



UC DAVIS
Aggie Adventures
Cal Aggie Alumni Association

 **Duration**
7 days

 **Activity Level**
Moderate

 **Journey Type**
Land
Small Group



Havana: The Afro-Cuban Experience

April 2-9, 2027

Starting from \$6,245/pp

Experience the enduring influence of the African diaspora on Cuban culture on a seven-night immersive, educational journey. Engage in meaningful daily exchanges with local Cubans from diverse backgrounds —entrepreneurs, dancers, artists, musicians, and Afro-Cuban religious and community leaders—gaining insight into their lived experiences. Follow the historic Slave Route and illuminate the rich Afro-Cuban traditions that continue to shape Havana, Matanzas, Guanabacoa and Regla. This exclusive program, developed by AHI Travel, is operated in accordance with a People-to-People general license.



Day-by-Day Itinerary

Explore Cuba's Afro-Cuban history and culture through a full schedule of daily activities and interactions with local Cuban residents, artists, dancers, musicians, writers, religious leaders, philanthropists and entrepreneurs, which will directly benefit and support the Cuban people.

This exclusive program, developed by AHI Travel, is operated in accordance with a People-to-People general license established by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control pursuant to 31 CFR section 515.565.

Havana | The Afro-Cuban Experience

Air Program: 8 days/ 7 nights

Land Program: 8 days/ 7 nights

Breakfasts: 7 | Lunches: 6 | Dinners: 4

B | L | D denotes included breakfasts, lunches and dinners.

This itinerary is subject to change due to operational conditions.

Activity Level ratings indicate each excursion's physical expectations. To make the best personal choice, please evaluate each excursion's rating and your ability to meet the tour's physical demands. Please note, excursions on this program require: walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths and uneven surfaces and getting on/off motor coaches.

- Mild: Walk under 1 mile on mainly flat terrain; navigate under 50 stairs; stand under 1 hour
- Moderate: Walk 1-3 miles on flat/uneven terrain; navigate 50-100 stairs; stand 1-2 hours
- Active: Walk 2+ miles on flat/uneven terrain, including up and down inclines; navigate 100+ stairs; stand 3+ hours

Day 1

Depart gateway city | Miami, Florida | Havana, Cuba

Paseo 206

D

Passengers depart for Havana, Cuba, via Miami, Florida. Arrive in Havana, proceed through immigration and then to the baggage claim area to retrieve your luggage. After completing customs, exit the baggage claim area and proceed to the Arrivals Hall, where an AHI Travel representative will meet you.

Transfer with your group and check in to the first-class Paseo 206, a privately owned hotel located in the heart of Havana's El Vedado neighborhood.

Welcome Dinner. Gather with your fellow travelers for this evening's Welcome Dinner at a locally owned and operated restaurant. During the economic reforms of the 1990s, many Cubans were able to open their own independent establishments, each offering a distinctive atmosphere and authentic regional cuisine. Enjoy the opportunity to mingle with fellow travelers and local hosts alike, savoring the flavors of Cuba while supporting the entrepreneurial spirit that continues to shape the island's culinary scene.

Day 2

Havana | Regla | Guanabacoa

Paseo 206

B | L

Start each day with a hearty breakfast at the hotel, featuring freshly prepared dishes and a selection of seasonal, locally sourced fruits.

People-to-People: Afro-Cuban Old Havana. Join Cuban writer and activist Roberto Zurbano for a guided walk through La Habana Vieja. Founded by Spanish colonists in 1519, Havana's UNESCO-inscribed historic district pulses with centuries of history and life. Learn about its engrossing, tumultuous history and the Cuban people's deep-rooted Afro-Cuban culture and heritage as you walk through Old Havana's four historic main squares: Plaza de Armas, the city's oldest; Plaza de San Francisco, graced by the 19th-century Fountain of Lions; Plaza de la Catedral, dominated by the majestic Cathedral of Havana; and Plaza Vieja, Havana's most renowned for its eclectic architecture.

As you stroll, immerse yourself in the rhythm of daily life. Each square has its own character, yet all are united by a spirit of community, artistry and resilience. Street performers tune guitars and rehearse dance steps beneath balconies adorned with fluttering laundry and flags. Artists display colorful stalls, antique booksellers lay out their treasures beneath banyan trees, children chase pigeons around fountains, and locals play dominoes and debate politics—all scenes that capture the living heartbeat of Havana. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Afro-Cuban Identity. Stop by the independent shop, Beyond Roots, founded by Adriana Heredia Sanchez. Meet and talk with the inspiring staff to discover the shop's various educational experiences and workshops that highlight and preserve Cuba's Afro-Cuban identity. (Mild)

Regla's Black Madonna . Continue to the municipality of Regla, a culturally rich district known for its long traditions of Santería and other Afro-Cuban religions. Santería originated in Cuba among the descendants of African slaves who combined their Yoruba religious practices with elements of Roman Catholicism. See the Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Regla, Church of Our Lady of Regla. Inside, the Virgin is represented by a Black Madonna, associated with Yemeyá, the ocean mother goddess of sailors. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Visit a Babalawo's Home with Lunch. Continue to Guanabacoa, the cradle of Afro-Cuban Culture in Havana, to visit the house of a Babalawo — a sage or high priest who is well-versed in the rituals, lore and history of the Yoruba tradition/religion called Ifá — for an intimate experience that provides profound insight into Ifá practices and culture. Most of the community's religious activities and local parties are hosted at his home. Then, get to know your hosts as you savor a home-cooked lunch of Afro-Cuban foods in the Babalawo's home. (Mild)

Enrichment: Cuba & U.S. Relations. Join a discussion on this timely topic with Camilo García López-Trigo, esteemed professor at the University of Havana. Gain a firsthand perspective on the island's evolving opportunities for engagement amid ongoing diplomatic tensions and recent shifts in U.S.–Cuba policy from a leading Cuban scholar.

Dinner is at your leisure tonight. Your AHI Travel Director can recommend restaurants. While dining at a local restaurant of your choice, you contribute to Cubans making a living in the private sector.

Day 3

Havana

Paseo 206

B | L

People-to-People: Cuba's 1961 Literacy Campaign. This morning at the hotel, you'll meet the remarkable Norma Guillard, a distinguished Cuban social psychologist, activist and advocate for LGBTQ rights. An adjunct lecturer at the University of Havana, she teaches courses on psychology and gender while remaining at the forefront of Cuba's social and cultural discourse. Guillard's extraordinary career began at just 15, when she joined the Cuban Literacy Campaign, helping teach more than 700,000 people to read and write—a story captured in Catherine Murphy's short documentary "Maestra," in which Guillard is featured as one of the protagonists.

Watch the short documentary and hear Guillard recount her experiences as a teenage literacy worker, her founding of an LGBTQ rights group, leading sexual health workshops for women in low-income neighborhoods and her published work on sexuality and feminism. Then participate in a thoughtful discussion with Guillard, with time for questions, gaining a rare, firsthand perspective on the social movements and cultural currents that have shaped modern Cuba. (Mild)

People-to-People: Cuban Fine Art. Meet Wilfredo Benítez Muñoz, Executive Director of the Ludwig Foundation, at the National Museum of Fine Arts in central Havana. The museum's diverse collection includes Cuban artists dating to the 17th century, as well as works by Goya, Rubens, Murillo, and a host of Greek and Roman art, spanning the colonial era, 19th century, modern and revolutionary movements. Muñoz will offer insightful commentary as he guides you through the museum's galleries. (Moderate)

Discuss the morning's visits over lunch together at a local restaurant.

El Callejón de Hamel. Stroll through this eclectic, colorful alleyway to experience the richness of Cuba's oldest community art project, a diverse menagerie of African, European and North and South American influences. The paint-splattered street has become central to Afro-Cuban culture, reflected in rumba drummers and dancers, vibrant murals and sculptures and art made from recycled items. Along the way, discover the religions, rituals and cultural traditions that continue to shape life in Havana. (Moderate)

Enrichment: The Cuban Health Care System. Health care in Cuba is considered a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of national policy. Through a focus on prevention, primary care, and community-based services, the system achieves remarkably high health outcomes despite economic limitations. Join a discussion with Alberto Roque to gain an insider's perspective on how these principles shape daily life and reflect Cuba's commitment to social welfare.

As the evening unfolds, step out to explore Havana's culinary scene at your leisure, choosing from a range of inviting eateries and supporting local entrepreneurs while taking in the city's flavors and rhythms.

Day 4

Havana

Paseo 206

B | L | D

Enrichment: Empowering Cuban Women. Begin the day with an illuminating talk led by sociologist Dr. Marta Núñez, who offers insightful perspectives on gender relations and the evolving role of women in Cuban society. Explore the significant contributions of Cuban women in government, science and other professional fields, and engage in a thoughtful conversation about the ongoing challenges and strides toward gender equality.

People-to-People: Cuba's Jewish Culture. Set out for the Patronato community center, home to Havana's Ashkenazi Synagogue. A member of the city's Jewish community will welcome you and share the history of Ashkenazi and Sephardic immigrants who arrived in the early 20th century from Eastern Europe, as well as insights into contemporary Jewish life in Havana. Once numbering over 15,000, Cuba's Jewish population declined sharply after the Revolution, when policies declaring the island country an atheist state created an environment where religious practice and personal freedoms were restricted. Today, the community is a small but vibrant remnant of its pre-1959 presence. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Cuba's Elite Dancers. Next, step into Malpaso, a contemporary dance studio renowned for hosting internationally acclaimed choreographers. Go behind the scenes to meet elite dancers, gaining insight into their rigorous training, artistic passion and commitment to advancing Cuba's dynamic dance tradition. (Moderate)

Take a break over a group lunch at a restaurant in Old Havana, while sharing the morning's insights.

People-to-People: Female Cuban Entrepreneurs. Continue walking through Old Havana, stopping to spend time visiting shops created, owned and operated by Cuban women. Stop by Zulu, an Afro-Cuban workshop that crafts and sells handbags and leather goods from recycled leather scraps. Meet with these female entrepreneurs to discuss the challenges they faced in opening their own businesses and the new opportunities available in Cuba. (Moderate)

Return to the hotel for relaxation before this evening's activities.

People-to-People: Ludwig Foundation of Cuba. Later, gather on the terrace of the Ludwig Foundation of Cuba, founded in 1995 by Peter and Irene Ludwig as a nonprofit institution dedicated to supporting Cuban artists both locally and internationally. The Foundation nurtures emerging talent across various art forms. During tonight's event, meet independent Cuban artists and engage in conversations about their creative passions, dedication to their craft and future aspirations. (Mild)

Have dinner together this evening at a local restaurant, reflecting on a day rich with culture, history and the enduring spirit of Cuban creativity.

Day 5

Havana | Matanzas

Paseo 206

B | L | D

Matanzas is known for its rich cultural heritage shaped by its diverse roots and artistic excellence. Founded in the late 17th century, it grew into a thriving port where Spanish, African and Caribbean influences converged. The city played a key role in Cuba's national arts as the birthplace of rumba, danzón and the spiritual drumming traditions of Santería. These forms emerged from Afro-Cuban communities descended from enslaved Africans who worked in the sugar industry, and their legacy lives on in the city's rhythms, poetry and spiritual practices.

Matanzas Panoramic Tour. Today, journey along Cuba's scenic northern coast to Matanzas. Known as the "City of Bridges," Matanzas is shaped by the Yumurí, San Juan and Canímar rivers as well as an intricate network of canals and streets. Pause at the Puente de Bacunayagua, Cuba's longest and highest bridge, which marks the border between the Mayabeque and Matanzas provinces, and appreciate the sweeping views of the Yumurí Valley. Continue into Matanzas, where you'll pass by the neoclassical Teatro Sauto, once home to acclaimed performers and a symbol of the city's artistic heritage. Drive through the historic Barrio de Versalles (French Quarter), where French-influenced design, Afro-Cuban heritage and the Yumurí Valley converge to create a slice of Cuban history. Though time has weathered many of the grand colonial mansions, they stand as eloquent markers of the wealth and spirit of Matanzas' golden age.

San Severino Castle, La Libertad Park & Pharmaceutical Museum. Stop to visit the San Severino Castle, built in 1735 as a fortress and the location where African slaves were brought in the 18th century. It is now a part of UNESCO Sites of Memory of Slavery in Cuba, honoring significant places linked to slavery, the slave trade and their legacies. From there, walk through the historic La Libertad Park, reflecting on Cuba's struggles for independence as you pass by statues and monuments honoring national heroes. Then, visit the Museo Farmacéutico, a preserved 19th-century French-style pharmacy founded in 1882, to see its collection of French porcelain jars and North American stained-glass medicine bottles. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Cuban Choir Performance. Stop for lunch nearby, where a lively choir will entertain you with vocal arrangements that tell stories of hisNext, a local choir will entertain you with lively vocal arrangements that tell stories of Cuba's history, culture and social life. Interact with the dedicated and talented choir members during a brief question-and-answer session. (Mild)

Take a break to relax and recharge over a group lunch nearby.

Sugar Mill Triunvirato & Museum. After lunch, visit the Sugar Mill Triunvirato, a 19th-century plantation that flourished during the sugar boom. It is also one of the UNESCO Sites of Memory of Slavery in Cuba. Contemplate the poignant, towering Monument to the Slave Rebellion, which depicts the legendary Carlota, the slave who led the rebellion in 1843, with a raised machete. The statue commemorates the 329 enslaved people who rose against inhumane conditions and stands as an enduring symbol of resistance and courage in Cuban history. At the Sugar Mill Museum, located in the former overseer's house, explore artifacts and furniture that provide a visual depiction of life here during the 1800s, as well as information about the 1843 Slave Rebellion. (Moderate)

Return to your hotel in Havana and have dinner at leisure tonight, reflecting on the day in Matanzas, which has brought Cuba's African legacy and Afro-Cuban culture to life.

Day 6

Havana

Paseo 206

B | L

Enrichment: Race and the Cuban Revolution. Begin the day with a thought-provoking discussion led by Dr. Rosaida Ochoa, exploring the intersections of race and the Cuban Revolution. Gain rare insight into the social, historical and cultural forces that have shaped modern Cuba.

People-to-People: Agromercado. This morning, take a walk to visit a typical Cuban street market bustling with vendors selling fruits, vegetables, rice, beans and a variety of meats. Pause to chat with the local purveyors as you immerse yourself in the daily shopping life of local Cubans. (Moderate)

People-to-People: Inside an Art Studio. Afterward, visit Casa Fuster, the home and studio of renowned Cuban painter and sculptor José Fuster, whose work is inspired by Picasso. Admire his vividly colored mosaics and hear about his artistic journey, as well as the challenges

and opportunities facing contemporary Cuban artists. Then, share an enriching group lunch amid this uniquely creative environment before returning to the hotel. (Mild)

People-to-People: Vintage Convertible Ride. Set out in one of Havana's legendary American convertibles. Roughly 60,000 of these 1950s-era classics still roam the streets thanks to the ingenuity and perseverance of their owners, despite the U.S. trade embargo. Settle into one of these iconic Cuban treasures for a scenic drive along the Malecón, the 4.3-mile seaside esplanade lined with notable landmarks and monuments. Enjoy easy conversation with your driver and take a peek under the hood to hear about the mechanical creativity and maintenance techniques that keep these cars running. Along the way, you'll gain a deeper appreciation for the resourcefulness Cubans bring to everyday life. (Mild)

People-to-People: Afro-Cuban Dance. Back at the hotel, meet a group of Cuban-born-and-raised dancers whose lives have been shaped by the studios and troupes they've trained with since childhood. Today, you'll support their individual artistic journeys as they share their passion and guide us through the rhythms of salsa. You may even try a few steps yourself! (Mild – Moderate)

Have dinner together at the Claxon Hotel tonight. Discuss today's vivid experiences that have brought Cuba's art, rhythms and social fabric to life.

Day 7

Havana | Rural Cuba

Paseo 206

B | L | D

People-to-People: Las Terrazas. Today, travel outside Havana again into Cuba's lush countryside, where the rhythms of daily life are intimately tied to the land. Admire the scenic views of lush, untamed landscapes on the drive to Las Terrazas, a model socialist community established in the early 1970s as part of an ambitious reforestation project aimed at restoring the surrounding landscape. Today, the residents of Las Terrazas are deeply engaged in sustainable development, eco-tourism and cultural initiatives, embodying a harmonious balance between people and nature.

During your visit, meet community members and gain firsthand insight into their conservation efforts and daily life. Visit a local daycare center and a doctor's office, stroll through the village to enjoy coffee at a café and visit an artist's studio to witness creativity flourishing within this verdant setting. Conclude your visit with a leisurely lunch at a nearby restaurant, featuring fresh, locally grown, organic vegetables, before returning to Havana. (Moderate)

Enrichment: The Rhythms of Cuban Music. Join Cuban ethnomusicologist Alberto Fayas for an illuminating talk about Cuba's vibrant music scene, rooted in the rhythms of Spain and West Africa.

Farewell Dinner. Share highlights of your immersive and enlightening Cuban experience with fellow travelers during a special dinner tonight at a local restaurant.

Day 8

Depart for Miami, Florida | Return to gateway city

B

After breakfast, check out of the hotel, bid farewell to enigmatic Cuba, and transfer to the airport for your return flight to Miami, with a connection to your home city. Your Travel Director will provide the details.

Note: Itinerary may change due to local conditions.



What's Included

Program Overview

- Small group: Sized just right at 12 guests.
- Round-trip flights between Miami and Cuba.
- 7 nights in Havana, Cuba, at the first-class Paseo 206, a privately owned boutique hotel.
- AHI Sustainability Promise: We strive to make a positive, purposeful impact in the communities we visit.
- Complimentary travel mementos.

Meal Program

- 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 4 dinners.
- Welcome and Farewell Dinners to mingle with fellow travelers.
- Tea or coffee with all meals, plus a local beverage with dinner.

On-site Features

- Enrichment by expert speakers enhances your insight into the region.
- Engaging excursions showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
- Cuban Visa.
- Tipping of guides and drivers.

FlexAir Travel Program

Need assistance booking your travel arrangements? Our experts are here to help. Our air program offers the following benefits.

FREE Economy Air

- Includes FREE Economy Air
- Special air add-on rates available from other gateways (please call for details)
- Our promise to keep your comfort in mind when selecting your flight route

Trip Transportation

- Assistance in the event of schedule changes or delays
- Arrival and departure transfers on group dates

Price Guarantee

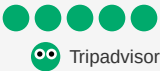
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Price guarantee to protect you from fuel surcharge increases
after ticket purchase

Travel and Hotel Accommodations

Paseo 206 Boutique Hotel

Located in the tree-lined neighborhood of El Vedado, this privately owned boutique hotel dates from 1933 and embodies a delightful essence of Cuban and Italian charm. Indulge in homemade Cuban-Italian dishes at the property's top-rated restaurant, Ecléctico, or enjoy an aperitif in the library room before heading out to explore Havana. After a day of incredible sightseeing, settle in your cozy suite, enhanced with contemporary Cuban artwork, Italian-designed furniture and luxurious Frette linens.



Pricing

\$500 Full Payment Discount expires November 3, 2026

Category/Deck	Base Price	Full Payment Discount*	Special Price
PR-Rooftop Suite (WAIT LIST)	\$7,745	-\$500	\$7,245
PM-Master Suite	\$7,245	-\$500	\$6,745
PJ-Junior Suite	\$6,745	-\$500	\$6,245
PS-Standard Room	\$6,245	-\$500	\$5,745

Package rates are per person based on Double occupancy from Land Only. Prices include all service charges; port charges when applicable; US government taxes and fees. The minimum deposit is \$1000.00 per person. Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage. Please contact your airline or refer to its website for detailed information regarding your airline's checked baggage policies. To view Program Terms and Conditions, close this window and scroll to the bottom of the page.

** Full Payment Discounts are only available at the time of booking with initial payment 150+ days prior to departure. This offer only applies to full payment at the time of reservation. Details on how to qualify for this savings will be included when your reservation request is confirmed.

