

The Landmark Society of Western New York Cuba: Third Time is a Charm TRAVEL TOUR

Sunday March 3rd – Tuesday March 12th, 2019



Day 1. Sunday, March 03. Rochester to Toronto

Leave Stone-Tolan Historic Site, 2370 East Avenue, for a leisure ride via motor coach to Hotel Carlington, Pierson International Airport.

Day 2. Monday March 04. Hello Cuba!

**Dinner included*

Transfer to Pierson International Airport.

Arrival at Varadero International Airport.

Meet your Authentic Cuba Travel tour guide and bus driver.

Private transfer to Havana City.

Check-in at the Iberostar Habana Riviera

Hotel located on the *Malecon*, Havana's evocative 8km-long waterfront boulevard.

Evening: There's a new wave of private restaurants that has swept the Cuban capital offering exciting cuisine in atmospheric surroundings. This evening we'll enjoy a welcome dinner at one of Havana's most famous *paladares*: Elite.



Day 3. Tuesday March 05. Old Havana, a Unesco World Heritage Site

**Breakfast and lunch included*

Breakfast at the hotel.

Morning: Meeting with our guide for the day, Architect Daniel de la Regata. We'll see important examples of Art- Deco style architecture such as:

Lopez Serrano Building with its strong reminiscence of American Skyscrapers.

Resembling a miniature Empire State Building with the bottom 70 floors chopped off, the López Serrano building is Vedado's most distinctive art deco architecture example. It was built in 1932 by Mira & Roisch Architecture Firm. It was the highest residential building in Havana for many years.



The House of Catalina Laza, built in the 1920's by Juan Pedro Baro. This beautiful mansion features Art Deco interiors by Rene Lalique and gardens by J.F.C. Forestier. The house has a fascinating love story. Married socialite Catalina Laza fell in love with landowner and widower Juan Pedro Baró in 1905. Cuba had no divorce laws at the time, so the lovers escaped to Paris to continue their affair. On their return, Baro built this outstanding mansion for the beautiful Catalina Laza.

America Building is a theatre complex designed in 1941 by architects Fernando Martinez Campos and Pascual de Rojas, consisting of two theatres, a restaurant and some shops in the main floor and residential apartments in the upper floors. Its interiors are very well preserved and conserve all the details of the original monumental design.

Lunch at the family-run restaurant *paladar* 'San Cristobal'. Housed on the ground floor of an early 20th century mansion, this restaurant serves their inspired interpretations of traditional Creole Cuban fare. The Obama family dined here during their historic visit to Cuba in 2016.



Afternoon: Visit to the Workshop School in Old Havana. High school graduates enroll in this institution to learn the arts and crafts necessary to authentically restore the ancient buildings of Old Havana. We'll tour the school and exchange with teachers and students.

Next we visit the Scale Model of Old Havana. The model serves as an excellent introduction to the layout of the city. It is color-coded by age with the historic buildings painted in crimson, pre-Revolution buildings in yellow and the post-revolutionary buildings in ivory. We'll learn how each part of the city has developed historically, and the tough challenges each district faces today.



Followed by guided walking tour of UNESCO World Heritage Site, Old Havana.

Visit to the Cathedral Square, named after the masterpiece of Cuban baroque architecture: the Cathedral of Havana built by the Jesuit order.

The Cathedral's baroque facade is simultaneously intimate and imposing, and one of the two towers is visibly larger, creating a pleasing asymmetry.

Visit to Square of Arms, ancient military parade ground for Spanish soldiers and surrounded by impressive buildings such as:

Palacio de los Capitanes Generales, the former official residence of the governors (Captains General) of Havana, Cuba. It is home to the Museum of the City of Havana.

Palacio del Segundo Cabo. The seat of the second authority of the island. Today it houses important publishing houses.

Continue walking tour onto San Francisco Square, named after the Convent of San Francisco, this square was conceived in 1628, with the objective of supplying water to the ships trading with the metropolis.

Visit to Plaza Vieja, the only civic square of colonial times. Notice it doesn't have a church or government building around. Here we will visit important institutions for visual arts.

Next we go on a guided tour around the historic Hotel Nacional.

Optional Dinner at the Hotel Nacional. (Not included in tour cost)

Evening: Enjoy Latin Jazz at Club La Zorra y El Cuervo, Havana's most famous Jazz club. The club features great performances by island bands and soloists! (Optional, not included).

Day 4. Wednesday March 06. UNESCO Biosphere Reserve 'Sierra del Rosario'

**Breakfast and lunch included*

Breakfast at the hotel.

Morning: Departure to Las Terrazas eco-community, located in UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Sierra del Rosario in the western province of Pinar del Rio.

We'll tour its rural village called Rancho Curujey and enjoy a welcome cocktail while hearing about this self-sustaining community's goals of reforestation, historical preservation, environmental balance and a good life.

Followed by visit to a rural elementary school for an exchange with students and teachers.

Next we'll meet with local artists and craft workers in their homes and studios.

Later we'll walk the incredible ruins of a French Coffee Plantation built in 1801 worked by African slaves.

Then we continue on to La Moka, an ecological hotel with trees growing up through the balconies and ceiling.

We have lunch at an open-air restaurant specializing in traditional country cuisine!

Next you'll have free time to swim in the fresh waters of the San Juan River cascades and pools, and explore the surroundings of this lush tropical paradise. Don't forget your swimming suit!

Return to Havana city.



Evening: Optional Dinner at a private family-run restaurant. (Not included in tour cost).

Next we attend one of the most traditional and popular ceremonies in Cuba, The Fire of the Cannon of 9 o'clock at the colonial Fortress of San Carlos de La Cabana where Che Guevara established his headquarters after the Revolution came to power in 1959.

Day 5. Thursday March 07. Havana

**Breakfast and lunch included*

Breakfast at the hotel.



Morning: Visit to the Partagas Cigar Factory, founded in 1845 by Spaniard Don Jaime Partagas.

Before and after the Revolution, the Cuban-produced Partagás has been one of the most revered and highest-selling brands of cigars in the world.

Next we visit the Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA), the country's top art academy. School departments include Music, Modern Dance, Drama, and Visual Arts.

The schools were designed and built by architects Cuban Ricardo Porro and the Italians Roberto Gottardi and Vittorio Garatti from 1961 to 1965, in the former affluent neighborhood of Country Club Park (today known as Cubanacán), specifically on the grounds of the Havana Country Club golf course.



Today the buildings are considered Cuba's best example of post-Revolutionary architecture but at the time they were thought too sensual and avant-garde.

The project was halted, though the school did open. The complex fell into ruin and amazingly, in 2001 the Cuban government approached the three architects and asked them to complete the project. Restoration was completed in 2009.

We are now entering Fusterlandia, the studio, residence and wild kingdom of José Rodríguez Fuster, one of the most important Cuban ceramists and painters today.



Fuster has turned an entire neighborhood in western Havana into a giant art installation that involves locals and their actual homes as part of the exhibit. He's engaged and trained many neighborhood residents as artisans, especially youth. This is art for and by the people on an epic scale!

Lunch hosted by Jose Fuster.

Afternoon: Visit to Finca Vigia, a hilltop villa 20 kilometers east of Havana, where Hemingway lived from 1939 to 1960. It is here where the writer completed some of his greatest works, including *The Old Man and the Sea*, *Across the River and into the Trees*, and *Islands in the Stream*.

The villa has been maintained as a museum for the past 49 years. It contains original book and short story manuscripts, letters, over 3000 photographs, Hemingway's fishing tackle and gun collections, furniture, priceless art collection, and a 9000 volume library that contains rare first editions of his books and those of other famous writers.

Finca Vigía has made both the World Monuments Fund List of 100 Most Endangered sites, and The National Trust for Historic Preservation's 11 Most Endangered Places.



Evening: Next you may want to enjoy dinner and a performance of the world famous “Buena Vista Social Club” at the classy Habana Cafe cabaret. (Optional – Not included in tour cost)

Day 6. Friday March 08. Havana – Cienfuegos City

**Breakfast and dinner included*

Breakfast at the hotel.

Morning: Guided tour the Museum of Fine Arts Cuban Collection where we see the evolution of Cuba's visual arts over the last 300 years. The collection accounts for the richness of the island's Spanish, French, Chinese, African cultural roots.

Next we visit Havana’s Parque Central and surrounding buildings guided by Architect Pedro Vazquez Rodriguez, founding Member of Cuba’s National Union of Architects and Engineers.



Panoramic visit to the Capitolio Nacional, designed by Cuban Architects Govantes and Cabarroca and built by the American construction company Purdy & Henderson. This is one of Cuba’s most outstanding architectural patrimonies. The dome is 300.96 ft. high (7 inches higher than the highest capitol building in the US).

The Capitol building reopened on March 1st 2018 after 8 years of restoration work.

Visit to the former Centro Gallego, an exponent of German neo-baroque architecture style in Havana, built in 1915 by Belgian architect Paul Belau.

Centro Asturiano, inaugurated in 1927 designed by Spanish Architect Manuel del Busto, features solid heavy façades constructed in Capellania Stones with clear influence of Spanish Renaissance. It houses the most majestic staircase of Cuban Architecture.

Since 2001 the building houses the new Museum of Fine Arts.

Manzana de Gomez, first entire city block built in Cuba in the beginnings of the 20th century completely for commercial use with two inner diagonal streets that cross the building in all directions integrating the pedestrian circulation with the outer fabric.

Bacardi Building, designed in 1930 by Cuban architects Esteban Rodriguez Castells, Rafael Fernandez Ruenes and Jose Menendez Menendez, located in Las Murallas district. The rich façade design is based on polychrome granite imported from Bavaria and Norway as well as coloured brick, terracotta and Capellania stone.

The elaborate decoration of the building crown features a bat, logo of the Bacardi Company.

We'll also see residential buildings along the boulevard with clear influence from European and American architecture, such as the residence of Cuba's former president Jose Miguel Gomez Residence, and the former Asociacion de Dependientes del Comercio –a Venetian neo-renaissance style building placed in a key corner of the Prado featured in the film Buena Vista Social Club.

Lunch on your own. (Not included in tour cost)

Afternoon: Departure to Cienfuegos, in Central Cuba. The colonial town of Cienfuegos was founded in 1819 in the Spanish territory but was initially settled by immigrants of French origin. It soon became a trading place for sugar cane, tobacco and coffee because of its position on the Caribbean coast of southern-central Cuba at the heart of the country's sugar cane, mango, tobacco and coffee production area.





Check in at Jagua Hotel next to the beautiful Palacio Valle. With a magnificent location in the well-known residential area of Punta Gorda, in Southern Cienfuegos, the Jagua Hotel rises over the waters of Cienfuegos Bay.

Dinner at *paladar* (private family-run restaurant) 'Finca del Mar'.

Evening: **New Special Highlight** –

Performance by Cánticus Novus, one of the most prestigious choral groups in Cienfuegos city. Discussion session with singers after performance.

Day 7. Saturday March 09. Trinidad de Cuba

**Breakfast and lunch included*

Breakfast at the hotel.

Morning: Day trip to UNESCO World Heritage Site, Trinidad's Historical Center.



Trinidad is an outstanding example of a colonial city. It has maintained its historic core, featuring the highest percentage of surviving antique buildings and public squares and bringing together architectural, historic and cultural elements of great value.

We will stop at a mirador (lookout) over the Sugar Mill Valley, designated by UNESCO as a World Cultural Heritage Site in 1988, it constitutes a sort of triangular plain covering some

250 square kilometers and includes the San Luis, Agabama-Meyer and Santa Rosa valleys, besides the coastal plain of the south delta of the Manati River...



Nancy Benitez, a local architect and restoration specialist, will take us on a guided walking tour around this historic city known for its cobblestoned streets, pastel coloured homes and small-town feel.

Next we'll visit the Architecture Museum (Casa de los Sanchez Iznaga), housing the most representative samples of the city's architectural development in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Lunch at Trinidad's family-run restaurant '*Solananda*'.

Afternoon: Free time to wander the streets of Trinidad's historical centre.

Return to your hotel in Cienfuegos.

Evening is free to enjoy the hotel amenities, and the lively streets of Cienfuegos. How about live Cuban popular music at Casa de la Música – a great opportunity to dance with Cubans and your tour companions.

Day 8. Sunday March 10. Cienfuegos – Varadero

**Breakfast, lunch and dinner included*



Breakfast at the hotel.

Morning: Check out of hotel followed by guided walking tour of UNESCO World Heritage Site, Cienfuegos Historical Center.

We will visit neoclassical buildings around Paseo del Prado and the main Square Jose Marti such as:

The Tomas Terry Theatre completed in 1895.

The Casa de la Cultura, home of another wealthy sugar baron, stunning mansion in neoclassical style.



The Cathedral built with the donation of wealthy families like the Lebrancs, the Albis, the Terrys. Inside you find the reproductions of the 12 Apostles in stained glass imported from Paris. Also the original machinery of the clock tower was built in France. Still in place and working.

Transfer to Varadero.

Snack stop on route. (Not included in tour cost)

Afternoon: Upon arrival to Varadero we visit Mansion Xanadu. Built in the 1930's this is the former residence of American millionaire and entrepreneur Irenée Du Pont.

Check in at the Melia Varadero Hotel and have a light lunch.

Dinner at the hotel.

Day 9. Monday March 11. Varadero Beach

**Breakfast, lunch and dinner included*



Breakfast at the hotel.

Morning: Visit the Varadero Ceramic Workshop and Gallery showcasing great artworks from local artists. Exchange with artists and staff.

Lunch at the hotel.

Afternoon: Visit to Varadero's Handicraft Market. This is a unique

opportunity to exchange with Cuban entrepreneurs who make their living selling arts & crafts.

Dinner at the hotel.

Day 10. Tuesday March 12. Good Bye Cuba!

**Breakfast included*

Breakfast at the hotel.

Transfer to Varadero International Airport for departure.

Flight to Pierson International Airport

Motor coach return to Stone-Tolan Historic Site.

Services Included:

- *4 nights at the Iberostar Habana Riviera Hotel in Havana.*
- *2 nights at Hotel Jagua in Cienfuegos.*
- *2 nights at the Melia Varadero Hotel (All-inclusive) in Varadero.*
- *18 Meals: 8 breakfasts, 6 lunches, and 4 dinners included.*
- *Luxury air-conditioned coach transportation and professional driver.*
- *All activities, speakers, meetings and meals as described in itinerary except those noted as "optional" or "not included in cost."*
- *An expert Cuban English speaking guide and translator throughout the program, together with ongoing support from Authentic Cuba Travel' staff in Cuba and Canada.*
- *Official Asistur Cuban health insurance coverage.*

Services Not Included:

- *Activities listed as "optional" or "not included in cost" in itinerary.*
- *Gratuities for Cuban tour guide, bus driver, chambermaids, restaurant staff, porters, etcetera.*
- *Optional travel interruption and cancellation insurance.*

You may call Carolyn Haygood at 585.546.7028 X 11 to hold a space on the tour with a \$500 nonrefundable deposit on your credit card. All registration applications must be submitted in writing. ALL DEPOSITS MUST BE RECEIVED BY September 28, 2018.

Landmark members \$5,395

Nonmembers \$5,795

Single supplement \$699