



Ashé Cultural Tours, LLC  
204 Crossgate Drive  
Church Hill MD 21623  
301-237-2651  
[www.ashecultural tours.com](http://www.ashecultural tours.com)

People to People

Ashé Cultural Tours & The Mainstay in Rock Hall

*Presents...*

Havana International Jazz Festival  
and highlights of Havana, Viñales, & Las Terrazas  
10 Days | Departure January 10, 2020

*Highlights...*

Havana • 4 Days at the Havana International Jazz Festival  
UNESCO World Heritage Sites and Biosphere Reserves • Viñales • Horseback Riding  
White Sand Beach • Jazz Clubs • World-Class Museums  
Private Performances • 1950s American Classic Convertible Tour

Top Rated Hotels in Miami and Viñales  
Homestays in Havana  
18 Meals: 8 Breakfasts, 6 Dinners, 4 Lunches  
Round Trip Airfare from Fort Lauderdale Airport (FLL) and Visas (Cuban Tourist Card)\*  
Sightseeing: See attached Itinerary  
Led by Two College Professors with a combined 25 years of experience in Cuba  
Intercity and Airport transportation  
Cuban Medical Insurance

**Per Person Rate:** Double: \$3,250 | Single \$3,650 (limited availability)

*Included in above prices:* Round-trip Airfare MIA-HAV, Attraction Entrance Fees, All Taxes and Service Charges Hotel Transfers & Two Medical Insurance Policies (covers healthcare in Cuba, Emergency Medical Evacuation & Medical Reunion)\*\*

*Not included in above prices:* Travel Insurance, Checked Baggage Fees, additional meals, optional attractions, and taxis that fall outside group activities.

\* Cuba Visas (Tourist Cards) will be provided for participants who are non-Cuban born. Participants born in Cuba will need to obtain their own visas directly from the Cuban Embassy.

\*\* All Participants will be provided with medical insurance that covers care within the Cuban Medical System. Participants who opt not to buy their own Travel Insurance will also be provided with a Travel Medical Insurance policy to cover Emergency Medical Evacuation and Medical Reunion.

# Havana International Jazz Festival



## Highlights

Havana International Jazz Festival •  
UNESCO World Heritage Sites and Bio-  
sphere Reserves • Viñales • Horseback Riding  
• Private Performance •  
1950s American Classic Convertible Tour •  
White Sand Beaches • Jazz Clubs

**10 Days • 18 Meals: 8 Breakfasts, 6 Dinners, 4 Lunches**

### **Day 1 (Friday): Make your way to Miami, FL**

Make your way to Miami by flying into either FLL or MIA. Around 6PM many of us will head out for dinner and get to know one another. But, you can check in as late as you prefer.

### **Day 2 (Saturday): Flight to Havana. Full day of activities**

Today we take an early morning flight to Havana. Once we clear customs, we'll board our coach bus, drive 30 minutes to our homestays, and drop off our luggage. From here, we'll walk two blocks to the iconic oceanfront Malecón where we'll have lunch together at Castropol. Afterwards we will take a leisurely stroll to the Prado (Havana's tree-lined pedestrian boulevard), just four blocks from our homes and explore Havana's best outdoor artist market. Then we'll hop in 1950s-era classic American convertibles and enjoy a 1-2 hour tour of the city! When we return to our homes, our hosts will greet us with a welcome drink and a fantastic home-cooked meal. *Lunch and dinner included today.*

### **Day 3 (Sunday): Havana**

After breakfast, we will enjoy a private salsa class right in our homestay. Our host family will join us for fun and laughs! Afterwards we will head to the world-famous Callejón Hamel, an alley known for its Sunday rumbas and fascinating murals, most of which have been inspired by Afro-Cuban culture and religions. Here we will chat with a representative of painter Salvador González Escalona. We then enjoy lunch at Bicky's, one of Havana's most successful (and delicious) new private restaurants. We will tour Vedado (once a highly affluent neighborhood full of casinos), passing by the University of Havana, Coppelia (an outdoor ice cream shop that fills an entire city block), Havana Libre (where Castro established his first headquarters after the revolution), and La Rampa (the commercial center). Finally, we will head over to the Hotel Nacional, to enjoy the ocean view and witness the magnificent architecture of this infamous hotel with a strong connection to mob/gangster history. After dinner, your hosts will happily walk everyone over to some of the night spots along Obispo, where dozens of bands will be playing music in bars, restaurants and hotel lobbies. *Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included today.*

### **Day 4 (Monday): Havana - Las Terrazas - Viñales**

This morning we'll board a coach for the start of our three-day excursion to Piñar del Rio province. Our first stop is the pioneering ecovillage of Las Terrazas, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, burgeoning activity center, and the site of the earliest coffee plantations in Cuba. Close by, in the picturesque whitewashed village that overlooks a small lake, there's a vibrant art community with open stu-

dios, woodwork and pottery workshops. We will have a chance to meet with several of the artists and learn about their process and inspirations. The region's biggest attraction is its verdant natural surroundings, which are ideal for hiking and birdwatching. After spending a few hours with an incredibly knowledgeable local guide, we will enjoy lunch at El Romero known for its locally grown vegan fare. In the late afternoon we will continue an additional 2 hours to the mountain town of Viñales, where we will check into our hotel and enjoy the sunset as it casts a magnificent light on the mountains and valley below. In the evening, bands often play at the hotel. You can also head into town to enjoy music at the Polo Montañez Cultural Center. It's a 1km walk, so you will want to rely on taxis to move you in and out of town. *Breakfast and lunch included today.*

### **Day 5 (Tuesday): Viñales**

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the striking karst landscape of the Viñales Valley is notable for its mogotes, a series of tall, rounded hills that rise abruptly from the flat plain of the valley. It is also significant for its cultural associations, particularly its traditional agricultural practices related to growing tobacco. Because mechanical methods of cultivation and harvesting lower the quality of tobacco, time-honored methods such as animal traction are still used. The lush landscape is largely rural in character. Most of the buildings scattered over the plain are simple, built of local and natural materials and used as homes or family farms. The valley is home to an original culture, a synthesis of contributions from indigenous peoples, Spanish conquerors and African slaves who once worked the tobacco plantations. Some of you may opt for a 2-hour horseback ride into the valley. Others may wish to go and explore a frequently visited tourist cave outside of town. The steep cave walk culminates with a short boat ride on an underground river! Everyone will visit a working farm and learn about tobacco, coffee, and subsistence farming from a local campesino. Lunch and dinner will be on your own. Viñales is a lively and easy-to-navigate town with many lovely restaurants. *Breakfast included.*

### **Day 6 (Wednesday): Viñales - Havana**

After breakfast we will start the 2.5 hour bus trip back to Havana. On the way, we will detour to the small fishing village of Jaimanitas. Here we will visit the home of José Fuster, who transformed his community through ceramic arts. Fusterlandia is a multi-level, magical art complex straight from a Dr. Seuss book. After a short visit, we will continue to Havana, where we will have lunch. We'll check back into our rooms and get some rest. In the late afternoon we'll have a *private performance* followed by dinner. In the evening, we'll attend the inaugural concert of Havana's International Jazz Festival at 9:00PM at the Teatro Nacional de Cuba. *Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.*

#### **Day 7 (Thursday): Havana - Old Town Tour & Jazz Festival**

We'll visit Havana's Old Town (Havana Vieja), where we will guide you through Havana's four main squares (Plaza de Catedral, Plaza de San Francisco, Plaza de Armas, and Plaza Vieja). After lunch on your own in Old Town, we'll head to the Jazz Festival's Pabellon outdoor venue for a 2:00 show. After an early dinner, we will head over to the Teatro Nacional de Cuba for their 6:30PM performance. Most of us will head home around 8:30, but those who still have some energy can stay for the 9:00PM show as well! *Breakfast and dinner included today.*

#### **Day 8 (Friday): Havana - Beach and The Festival**

Weather-permitting, we'll visit one of Cuba's beautiful white sand beaches to enjoy its warm aquamarine waters. The pristine beach of Playas de Estes is about 30 minutes east of Havana. We will head over first thing in the morning so we can beat the crowds and get umbrellas and beach chairs. After a relaxing morning, we will return to our homestays in time for a *private performance* in our homestay. After dinner, we will head out again to the Jazz Festival and enjoy the 6:30 and 9PM performances. *Breakfast and dinner included today.*

#### **Day 9 (Saturday): Havana - Museums & The Festival**

This morning we will enjoy a guided tour of one of Havana's most well-known museums, Museo Nacional de Bella Artes, which exhibits Cuban art collections from the colonial times up to contemporary generations. Lunch will be on your own, with many options readily available within walking distance of the museum. This afternoon will be full of music, as we return to the festival for concerts from 2:00-4:00PM and again at 6:30PM. We will have a late dinner, and an opportunity to say farewell to our wonderful hosts. *Breakfast and dinner included today.*

#### **Day 10: (Sunday) Havana - Tour Ends**

Today we leave Cuba. We'll have an early breakfast (6:00AM) in our homestays. After breakfast, we leave for the airport to arrive by 7:00AM. Our flight is at 9:00AM. Arriving a little after 10:30AM in Florida, be sure to leave plenty of time to clear customs when making your return arrangements. We suggest at least three hours (but cannot be responsible for any costs associated with missed connections due to delays). *Breakfast included today.*

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#### **PLEASE NOTE:**

Trip costs include round-trip air transportation from Miami to Cuba. If you wish to meet the group in Havana, you may opt to purchase your own airfare, visa and (if necessary) ground transportation from Havana airport to our homestays. Please inform Ashé Cultural Tours of your desires/plans and we can discount your fee appropriately. In order to fully participate in the first days programming, you should arrive by 11:00AM.

Single accommodations are limited and available on a first come, first served basis. Triple accommodations are not available.

Trip requires minimum participation of 14 clients. Deposits will be refunded if the minimum is not met by deadline stated on website.

Ashé Cultural Tours, LLC, operates the people-to-people program to Cuba under a general license issued by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) and, as dictated by U.S. law, all participants are required to adhere to a full-time schedule of activities designed to inform, educate and promote meaningful interaction with the people of Cuba. You should expect to have limited personal free time. Ashé specifically designs its Cuba itinerary in order to comply with OFAC rules and requirements. Pursuant to such regulations, participants agree to adhere to the full-time program established by Ashé. **We reserve the right to make changes to the published itinerary**, due to inclement weather, lack of accessibility, or other unforeseen circumstances. We will use our best efforts to replace the delayed or canceled people-to-people activity with another qualifying or equivalent activity.

#### **IDENTIFICATION:**

Passports are required for this tour at your own expense. Cuba requires a minimum of 6 months passport validity from the date of return home. We recommend that our clients take a photo of their passport and carry it with them, and leave a copy at home with their emergency contact, as well.

#### **CONDITIONS IN CUBA**

Cuba is experiencing a shortage of food, medicine, and consumer goods. People with restrictive diets may find it challenging to find the foods that they require or desire. Convenience stores have sparsely stocked shelves, making it difficult to obtain most consumer items. Clients with health concerns should realize that medicine is difficult to obtain, and should plan to bring any prescription and/or OTC medicines they require or desire. This tour requires average physical activity.

You should be in good health, able to climb stairs and walk reasonable distances, possibly over uneven grounds, broken concrete, and cobblestone streets. *Please note:* Cuba is not ADA compliant and can be difficult to navigate for people with mobility issues.

#### **ACCOMMODATIONS**

Whenever possible, Ashé Tours uses homestays rather than hotels. Guests will typically live in Cuban homes, each with 2-4 private rooms. Each room has its own lock and air conditioning. Most have a private bathroom. The rooms are modest, but are clean and secure. Our homestays in Havana are located in a working class neighborhood, just 2 blocks from the ocean and 4 blocks from the edge of the tourist district (Paseo de Marti of Cento Havana). In Trinidad, we generally stay less than 200 meters from the center of tourist activity. In Viñales, we will hopefully stay in a beautiful hotel that overlooks the dramatic valley of Viñales. Again, we emphasize...this is NOT a resort experience.

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