

CUBA!

GAY MEN'S CHORUS WASHINGTON DC TOUR



9 DAYS/8 NIGHTS

Discover Cuba on the YFU Cultural Community Tour!

A People to People Exchange

Have you wanted to explore the unique island nation of Cuba? Now's your chance! YFU offers adults an opportunity to be exchange travelers this year, by joining a delegation from the US to Cuba. Depart from Miami with fellow YFU community members on a chartered plane bound for Havana where your itinerary will be packed full of exciting activities. With a focus on the arts, education, health and Cuba's distinctive culture, you'll experience lectures, museums, schools and arts communities, along with Cuba's unique cuisine, music and architecture!



Did you know Cuba has one of the highest ranking educational systems in Latin America? In spite of limited resources, a lack of instructional materials and technology, Cuba has established a literacy rate of 97%. What is the secret behind their success? During your visit you'll have the chance to meet with staff at the Literacy Museum who have been tracking what is known as the world's most ambitious literacy campaign. The trip offers opportunities to meet and greet Cuban business owners, museum staff, lecturers and other educators, and artisans for a true cultural immersion. The delegation has even been invited to a local street party – a great opportunity to interact with the locals!

Traveling under the People to People General License.

Travel arrangements by OFAC Travel Service Provider International Planning Services, Inc. d/b/a Interplanner – OFAC license No. CU-51857A



YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING
Intercultural Exchange Programs

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PROGRAM

ICON LEGEND

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|--|---|
|  ARRIVAL |  DEPARTURE |
|  RELAX |  WALKING |
|  SIGHTSEEING |  VISIT |
|  PERFORMANCE |  ROAD TRIP |
|  DONATE |  CELEBRATE |
|  LEARN |  TOUR |

IMPORTANT NOTE: We work diligently to ensure that the activities described here are available on your program, however on our unique delegations to Cuba we will also be working around restrictions enforced by the Cuban government. **Unanticipated changes, scheduling conflicts, delays, weather, or circumstances beyond our control could result in program adjustments.** If substitution for a scheduled program activity is required, we will make every effort to feature comparable events to retain the content and quality of the program.

DAY 1

Miami, FL, US – Departure to Miami



Departures: Participants will independently depart today for Miami, Florida. The program officially begins at the briefing in Cuba so note that no event or official gathering will take place in the U.S. this evening.

Destination: Upon arrival in Miami, please make your way to the **Miami International Airport Hotel** (located in concourse E within the airport itself). The hotel is just a short walk from luggage claim (2nd floor). Check-in begins at 3:00 pm so access to rooms prior to that is subject to availability.

Miami International Airport Hotel

Central Terminal Concourse E
2nd floor
Miami, Florida 33266
Telephone: 305.871.4100

Meals: Lunch and dinner are by individual arrangement today for those arriving earlier in the day time.



DAY 2

Miami, FL, US – Departure to Cuba



Meeting time: 4:45 am

This morning please plan to meet by 4:45 am in the hotel lobby to meet your delegation leaders. Check in will be in concourse G adjacent to the Dunkin Donuts. Lines queue up according to the flight, not just those flying with the charter company, so make sure you get in the correct line!

Breakfast: Due to the early hour of our departure from the hotel, breakfast could not be provided by the hotel. However, there are many dining options at the airport after you check in, but before you clear security and head to your gate.

Departure time: Departure is scheduled this morning on XAEL Charter service (operated by World Atlantic) at approximately 9:00 am (**check-in begins as early as 5:00**).

Arrival in Cuba is approximately 45 minutes later as it is a short flight. Delays are common as it takes quite some time to load the excess luggage that many visitors are bringing with them for their families and friends in Cuba. It is common to see car parts, bicycles, flat screen televisions as well as men wearing three or four hats to avoid having to pay any additional baggage fees at the counter. Quite a fun sight and an experience in itself!

WELCOME TO CUBA!!

Upon arrival at the Havana International Airport, you will need to make your way through passport control where they will take your photo (be prepared to remove any hats, scarves or glasses) and check your paperwork for entry into Cuba. Make your way to baggage claim and from there exit through customs to where your national guide will be waiting for the delegation.

Lunch: Enjoy some sites of the city in a panoramic bus tour of Havana en-route to lunch. Lunch will be provided at **El Tocaroro Restaurant.**

Hotel Check-In: Early this afternoon the delegation will transfer to your hotel for check in at the **Quinta Avenida Hotel** in Miramar. Check in and settle into your rooms before meeting in the hotel conference center for your welcome briefing.

Your delegation leaders will have some time to address the delegation and facilitate group introductions

Dinner: Enjoy a welcome dinner at **Paladar La California**, this paladar is known as one of Havana's best.



DAY 3

Havana, Cuba



Breakfast: Breakfast will be provided daily during your stay in Cuba.

Morning Tour: This morning enjoy a walking tour of the historic center of **Old Havana**, a village founded in 1519 and declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 1982. There will be an explanation of the projects carried out by the City Historian's Office for the rehabilitation of Old Havana.

Lunch: Lunch will be provided at **El Templete Restaurant.**

Learn: This afternoon there will be an exchange with the Marina de Gonitch Chorus. You will meet members of the chorus and exchange experiences. Each chorus will sing for half hour at Casa de La Amistad – (House of Friendship).

Dinner: Dinner is by individual arrangement (own expense).

Performance: This evening enjoy a musical performance by Buena Vista Social Club musicians at El Tablao de Pancho, Havana's best!

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DAY 4

Havana, Cuba



Breakfast

Learn: This morning the delegation will have a welcome orientation to Cuba on behalf of the staff at the **Cuban Institute of Friendship with People** in conjunction with our local team at the Casa de la Amistad. This mandatory meeting focuses on Cuban/U.S. relations, and is a required component of all visits to Cuba.

We will continue to the Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti – (National Library Jose Marti) for a one hour concert at the libraries auditorium.

Lunch: Lunch will be provided at **El Divino Restaurant**.

Visit: This afternoon we will visit “La Casa de la Cultura”, (House of Culture) located in Arroyo Naranjo a suburb of the city of Havana and enjoy a performance by students of the JCB Project who are learning how to dance and sing. Following the presentation the GMCW will perform for a half hour. Interplanner will present a donation to the project.

Celebrate: This evening enjoy a **neighborhood street party** with all the residents of the block participating. It’s a great opportunity to interact with the locals.

Donation: The delegation should collaborate to bring some rum, chips, crackers, sodas to contribute to the party. These can be purchased at the hotel or any local store. Also some gifts for children will be very much appreciated however we don’t have quantities, ages or genders to share. We recommend small items that are easy to carry. Appropriate items could be school or art supplies, books and notebook paper/journals, stickers, children or teen magazines, matchbox cars, dolls, card or board games, etc.

Dinner: Dinner is by individual arrangement (own expense).

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DAY 5

Havana, Cuba - Pinar del Rio



Breakfast

Learn: Morning departure for an educational visit to **Las Terrazas Community Project**,

you will receive an explanation of their local community project developed for the restoration of the area in the heart of the Sierra del Rosario. Visit the restored ruins of Buena Vista (old coffee plantation of the French immigrants) with the house, the remains of the slave barracks and the area used to process coffee beans.

Lunch: Lunch will be provided at one of the restaurants within Las Terrazas, which is located in a mountain area of the Candelaria municipality. Declared a biosphere reserve by UNESCO in 1985 and with an extraordinarily beautiful landscape, it will provide a great photo opportunity.

Note: Bring your swimsuit and a towel with you today!

Return to Havana

Dinner: Surprise!!

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DAY 6

Havana, Cuba



Breakfast

Visit: Morning departure to visit the **Hemingway Museum** located in the Finca Vigia, former residence of the American writer located in the San Francisco de Paula neighborhood on the outskirts of the city. We will tour along the beltway of the city reaching Cojimar, a fisherman’s village where Hemingway docked his fishing boat “El Pilar”, a source of inspiration for this famous novel “The Old Man and the Sea”

Lunch: Lunch at **El Bodegon Las Brisas Paladar**.

Visit: This afternoon we will meet with **The National Center for Sex Education (Centro Nacional de Educación Sexual, or CENESEX)**. The center is best known for advocating tolerance of LGBT issues on the island. The head of the center is Dr. Mariela Castro Espin, daughter of Cuban leader Raúl Castro (brother of former leader Fidel Castro). The visit will take place at ICAP – Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos – (Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples). Dr. Mariela Castro Espin has been officially invited to exchange with the GMCW delegation for two hours. Following the meeting the GMCW and Cuba’s gay chorus “Mano a Mano” will perform.

Dinner: Dinner is by individual arrangement (own expense).

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DAY 7

Havana, Cuba



Breakfast

Visit: This morning the delegation will also visit **Convento de Nuestra Señora de Belén**. – (Convent of Our Lady of Bethlehem). A special visit has been arranged to the restored 18th century convent in the middle of Old Havana. They have a health clinic and pharmacy, physical therapy for the elderly, services for disabled youth, an eye care center and glasses

for all ages, meals for those in need, support for single mothers, occupational training and they are working on some limited housing as

well (under construction). Mass and other religious services are held at the convent and there is a full schedule of crafts, musicals and other activities for the seniors. During hurricane season the center also functions as an emergency shelter. They have on onsite (albeit small) daycare as well for the workers and a select few local families with the greatest need. There will be a presentation by the Convent and the GMCW will perform for the community and the elderly that are part of the convent’s program. Each program will take half hour.

Donations: The center is in desperate need of adult diapers and pain killers and regular over the counter medications. Children’s toys or books (Spanish language or picture) are of course welcome.

Lunch: Lunch will be provided at **La Torre Restaurant**.

Learn: This afternoon visit the **Museo de Bellas Artes** (Fine Arts Museum). The Fine Arts Museum is dedicated exclusively to Cuban art collections beginning in the mid- 16th century. Spanning the 17th and 19th centuries, it has galleries devoted to landscape, religious subjects and the Costumbrismo narrative scenes of Cuban life. Other galleries are devoted to more current work, and are recognized for the extensive collection of Hyperrealism and the latest generation of Cuban artists whose works all reflect the strong symbolic imagery prevalent in recent decades.

Dinner: Dinner has been specially arranged at **La Fontana Paladar**.

After dinner this evening the delegation will go down to the Cannon Blast ceremony, a tradition evoking the announcement of the closing of the gates of the city and of the channel at the entrance of the bay.

Performance: Evening show at Havana's famous "Jazz Café."



DAY 8

Havana, Cuba



Dance School



Stilt Walkers Old Havana

Breakfast

Visit: This morning depart for a visit to the city of Regla. Visit the church of **Nuestra Señora de Regla**, one of Cuba's most frequented pilgrimage churches. The most impressive is the statute of the Virgin of Regla who is black and cradles a white infant in her arms. She is the patron and protector of sailors. She is considered the equivalent of Yemaya, the goddess of the sea in the Yoruba religion. Visit the **Municipal Museum of Regla**. There will be a ritual dance of Santería, the religion brought to Cuba by African slaves. A folklore group will perform a ritual dance.

Lunch: Lunch will be provided at the **1830 Restaurant**.

This afternoon the delegation will enjoy a performance by **Bebe Compañía Dance Company** with a variety of children's programs. The GMCW will perform following the presentation. Performance will be half hour each. The exchange will take place at Havana's famous Bertold Bretch Theater.

Performance: This evening the GMCW has been invited to the prestigious Casa de Las Americas for a one hour performance in the Ernesto Che Guevara auditorium.

After the concert there will be a farewell reception at the Santa Isabel Hotel terrace in Old Havana. The stilt walkers dance group will entertain you as you follow them dancing in the streets of Havana to your farewell dinner.

Dinner: Share your memories of Cuba with other delegates at a farewell dinner at **Café Del Oriente Restaurant** in the historic center.



DAY 9

Havana, Cuba – Departure Day



Breakfast

Departure: Today you bid farewell to Cuba, "The Pearl of the Antilles" Transfer to the airport for departure. Our guide and local airport representative will be available to help you with the check-in procedures.

Thanks for traveling with YFU and Interplanner, see you soon for a new adventure!



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