



***Holidays in Havana and Varadero  
December 24 – 30, 2017***

***Embark on a journey back in time...  
An in-depth exploration of music, art, history and culture  
Immerse yourself in cars, cigars, cuisine and the stunning beaches of  
Varadero. Be part of an adventure ...only 90 miles away!***



**Cuba in the midst of change...  
Experience the most fascinating time Cuba has seen in the past 50 years  
The Cuba that remained frozen in time is rapidly changing...  
See the transition with OCJ while it is still possible  
Join us for a holiday "Journey of a Lifetime"!**

# Itinerary

## Day 1, Sunday, Arrival in Havana (D)

- Today you arrive in Havana on a new commercial flight from the US. Since the group will be arriving at different times and at different terminals, guests will take taxis to the hotel. If it is an early arrival, leave your bags with the hotel and start your adventure with a walk to acclimate yourself to the area.
- We will officially begin the trip at 6:30 pm with a welcome cocktail and get together to meet your fellow adventurers!
- Then off to dinner at one of Cuba's most well-known restaurants for your first taste of Cuba. Afterwards, we suggest if you are not too tired to visit (optional) one of Cuba's most famous jazz venues such as the Jazz Café or the Fox and the Crow jazz club – it is a quintessential down under jamming smoky jazz joint!

## Day 2, Monday, Havana (B,L,D)

- After breakfast at the hotel, we will make our way to one of Cuba's most well-known exports - a cigar Factory. Here you will see the art of making some of the worlds most coveted brands – Cohiba, Partagas, Romeo and Juliet.
- Next we'll stop at Plaza de Revolucion which is where you see the familiar iconic silhouette of Che Guevarra and where the “bearded one” made his famously long speeches from this largest square in Cuba. It was also where his recent memorial service was held. A great spot for a group photo.
- Continuing, we spend the rest of the morning in Old Havana – a UNESCO Heritage site which dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Here you will witness the greatest wealth of Spanish colonial architecture in the western hemisphere. We will stop at many local sites and have the opportunity to interact with Cubans when we visit Plaza de Armas and the Plaza de la Cathedral. We will visit Taller Grafics workshop which is one of the oldest and most important print shops on the island; this is a great place to see art and talk with artists.
- Our included lunch will introduce you to private businesses in Cuba. We will take you to a paladar... owned by a Cuban entrepreneur. These establishments have raised the bar on gastronomy in Cuba and yes... you could even say Cuba could be the next foodie destination!
- If you are interested in the Jewish community we will visit a synagogue as there are 3 in Havana.
- Next is Museo de la Revolution. Learn about history of Cuban political development from the Cuban perspective. This fascinating visit houses the most complete exhibit

of revolutionary history including the Granma Memorial, the vessel that brought Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, and other revolutionaries from Mexico to Cuba in 1956. It is housed in the former Presidential Palace.

- Ever wondered what the Hotel Nacional de Cuba reminds you of? It is the sister hotel to the Breakers in Palm Beach built by the same architects McKim, Mead and White. We will visit this historic hotel perched above the famous Malecon and learn about the role it played during the days of the Mafia in Cuba.
- Tonight dinner is included at a Paladar- and OCJ knows the best!

### **Day 3, Tuesday, Havana (B,L)**

- After breakfast at hotel we will feel the beat of Cuba when we admire the steps and sounds of one of Cuba's private dance troupes. The mixture of many different sounds and instruments will be sure to have your feet stomping! You do not want to forget your cameras for great shots and video.
- Now that we are in an artistic mood, Casa-Estudio de Fuster in Jaiminitas is next in line. This is the studio-home of Jose Fuster, commonly called the 'Picasso of the Caribbean. Explore the unique studio, property, and neighborhood whose homes are adorned with Fuster's ceramics and the most whimsical spot on the island.
- Learn about the dual currency system on the island when we stop at an agri-market. This is another colorful opportunity to take great photos!
- After an included lunch we will continue at what is considered the 4<sup>th</sup> most important cemetery in the world – once there you will find out why. Colon cemetery is also home to one of the most important pilgrimage spots on the island. You too can take the traditional walk!
- Next on our journey is a visit to Searching for the Sun community project. This is a project that is teaching the craft of jewelry making to young Cubans; this was the vision of one of Cuba's top female business women. We will have the opportunity to visit the workshop and also have the chance to support this project when we shop in the gallery.
- Dinner is NOT included; this is a great chance to explore on your own and possibly take in the world famous Tropicana or the Buena Vista Social Club.

### **Day 4, Wednesday, Havana (B,L,D)**

- After breakfast we will head to the east of Havana to the municipality of Guanabacoa and the Morro Fortress. This fortress is perched high above the entrance to the Havana Bay and view of the city from this vantage point is stupendous! You are sure to fall in love with Havana from this view alone!

- A walk down the Malecon of Cojimar, a village where Hemingway kept his famous boat Pilar, before we continue on to Finca Vigia, Hemingway's home in Cuba. We will hear about the Cuban perspective on Hemingway, his associations with the island, and the difficulties of restoring and maintaining his former home which is now a museum. It was Hemingway himself who proclaimed that Cuba was his real home.
- Lunch included before San Jose Feria - the local crafts market. As this is our only activity this afternoon. You can talk with artists and shop for as long as you like before returning to the hotel or see places (on your own) that are of interest to you. We can set up meetings at high end galleries if art is your forte or our guide can help with suggestions.
- Tonight our farewell dinner is included at one of OCJ's favorite paladars; enjoy this last supper with your guide and say a toast to your Cuban experience.

### **Day 5, Thursday Havana/Varadero (B,D)**

- After an included breakfast, we check out of the Havana hotel and venture east for 2.5 hours to world renowned beaches of Varadero. This drive will take us along Cuba's northern coast and give us the opportunity of seeing rural Cuba. During our ride we will begin discussing many interesting topics including what new diplomatic relations means for Cuba.
- A stop at the Bridge of Bacunayagua, which stands at 110 meters above the stunning valley of Yumuri is a must. This is a perfect stop to taste the best Pina Colada in the island and toast to our new friends we have made along the way!
- As we drive through the town of Matanzas, the city of bridges, we will peak into Ediciones Vigia print shop where the forgotten craft of handmade books is still practiced. These books are truly collector's items and works of art!
- At last we arrive to our all-inclusive 5 star hotel where you can relax, eat and drink all you want for the next 2 nights. Food and drinks will continue flowing!
- Check in, take a swim, relax and get comfortable with the stunning surroundings.
- Dinner will be at one of the many included options in the all-inclusive hotel.

### **Day 6, Friday: Varadero (B,L,D)**

- After breakfast at this all-inclusive resort we suggest you enjoy one of the people to people activities that will be of most interest to you. We will provide you with a list of some options that will be available.

### **Day 7, Saturday: Varadero/Havana/ USA**

- As the group will be departing from Havana at different times we will provide an early am transfer to Havana. If you have a later flight and prefer to return to Havana on your own that is optional. Say our goodbyes to Cuba and leave a little of our hearts with our new friends

*Trip itineraries are subject to change due to factors outside of our control but if any changes need to take place, we will substitute with something just as interesting!!! Take note that the above itinerary is a sample of what your journey will entail.*

**Your trip includes:**

- 6 nights (7 days)
- Hotel accommodations in Havana and Varadero
- Meals of 6 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 5 dinners
- Opportunity to try privately owned Paladars and sample some of the best cuisine of Cuba, recommended by OCJ – we know the best!
- Land transportation in Cuba by a driver with many years of service
- Services of an experienced Cuban, English speaking professional guide/driver who is very well versed and is willing to share knowledge on Cuban community, politics, education, medical system, arts, economics, etc.
- Entrance fees to the important cultural and historic sites

**Not included:**

- Trip cancellation insurance – highly recommended. Cancellation for any reason prior to trip can cause you to lose all money paid.
- Transfers to hotel upon arrival and transfer to airport upon departure outside of our scheduled time
- Tips for driver/guide (*SUGGESTED MINIMUM IS \$100 PER PERSON*)
- Gratuities to wait staff ,bellboys or step on guides
- Excess baggage charges

**Per person double occupancy from:**

10-15 travelers - .....	\$4900
16-20 travelers - .....	\$4800
21 + travelers - .....	\$4700
<i>Single supplement.....</i>	<i>\$ 1200</i>



### **Important Information:**

- Your passport must be valid 6 months from date of return.
- If you are Cuban born and departed Cuba before December 31, 1970, you will need a special visa and must notify OCJ as soon as possible. This is a timely and lengthy process and can take up to 12 weeks to receive. You must let us know immediately so we can give the contact information.
- Trip cancellation is highly recommended as once within cancellation period there are no exceptions.
- Each traveler must fill out an application, liability form, travel affidavit and reservation form and we must have the originals. Faxed or emailed copies will not be accepted.
- There is no Kosher food in Cuba but we will request either a fish or vegetarian option at each restaurant.
- Cuban health insurance is included (and compulsory) in the cost of the trip. It covers medical expenses in Cuba due to illness and accident up to \$25,000 and repatriation and transport up to \$7000. Pre-existing conditions are not covered.
- Cuba is not a non-smoking country. If you have issues with smoke, be aware that even non-smoking accommodations and establishments may still have smoke. If you have bad asthma or allergies to smoke this may not be the trip for you.
- Although this is not considered a very strenuous trip, you have to get on and off a bus, walk on streets in Old Havana that are cracked and with cobblestones and many times the elevators in museums may not be working and you will have to take steps. You must be in somewhat satisfactory walking condition.

- If you use a CPAP machine you should bring an extension cord as many hotels do not have outlets next to the bed.
- You will receive all travel documents in the Miami airport morning of departure – air ticket, visa, letter of authorization and copy of OCJ license.
- Please refer to the bottom of the itinerary for what is and is not included in your journey.