

New Year's in Cuba: A Family Friendly Program

December 27, 2022-January 1, 2023



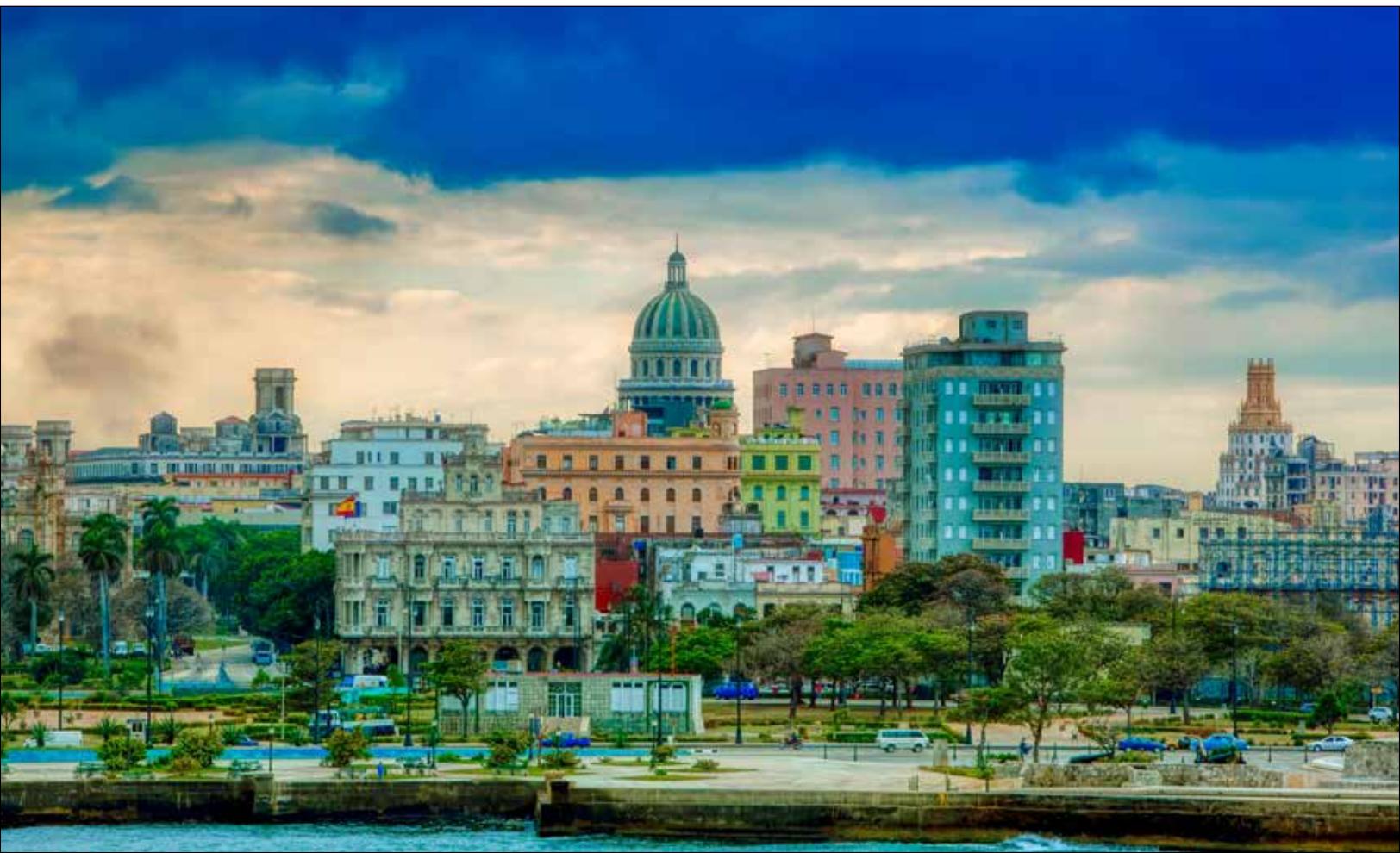
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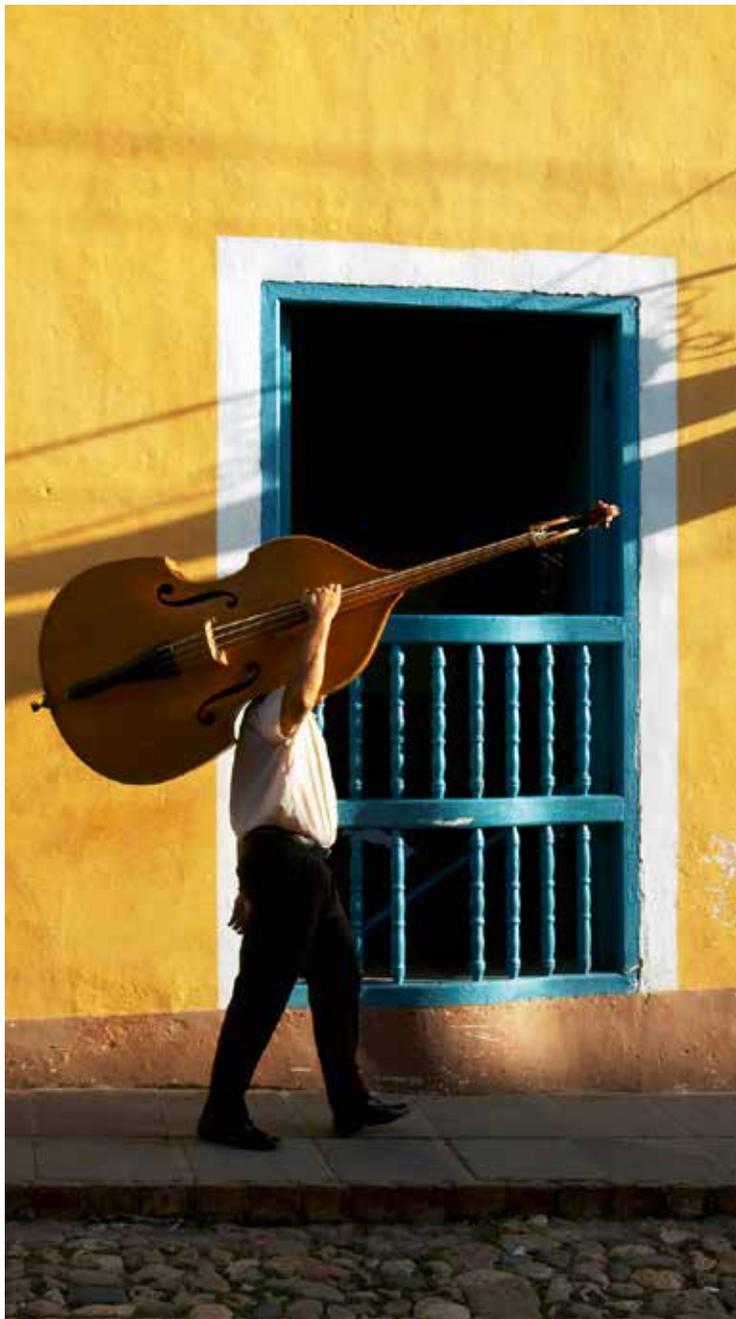
Join Us!

We invite you to join a specially designed program focused on understanding not only Cuba's past and present, but also learning what its future may hold. This tour will feature family-friendly events and activities that will explore the unique history and beauty of Cuba in ways that people of all ages can appreciate.

Cuba's decades-long isolation has had both negative and positive impacts on society. Its dynamic arts community, curious and well-educated population, growing number of NGOs, rich music culture, and stunning colonial architecture make Cuba a unique place to visit, learn about, and explore. Planned tour activities, meant to enrich your understanding of Cuba, will include an interactive musical workshop, discussions with prominent Cubans, a visit to a car restoration shop, a scavenger hunt in the historic Fine Arts Museum of Havana, hiking in the stunning Viñales Valley, and an opportunity to meet with a circus group whose members range from elementary-age to young adult performers.

We look forward to offering you an opportunity to experience Cuba's natural beauty, culture, and political history on this family-focused itinerary. Space is limited to 12 travelers, so call today!





Program Costs and Inclusions

Trip Price: \$3,995 per person based on double occupancy
Single Room Supplement: \$1,140

Trip Price includes accommodations as listed in the itinerary based on double-occupancy, meals as listed in the itinerary (B,L,D), one drink each with lunch and dinner, all tours, excursions, sightseeing, entrances, transportation in an air-conditioned motor coach with bottled water, services of a local Cuban guide, a Cuban visa card, and all gratuities. Trip price based on a minimum of 8 travelers and a maximum of 12 travelers. Price subject to small group surcharge if group size is under 8.

Does not include airfare to and from Havana, luggage charges, mandatory health insurance and evacuation required by the Cuban government which is included with airline tickets to Cuba purchased in the US, personal insurance for baggage and trip cancellation and items of a purely personal nature. The World Affairs Council offers trip insurance and it is highly recommended.

For more information contact
the Travel Department:

Phone: 215-561-4700 x209 or x231
Toll free: 800-942-5004 x209 or x231
E-mail: travel@wacphila.org
Website: www.wacphila.org/travel

Health and Safety Protocols

All travelers on this program will be required to be fully vaccinated or, in the event of a medical exemption, produce a negative COVID-19 test taken no more than three days before departure. Additionally all travelers will be expected to comply with any local COVID requirements in place. Cuba requires a declaration of health to enter and travelers are subjected to random PCR test screening. <https://cu.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/>

As a result of possible changes in requirements, Distant Horizons will reach out to all travelers two weeks prior to travel with an update on all requirements to enter Cuba and to return to the United States.

Whilst Distant Horizons and its local partners will follow all COVID protocols in place in Cuba, it is important to acknowledge that travel outside of home brings risk of exposure to COVID 19. Each traveler will be required to sign an Assumption of Risk and Waiver of Liability prior to departure.

ITINERARY

December 27: Tuesday. Havana. L,D

Mid-morning arrivals in Havana.

Enjoy lunch.

Visit the **Museo de Bellas Artes**, Cuban Collection accompanied by **Cristina Figueroa Vives**, a curator of contemporary art. The museum's origins date back to 1842 when the San Alejandro Art Academy started its collection, which forms the nucleus of the museum founded in 1913. It expanded greatly after Castro took over in 1959, notably with works from the private collections of Julio Lobo and Oscar Cintas. Beginning on the top floor we will make our way down—the paintings providing an excellent opportunity to learn about Cuban history.

Check in to your *privately owned hotel*.

Meet for a welcome lecture at the hotel.

After the meeting enjoy cocktails and hors d'oeuvres on the hotel rooftop of the Colonial wing, followed by dinner.

December 28: Wednesday. Havana. B,L,D

Meet in the hotel with **Dr. Jorge Mario Sánchez**, a professor at the University of Havana. Dr. Sánchez is also a senior scholar at the Centro de Estudios de la Economía Cubana (CEEC) as well as a specialist on international trade and economic development. Today's discussion will focus on "**The Economy of Cuba.**"

After the discussion drive a short distance to the **Presidential Palace**, a huge ornate building topped by a dome and now known as the home of the Revolutionary Museum. The history



of Cuban political development is illustrated here from the slave uprisings to joint missions with the ex-Soviet Union.

A few minutes away by foot is the **Granma Memorial** which preserves the vessel that brought Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and other revolutionaries from Mexico to Cuba in 1956. The Granma, a surprisingly large launch, embodies the powerful, unstoppable spirit of the revolutionary movement.

Continue to the **Hotel Nacional** for a *mojito* or lemonade in the hotel's Hall of Fame. The Hotel Nacional, an iconic hotel, opened in 1930 when Cuba was a prime travel destination for Americans.

Enjoy lunch at **La Barraca Restaurant** located outside on the grounds of the Nacional Hotel.

After lunch, drive to Old Havana to begin exploring this colonial city by foot. Our tour this afternoon will be led by **Ayleen Robaina**, an architectural historian. As we walk through old Havana we will stop to admire the city's many squares, its cathedral and a scale-model of Old Havana.

After the tour, take part in an **interactive musical workshop**, where there will be an opportunity to learn more about the Cuban musical tradition. There are many different kinds of salsa music and dance in Cuba but most of these styles are derived from Son, which will be our focus this afternoon.

Depart the hotel for dinner at **L'Atelier**.

December 29: Thursday. Havana. B,L

Meet at the hotel with **Griselda Aguilera Cabrera** who is featured in the documentary film *La Maestra*. This 33-minute film tells the personal stories of the youngest workers of the 1961 literacy campaign who went to the mountains and valleys across the island to teach—and found themselves deeply



transformed in the process. Watch the film and engage in a discussion about the experience.

After the discussion, continue on to a private performance of the dance/musical group **Havana Compass**. Lilieth Rivera, is the founder of Havana Compass, which is dedicated to the study and choreography of traditional and modern dances. In partnership with percussion artist, Eduardo Cordova, the troupe has created an exciting, diverse performance with traces of Spanish dance form, African-Cuban Jazz rhythm and modern dance.

After the performance, take your bus a short distance to the neighborhood of Marianao to learn about a project called **Angeles del Futuro** (Angels of the Future) in which children aged between 7-15 years are trained in circus skills.

Enjoy lunch at the home and studio of artist **Jose Fuster** who has turned his neighborhood into one enormous piece of

mosaic art. Fuster is an artist who is dedicated to his creations, a vast array of artwork from ceramics evoking the nation's African roots, as represented in the Santeria religion, to whimsical paintings drawn from ordinary life in Cuba: commuters crowded inside creaky, smoke-belching buses, the ubiquitous dominoes games in backyards and street corners. Drive through his neighborhood known as Jaimanitas before arriving at his studio and home for lunch.

After lunch visit **Ernest Hemingway's home**. The house is just as Hemingway left it, with the books on the tables and many of his favorite photographs on display. While it is not possible to go inside the house, the windows are left open for a decent view of the interior.

Dinner tonight is on your own.

December 30: Friday. Havana. B,L,D

Depart early this morning to enjoy a full day excursion to the **Valle de Viñales**. Spend the day exploring this breathtakingly beautiful region, famous for its tobacco plantations and *sheer-sided mogotes*, which are limestone hills rising from a tropical plain rich with hibiscus, bougainvillea and flame trees, tobacco plantations and rice paddy fields.

Enjoy a walk along the **Coco Solo Palmarito** trail through this mistily dreamlike landscape rich in plant and birdlife. Walk in the shade of *mogotes* and admire these 250-million year-old loaf-shaped limestone mountains. The dome or plateau shaped limestone mounds are usually full of caves. They form the Cordillera de Guaniguanico, a low range of hills which extend about 40 miles northeast from Mantua and comprise the Sierra de los Órganos and the Sierra. Travel to **Finca Ecologia**, an extensive, family-run organic farm just past the town of Viñales. Take a brief tour of the garden before enjoying lunch made from ingredients grown





or raised on the farm. Lunch will be served overlooking the expansive Viñales Valley.

After lunch spend some time exploring the sleepy town of Viñales whose main street is lined with colorful colonial-era wooden houses. Small businesses thrive as the town has begun to attract visitors from all over the world.

Arrive back at the hotel around 6.15pm.

Depart the hotel for dinner at **La Guarida**. The restaurant is perhaps the most well-known of all paladares in Havana. It was the location of the 1994 Oscar nominated film, *Strawberry and Chocolate*.

December 31: Saturday. Havana. B,L

Depart the hotel and visit a **classic car mechanic shop**. Here you will meet with the owner of the shop who will talk about his business and show you how they fix and maintain the classic cars that Cuban is so famous for.

Depart the shop and drive to Cojimar. It was in Cojimar in 1762 that the English put ashore their invasion army and captured Cuba for King George. It is also the place where Ernest Hemingway berthed his legendary fishing boat, the *Pilar. III*. Admire the bust of Hemingway made from brass fittings that each fisherman in the village donated after Hemingway's death.

Drive a short distance for a roast pork lunch at **Casa Grande**.

After lunch, drive to **Callejon de Hamel**, the site of a huge multi-dimensional Afro-Cuban mural. Here there will be a chance to learn more about the Santeria religion where we meet with a Santeria practitioner, **Elias Aseff**. Probably the most explicit reference to the African soul in Cuba is to be found in Santeria, which represents the synthesis of the cults of African slaves and the Catholic religion. As a result of

Cuba's historical links to Africa, Santeria in Cuba today embodies almost all aspects, mystic and earthly, of the identity of African origin. Santeria conceals great complexity in both active and passive practice. It represents for its believers a guide and a support to their lives, whose benefits are to be found in earthly life. Accompanied by Elias, we will enter a Santeria home and learn more about this religion.

End the afternoon with a **private salsa class**. Salsa has its origins in Cuba where the blending of African drum rhythms and Spanish guitar evolved into a variety of Latin American music: Son, Danzón, the rhythms of Carnival, Cha Cha Cha, Mambo, Salsa and even Tango came out of Cuba.

Depart the hotel for a New Year's Eve dinner at **La Moneda Cubana**. After dinner enjoy the festivities on the Plaza de la Catedral.

January 1: Sunday. Havana. B

Return to the US today.



Trip Description

This program offers a wonderful opportunity to experience Havana. The infrastructure of the city is good with comfortable hotels, excellent restaurants and a wide variety of educational and family oriented activities. You will be staying at the Parque Central, one of the best available hotels in Havana. Food in Havana is freshly prepared and we eat at delightful privately owned local restaurants. More details will be provided upon registering for the trip.

Vaccinated participants must be in good health and able to keep up with an active group. In order to participate, one should be able to walk 1 mile comfortably, use stairs without handrails, and be able to walk and stand for periods of two hours at a time. Some days have an early-morning start and include a full day's schedule of activities, lectures and special events. The temperature in the region during this time of the year is lovely, averaging in the upper 70s to low 80s (°F).

This program has been carefully designed as a family-friendly program. We recommend this program for children over the age of 8.

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RESERVE YOUR TRIP TODAY!

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To make a reservation please mail this form with a \$1,000 deposit* check (per person) payable to Distant Horizons and mail to: World Affairs Council of Philadelphia, 1617 John F Kennedy Blvd, Suite 1055, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

*Your deposit is refundable up to 90 days prior to departure less a \$500 administration fee. Upon receipt of your deposit you will receive an application packet to complete.

For more information contact the WAC Travel Department, E-mail: travel@wacphila.org Phone: 215-561-4700 x209 or x231

Full Legal Name (exactly as it appears on passport)

Title _____ First _____ Mid.Intl. _____ Last _____

Title _____ First _____ Mid.Intl. _____ Last _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Mobile phone: (_____) _____

E-mail: _____

I am a member of the _____ council.

Sharing a room with _____ (form sent separately)

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$ _____ to reserve _____ spaces on **New Year's in Cuba**.

Reservations are subject to availability and processed on a first come, first served basis. Reservations to be paid in full 60 days prior to departure. Reservations received after this date must be accompanied by payment in full. Final payment made by personal check only, payable to Distant Horizons.