

Traveling University's Mission to **CUBA**

with Professor Stephen Berk

March 15-22, 2020

(As of 6/6/19)



Cuba:

A land frozen in time - so close, yet decades away.

A Jewish community dedicated to its heritage across half a century of isolation and prevalent atheism.

A rich and vibrant island culture, filled with dance and song, classic cars and donkey carts, rum and cigars. Experience all this and more as we step back in time together.

Day 1: Sunday, March 15, 2020: WELCOME TO CUBA!

- We depart Miami on our flight to **Havana**.
- We arrive at the Jose Marti Airport and meet our English-speaking guide and driver.
- This afternoon, we enjoy a panoramic overview of the city. Our first stop is at **Revolution Square**, which is dominated by the **José Martí Memorial**. This famous square is where Fidel Castro delivered the majority of his lengthy political addresses. We also pass by the **Rosenberg Memorial, Lennon Park, and Havana University**.
- This afternoon, we check into our hotel and enjoy a welcome drink and **orientation lecture** with Professor Stephen Berk.
- This evening, we join together for a **welcome dinner** at Ivan Justo paladar.

Overnight in Havana

Day 2: Monday, March 16, 2020: OLD HAVANA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin with a visit to **Patronato**, where we meet with community leaders - likely either **Adela Dworin**, the President of Beth Shalom or **David Prinstein**, Vice President of the community. We tour the center and learn about the Pharmacy and Sunday school, with time to deliver our gifts and aid.
- Next, we enjoy a **walking tour of Old Havana (Havana Vieja)**, a UNESCO World Heritage site. We learn about the history of Havana as we visit highlights of the city and the colonial plazas, including Jewish points of interest such as the **Raquel Hotel**, a Jewish-themed hotel.
- We learn about the art and tradition of **cigar rolling** in Cuba on a tour of **Partagas Cigar Factory** and see the process from leaf to finished product and ultimately distribution.



- After **lunch** at Café del Oriente, we visit **Adat Israel**, the Orthodox Synagogue where we meet with **Jacob Berezniak** to deliver our gifts to the community.
- This afternoon, we enjoy a performance by the **Habana Compas Dance group**, known internationally for combining dance and percussion.
- This evening, explore the city and enjoy dinner on own.

Overnight in Havana

Day 3: Tuesday, March 17, 2020: HEMINGWAY IN HAVANA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Morning lecture with Professor Stephen Berk.
- Today, we visit the **Sephardic Center** and meet with **Mayra Levy**, President of the congregation, who discusses the role of Sephardic Jews in the resurgence of Jewish life in Cuba. We also deliver aid to the community and interact with seniors at the only Jewish Seniors program in Cuba.
- While at the Sephardic Center, we also view the first exhibit displayed in Cuba about the Holocaust.
- We enjoy **lunch** together at VIPhavana, a local Paladar serving an excellent vegetarian paella.
- Visit the **Jewish cemetery in Guanabacoa**, including a special visit to the site of a small Holocaust memorial.
- This afternoon, we continue to **Finca Vigia**, the villa that Hemingway called home for 21 years. His home is now a museum with many of his personal belongings. Learn how Cuba influenced his writing.
- We return to our hotel to relax and refresh.
- Evening at leisure and dinner on own.
- **Option** this evening to attend the classic show at the Tropicana (separate cost).



Overnight in Havana

Day 4: Wednesday, March 18, 2020: CIENFUEGOS & SANTA CLARA

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We depart Havana by bus. Professor Berk **lectures** along the way.
- We continue to **Santa Clara**, an important city founded in the 1600's, where Che Guevara won a significant battle which led to the triumph of the revolution in 1959.
- We stop at **Che Guevara Memorial** for a photo opportunity at the Square.
- We meet with **David Tacher**, a leading representative of the Santa Clara Jewish community. We will learn about the local community and deliver our gifts.
- Enjoy lunch together with members of the community on their rooftop deck.
- We depart for the beautiful port city of **Cienfuegos**, Cuba's "Pearl of the South".



- Upon arrival, we stop for a brief orientation of Cienfuegos' central landmarks, including **Parque Marti** and the **Thomas Terry theater** and learn about this UNESCO World Heritage Site founded by French immigrants in 1819.
- This evening, we enjoy **dinner** together at the lovely seaside Finca del Mar.

Overnight in Cienfuegos

Day 5: Thursday, March 19, 2020: TRINIDAD

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we depart for the beautiful colonial town of **Trinidad**, a charming city settled in 1514 which has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1988.
- Upon arrival, we enjoy a walking tour of historic **Trinidad** which is a 500-year-old city with Spanish colonial architecture. Only a few square blocks in size, historic Trinidad is famous for its lovely cobblestone streets, pastel houses with wrought iron grills, as well as beautiful palaces and plazas. We learn about the efforts to preserve the city's heritage.
- We meet with the famous **Santander family**, well-known local potters, and visit their workshop and gallery. These artists have been making handmade pottery for over 100 years.
- **Lunch** at San Carlos paladar.
- Following lunch, we return to Cienfuegos.
- This afternoon, we meet with **Rebecca Langus** and learn about the local Jewish community with time to deliver gifts.
- Next, we enjoy a performance by **Cantores de Cienfuegos at Museo Provincial de Cienfuegos**.
- This evening, we enjoy **dinner** on the San Carlos hotel rooftop.



Overnight in Cienfuegos

Day 6: Friday, March 20, 2020: RETURN TO HAVANA

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we depart for Havana, stopping for lunch on our own en route. Professor Berk **lectures** along the way.
- Upon arriving in Havana, we stop at the impressive **Fuster house/studio** to see this unique mosaic masterpiece and learn about the artist's project to beautify and help the community in which he lives.
- We check into our hotel and have time to relax and refresh.
- As the sun begins to set, we join together for **Shabbat services and dinner** at the **Sephardic Center** with community members.

Overnight in Havana



Day 7: Saturday, March 21, 2020: ARTISTIC HAVANA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Free day **OR** join our guide for a neighborhood walking tour around our hotel, ending with entrance at the **Museum of the Revolution**, less than a 10-minute walk from our hotel.
- **Lunch** is included back at our hotel.
- Prof. Berk lectures after lunch, summarizing our Cuban experience and the vivid history of this colorful island nation.
- This evening, we enjoy a **classic car ride** from our hotel to our **farewell dinner** at El Mediterraneo paladar as we recall all that we have experienced together.
- **Optional:** Late evening visit to the artists of **Fabrica D'la Arte**, a former cooking oil factory, which comes alive on weekend nights and features the best avante garde art in the country.



Overnight in Havana

Day 8: Sunday, March 22, 2020: DEPARTURE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We transfer to the airport for our flight back to Miami.

The Memories Last Forever!!

**Itinerary subject to change*

