magnificent Fortress of San Carlos de la Cabaña. Its construction began in the 16th-century. Later, Ché Guevara established his headquarters in its vaults after the 1959 Revolution. El Cañonazo is an enchanting reenactment dating back to 1519 when the city of Havana was enclosed by a tall, thick rock wall to ward off attacks from pirates and the English. The firing of the 9 PM cannon signaled the closing of the city gates each evening. If you were outside at the time, you were in "vedado" or the forbidden zone. Today Vedado is the cultural hub of upper-crust modern Havana (Optional).
- Havana Jazz Festival Performances, choose among events taking place at several different venues (transportation to one venue INCLUDED)

Day 3 • Tuesday • Amazing nature trip to stunning Las Terrazas

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel
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- Tour highlight. Now for a day excursion to the amazing Las Terrazas region just one hour to the west of Havana. Once mired in poverty and completely deforested as a result of centuries of charcoal production for coffee processing and cooking, Las Terrazas today is a vibrant self-sustaining eco-community. Located in the Sierra del Rosario mountain range Las Terrazas spans the provinces of Artemisa and Pinar del Río. We'll visit the rural village called Rancho Curujey and learn about this self-sustaining community's successes in reforestation, historical preservation, environmental balance, and a good life. Later we'll walk the incredible ruins of a French Coffee Plantation built in 1801 worked by African slaves
- Optional thrill for the young at heart: Zipline through a forest and across a lake!
- We'll enjoy lunch at an open-air restaurant specializing in traditional country cuisine – La Casa del Campesino – ever popular with tour participants and locals alike. The eatery is located on the fresh water shore of the Río San Juan making it lush tropical paradise. This jungle-like forest area offers an opportunity for birding and plant identification
- Return to 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.
- Havana Jazz Festival Performances, choose among events taking place at several different venues (transportation to one venue INCLUDED)

Day 4 • Wednesday • Cuban art, HAVANA JAZZ FESTIVAL PERFORMANCES

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel.
 - 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.
 - Lunch at a local restaurant, included.
 - Return to your hotel and freshen up. Explore the city with your tourmates and new Cuban friends
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Day 5 • Thursday • Fusterlandia, HAVANA JAZZ FESTIVAL PERFORMANCES

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel.
 - We'll examine Cuba's greatest visual masterpieces spanning three centuries at Havana's world class museum of modern art – Palacio de Bellas Artes. Its 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.
 - Later today, lunch included at the local restaurant 5 Esquinas Trattoria.
 - Arts tour highlight. We'll visit Fusterlandia, the creation of Fúster, one of Cuba's most important ceramists and painters, at his whimsical studio in Jaimanitas, just outside of Havana. Fúster is known as the Picasso of the Caribbean and his art is acclaimed internationally. His artistic mission has been the rehabilitation and decoration of the village of Jaimanitas where he lives. Fúster has decorated over 80 houses with ornate murals and domes to suit the personality of his neighbors. Nowadays, Fúster's art is a cherished part of Cuban culture and joins the rank of other public artworks such as that of Gaudi in Barcelona or that of Brancusi in the Romanian city of Targu Jiu. He supports his community project through the sale of his paintings and ceramics.
 - After lunch, we'll visit Producciones Abdala S.A., a company that provides recording, mastering, restoration, production and editing services, using advanced technology in musical recording. They have played an important role in Cuban music, especially in the jazz genre. We will also meet artists there.
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- Havana Jazz Festival Performances, choose among events taking place at several different venues (transportation to one venue INCLUDED)

Day 6 • Friday • Urban farm, Hemingway, HAVANA JAZZ FESTIVAL BANDS

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel
 - Visit the UBPC Vivero Organopónico Alamar, a giant farm cooperative producing a range of healthy, organic vegetables
 - 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
 - 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.
 - Return to your hotel and freshen up
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Day 7 • Saturday • Havana discovery, HAVANA JAZZ FESTIVAL PERFORMANCES

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel
- Get ready for an American vintage cars tour of Havana. Hail back to picture postcard days of the 1950s. You will tool the most important sites of Havana in classic US automobiles lovingly restored and maintained by their owners. This is an excellent time to discuss with your guide about the pre-revolution period and Cuba after the revolution. We will stop at the Morro castle, the Hotel Nacional, and at the Revolution Square.
- Visit to Proyecto Cultural Muraleando. The need to transform their neighborhood into a healthy and attractive environment was the reason that led to the creation of Muraleando in 2001. Music, dance and acting are part of a stage where the most unsuspected objects are transformed into works of art. This project contributes to show how vast is the world of plastic arts from a peculiar context; a fact that favors the great affluence of Cuban and foreign spectators.
- Lunch and Cuban percussion workshop included at Muraleando.
- Return to your hotel and freshen up
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Day 8 • Sunday • Afrocuban music, HAVANA JAZZ FESTIVAL CLOSING FINALE

- Greet the day with tasty breakfast served at your hotel
 - Morning: Explore the city with your tourmates and new Cuban friends
 - Lunch 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
 - Visit the Afrocuban influenced Callejón de Hamel and witness a monster mesmerizing neighborhood rumba jam and dance party that will knock your socks off
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1-888-965-5647 toll free

- Return to your hotel to freshen up
- Attend a big jazz event this evening (transportation included).
- Farewell group dinner at local restaurant, included.

Day 9 • 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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