



## **MOMENTA – PRO DANZA Interchange Trip**

**23- 31 March 2019 (9 days/8 nights)**

*AIR Departure: Chicago (to be announced)*

*Itinerary Subject to Change: often for the better*

### **Day 1 – 23 MAR 2018**

Saturday

**General “Group” departs Chicago, IL for Havana**

#### **Met at Havana Airport with group bus and guide**

The city of **Havana** (La Habana) was first settled on 25 November 1519 on the sheltered, natural Havana Bay and became Cuba’s capital city in 1553. It was a strategic port city and thereby wealthy jumping off spot for New World gold and silver being transported to Spain.

**Visit to the Plaza de la Revolucion** – This large square is surrounded by many of the major state offices (including the National Theater) with the impressive Jose Marti Memorial museum tower the highest point in the city. This city square is the center of the city for political rallies and special events including the open air masses held during Papal visits.

#### **Check in - Private Homes or Hotel**



**Hotel Melia Habana – Luxury hotel located in the Miramar neighborhood with ocean views, large pool, free and Wi Fi.**

**6:45 PM - Dinner –on the rooftop of the La Moneda de Cuba paladar (private restaurant) in Old Havana or similar**



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**8:15 PM - Transfer across Havana Bay** past the **Castillo de Los Tres Reyes del Morro**, built between 1589 and 1630 at the entrance to Havana harbor on the peninsula point opposite the city buildings of Havana. Down along the water is the Battery of the 12 Apostles with each canon named after an apostle.

### **Transfer to San Carlos de la Cabana fortress**

**Fortaleza de San Carlos de la Cabana** was built between 1763 and 1774 on the la Cabana hillside down from El Castillo del Morro after the English conquest of the city from that hill area. Steep walls, a deep moat and a majestic drawbridge make this long hillside fortress (it once housed 120 canon) a dominant feature on the harbor and a great spot for viewing old Havana at night. It also housed political prisoners and became Che Guevara's headquarters after taking possession of the city in 1959.

### **9:00 PM - Canonazo Ceremony**

Every night the picturesque **Canonazo Ceremony** takes place with an historical ceremony recalling the firing of a canon shot to announce the closing of the city gates and the raising of a chain in the harbor to protect against pirate attacks. A drummer marches soldiers dressed in 18<sup>th</sup> century Spanish Colonial uniforms to the ramparts at 8:45 AM to prepare the large canon for the loud explosion at 9:00 PM.

***NOTE:** the ceremony takes you into an impressive fortress and does involve walking cobblestone areas in dark conditions. The view across the bay to Havana is truly impressive however.*

### **Transfer to Homes/Hotel for overnight**

## **Day 2 – 24 MAR**

Sunday

### **9:00 AM - WALKING TOUR of Old Havana**

*(the arrangement of plaza visits might be adjusted to provide easier lunch access or walking times)*

Havana Vieja or **Old Havana** is the historic center of Havana, full of Spanish colonial buildings surrounded by a city wall in Havana's early years. Currently in restoration, the area was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1982. The area incorporates 4 main squares: Plaza de Armas, Plaza Vieja, Plaza de la Catedral and Plaza de San Francisco. The busy **Calle Mercaderes** and the bustling **Calle Obispo** are Old Havana's major crossing streets. Calle Obispo starts to the west of the Plaza de Armas and is a



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main shopping street in Old Havana. It runs past the Ambos Mundos Hotel up to the El Floridita Bar, birthplace of the daiquiri, and the **Parque Central** where you'll find the Capitolio and the Grand Theater.

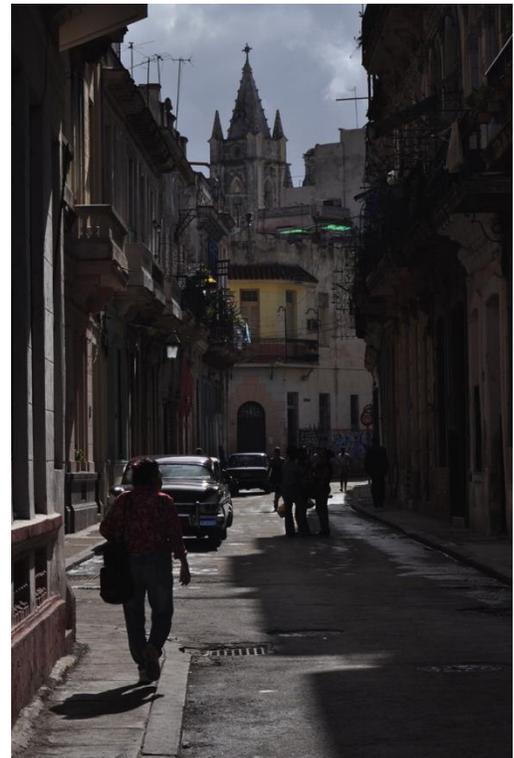
The **Plaza de Armas** is Havana's oldest square. The center area, often bordered by bookstalls, has a statue of revolutionary landowner Carlos Manuel de Cespedes at its center. At the northeast corner is the neo-classical **El Templete** (built in 1828) marking the spot where the first mass in Havana was said under a Ceiba tree in 1519. This event is celebrated again every 16 November. Opposite is the **Castillo de la Real Fuerza**, Cuba's oldest building and the second oldest fort in the New World. This fort and a city wall were built to protect the inhabitants from pirates. The weathervane atop the fort is **La Giraldilla**, the symbol of Havana representing governor Hernando de Soto's wife who watched in vain for his return from his Florida campaign. On the west side of the square is the **Palacio de los Capitanes Generales** (1780), the home of Cuba's ruling governor and now the city's historical museum.

Visit the **Ambos Mundos Hotel** with the Hemingway Museum Room. Can take a coffee or cocktail at the beautiful rooftop garden.

The cobbled **Plaza de San Francisco** faces the Terminal de Sierra Maestra, the dockyard for luxury liners. At one side stands the Iglesia y Convento de San Francisco de Asis, built in 1608 and rebuilt in Baroque style in 1730 complete with a 40 meter bell tower (campanario). Because of its excellent acoustics, the church was converted into a concert hall. Outside the statue of the legendary French Wanderer draws touches and photos.

**La Plaza Vieja** is the largest of the four Old Havana squares and is dominated by 18<sup>th</sup> century residential buildings. The square that once was a covered market and later hosted fiestas, bullfights and executions is now becoming more tourist minded with small museums, galleries and restaurants including a brewer. We'll also stop at the Hotel Raquel to see how the city is honoring its cultural background, in restoration projects, such as the Hebrew culture in this old Jewish neighborhood.

**LUNCH** at Dona Eutemia – a private restaurant in Old Havana or similar



Visit the **Plaza de Catedral** is a beautiful square surrounded by noble residences and



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anchored by the Cathedral of Saint Christopher, Havana’s patron saint. Construction of a church on the site began in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was built into La Catedral de San Cristobal de la Habana after the Jesuits were expelled in 1767. This undulating baroque structure, (“music set in stone”), featuring asymmetrical towers was completed in 1777 and recently restored.

**Visit El Taller Experimental de Grafica printmaking artist studio**

**Visit the Renee Portocarrero silk screen workshop**

*Return to Lodgings*

**GROUP DINNER at a Private Restaurant**

### **Day 3 – 25 MARCH**

Monday

**Hotel Pick up for transfer to Pro Danza, Avenida 51, #11805, Marianao, La Habana – (537) 265-0848**

**Everyone Visit the ballet school Pro Danza directed by Laura Alonso (daughter of world famous ballerina Alicia Alonso).**



**Group Lunch**

**After Classes – Return to Homes/Hotel**

**GROUP DINNER**

**Checking for Ballet Folklorico or other dance/music evening stop**

**Return to Homes/Hotel**



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**Day 4 – 26 MARCH**

Tuesday

**TRANSFER STUDENTS TO PRO DANZA for Classes**

**Adult morning tour**

**Tour Fabrica Corona** and talk with cigar workers about their training, quality control techniques and incentive programs.

**Lunch on Own**

**2:00 PM or so - Return to Homes or Hotel**

**3:00 PM – After Classes Group Tour**

**Bus tour of central Havana and Vedado including:** The Malecon, El Capitolio, the Grand Theater of Havana, the Cuban National Ballet studios, and the Bacardi Building,

**The Malecon** is the nearly 5 mile seawall with 6 traffic lanes and a broad oceanfront walkway running west from Castillo de San Salvador de la Punta to the River Almendares. The Malecon is a very popular gathering spot for all Habaneros, especially on hot summer nights. During storms, the traffic is often closed as the winds from the north drive large waves crashing over the sea wall.



**Vedado** once referred to the “forbidden” area outside the historic city’s walls that banned construction and retained its forest preserve as a buffer against attack. This residential



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neighborhood area is currently the commercial heart of modern Havana. The guide will point out the neighborhood entertainment options

### **GROUP DINNER**

### **Day 5 – 27 MARCH**

Wednesday

#### **Students Transfer to Pro Danza**

#### **Adult Morning Tour**

**Visit the National Museum of Fine Arts – Cuban Art Section.** The Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (Private tour with Museum Guide)

**Lunch on own at Sloppy Joe's**

#### **After Classes Group Tour**

**Visit Hemingway Home in San Francisco de Paula and the seaside fishing village of Cojimar, setting for Hemingway's novel, *The Old Man and the Sea*.**



Ernest Hemingway, the Nobel and Pulitzer prize winning author, born and raised in Oak Park, IL, first visited Cuba in 1928 and returned regularly from 1932 on for fishing, to write in his habitual room at the Ambos Mundos Hotel (now museum room 511 at the hotel), and in 1939 purchased Finca Vigia (Lookout Farm) in San Francisco de Paula. Finca Vigia represents one of the few areas where the U.S. and Cuban governments continued to work together in difficult recent years to structurally restore the house and



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preserve and then digitalize the many letters and documents left there for use in academic research. Circling the ground floor, you can see the house more or less as it was when Hemingway was living and writing here. There's his library of 9,000 books, paintings, and stuffed animal heads. In addition to an old typewriter, the works of art by Picasso, Miró, and Klee are some of the more prized possessions. There's a small tower separate from the main house that you can climb for a better view all around. In the surrounding gardens, you can see Papa's pet cemetery, the swimming pool and the author's dry-docked fishing boat, Pilar.

### **Dinner on Own**

### **Attend Ballet at National Grand Theater if performing**

### **Day 6 – 28 MARCH**

Thursday

### **TRANSFER STUDENTS TO PRO DANZA for Classes**

#### **Adult morning tour**

**Visit the Organoponic of Alamar (organic farm)**, a cooperative growing organic vegetables and medicinal plants employing many senior citizens from the local community of Alamar (also known as the home of Cuban Rap Music). If she is in town, I will ask that you tour the farm with agronomist Isis Salcines Milla, a daughter of one of the founders.

#### **Lunch on own**

#### **After Classes Group Tour**

**Visit Studio Fuster** in Jaimanitas to see how this has transformed the entire neighborhood into a work of art and a model of individual private enterprise.





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**VISIT Fabrica del Arte – Set in an old factory, a series of galleries, stages and restaurants.**

**GROUP DINNER**

### **Day 7 – 29 MARCH**

Friday

**TRANSFER STUDENTS TO PRO DANZA for Classes**

**Adult morning tour :**

**Visit Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA) – private tour with ISA professor**

**Lunch on own**

**Afternoon/Evening Community Performance at Pro Danza or  
community theatre**

**Return to Hotel**

**Dinner on Own**

**On Own (extra cost) - Visit Tropicana Club Cabaret**

### **Day 8 – 30 MARCH**

Saturday

**Visit local market**

**Visit Callejon de Hammel**

This neighborhood Cuban art project featuring vivid street murals and the sculpture of Salvador Gonzalez Escalona is an ongoing Afro-Cuban educational and artistic event, a Santeria shrine and a rumba street party every Sunday. Here we will have an introduction to Santeria and Orisha dancing



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**GROUP LUNCH**

**AFTERNOON – Ocean swimming at Playas del Este**

**Visit the San Jose Handicraft Market**

**GROUP FAREWELL DINNER with Cuban Guests –and Music at a Restaurant**

**Day 9 – 31 MARCH**

Sunday

**Departure from Havana (to be announced)**