



Hello Cuba Travel (RN 201009693)
Authentic Cuba Travel (RN 201009735)
TICO Registration No. 50018706
ACTA Registration No. 9735559
IATA TIDS No. 96-5 3230 6.



877 280 2054 Toll Free North America
647 351 8191 Toronto and International
416-966-4987 Facsimile
info@authenticubatur.com Email
www.authenticubatur.com Website

SPRING BREAK 2012: Catholic Pilgrimage Cuba Tour

Themes: Religion, Volunteerism, Education, Nature, Culture
Travels to Havana - Las Terrazas- Vinales

Cost: \$1,399 CAD (all tax incl.) *1

Includes:

- > Nice, Safe, Clean 3 star hotels
- > All Meals
- > 2 Complimentary Teachers Participation
- > Official Asistur Cuban health insurance
- > Luxury air-conditioned coach transportation
- > An expert Cuban English speaking guide and translator

FREE RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

- > Complimentary Custom Website
- > Complimentary Facebook Page
- > Complimentary Poster
- > Parents Updates
- > You won't be alone when introducing your tour
- > Fundraising Ideas
- > 24/7 Support before, during and after your Cuba tour

*1 Price valid for a group of 20 paying students, air fare not included. We guarantee lowest fare for our school groups. Contact us for assistance.

DAY 1 - SATURDAY 17 MARCH. ARRIVAL

Arrival at "Jose Marti" International Airport in Havana.

Group welcomed by the **ACT Cuban Guide**. Transfer to your hotel **Park View**, located in **Old Havana**, a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. Private group check-in.

Breakfast and dinner are complimentary.

DAY 2 – SUNDAY 18 MARCH. HAVANA

Morning: **Attend mass at the Cathedral of Havana**, a masterpiece of Cuban baroque architecture, built by the Jesuit order in the 18th century.

Followed by guided walking tour of **Old Havana**, **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.

Visit to **Square of Arms**, ancient military parade ground for Spanish soldiers and surrounded by impressive buildings such as:

Palacio de los Capitanes Generales was the former seat of colonial government. Today the building houses the Museum of the City.

Palacio del Segundo Cabo. The seat of the second authority of the island. Today it houses important publishing concerns.

Castillo de la Real Fuerza. The second oldest fortress built by the Spaniards in the West Indies. The castle was recently renovated and reopened in June 2008 to hold the impressive maritime museum. Well laid out exhibits chart Spain and Cuba's naval history.

Lunch in **La Mina** restaurant where you can enjoy traditional Cuban dishes and music live!

Continue walking tour onto **San Francisco Square**, one of the oldest in the historical quarter.

Visit to **Plaza Vieja**, the only civic square of colonial times. Notice it doesn't have a church or government building around. Here we will visit important institutions for visual arts.



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Free time in the famous **handicraft market of Old Havana** where you can purchase all sorts of crafts and souvenirs by local artisans.

Return to hotel.

Evening: tonight we have a **Cuban band** playing for us! You'll learn to dance to Salsa, Son, Rumba, and other popular Cuban rhythms with instruction from bandleaders.

DAY 3 – MONDAY 19 MARCH. HAVANA

Morning **reflection mass** with the elders and friends of **the Convent of Our Lady of Belén**.

Followed by a tour of the Convento de Nuestra Señora de Belén [Convent of Our Lady of Belén], a **community center** in Old Havana housed in an ancient convent. Construction on the Convent was begun in 1712. It was expanded and remodeled several times over the centuries. Finally abandoned in 1925, it fell into grave disrepair. In 1991, restoration began and continues with amazing results.

Today the Office of the Historian, local Public Health authorities, and the **Order of the Sisters of Charity** jointly manage the **Belén Convent**. It is home to fifty elderly people and provides physiotherapy and ophthalmological services to old folks in the community.

The Convent also houses an **orphanage, storm shelter, pharmacy, daycare, eye and medical clinic, computer workshop, museum, art gallery**, and services for handicapped and disabled kids. We'll meet with project director Nelson Aguila and tour this world famous project.

Special opportunity for students to present donations to the residents and staff of the Convent of Our Lady of Belén.

We'll spend the balance of the day **helping out** Convent staff and residents with improvement projects and chores.

Dinner at the hotel.

Evening: attend **baseball game** at **Latino Americano Stadium**, popularly known in Cuba as "The Colossus of Cerro" is home of Ciudad Habana **Industriales**. The stadium holds 55,000 people. In 1999, it hosted an exhibition series between Cuban National Team and the Baltimore Orioles.

DAY 4 – TUESDAY 20 MARCH. HAVANA

Today we'll spend our time **volunteering** at the **Convent of Our Lady of Belén**. We'll help out with projects that are priorities for children with special needs and the elderly.

Dinner at the hotel.

Evening: attend one of the most traditional and popular ceremonies in Cuba, **The Fire of the Cannon of 9 O'Clock** at the **Fortress of San Carlos de La Cabana**.

DAY 5 – WEDNESDAY 21 MARCH. HAVANA

Morning: visit to the **Abel Santamaría School for visually impaired children**. There are 102 students living at the school and another 70 students attending on a daily basis.



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The staff consists of 54 teachers with specialties in psychology, eyesight, and special education.

Programs for the students include basic academic courses and in addition classes in sports, music and culture which assist the students in integrating into society.

Many of the students upon graduation attend higher level schools.

Tour around the school and meet with teachers and students to learn how the children are being prepared to play a full part in society.

Lunch hosted by **Jose Fuster**, one of the most important Cuban ceramists and painters today.

Afternoon: visit to the **community-based project Cintio Vitier** in Nuevo Vedado neighbourhood.

This project offers painting, papier-mâché, drama, music, dance, and other skill development workshops to elementary and secondary students.

We'll meet with director Pedro Pulido for a presentation on his outreach work in the community of Colon.

Followed by coach tour of the most important sites of **Modern Havana** such as the Capitol building, the Grand Theatre, Central Park, Prado promenade, Sevilla Hotel, Revolution Square, Malecón seawall, Monument to the Battleship Maine, Hotel Nacional, University of Havana, Cristóbal Colón Cemetery, and the Miramar, Central Havana and Vedado neighbourhoods.

Dinner at the hotel.

DAY 6 – THURSDAY 22 MARCH. HAVANA - LAS TERRAZAS – VINALES

Morning departure to **Las Terrazas**, in **Sierra del Rosario** where we start the morning tour of the rural town at **Rancho Curujey** for explanation of the area.

Enjoy the view of the village that lies above the shores of **San Juan Lake** and beneath the mountains.

We also visit the home/studios of **local artists and artisans**.

Visit to rural **Primary** and **Secondary** schools.

Visit to the ruins of a **French Coffee Plantation** built in 1801.

Continue to **La Moka**, an ecological hotel with trees growing up through the balconies and ceiling.

Later we can take a swim at **San Juan River cascades and pools**. Lunch by the river.

Check-in at **Los Jazmines hotel**. Breakfast and dinner at the hotel.

DAY 7 - FRIDAY 23 MARCH. VINALES

Morning: visit to a local **agricultural cooperative** that grows tobacco, coffee, roots and vegetables.

Volunteer work at the farm.

Lunch together with cooperative members.



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Exploration of **Viñales Valley**, containing the most spectacular scenery in Cuba and some of the most interesting and varied geological formations on the island. The valley is particularly famous for its great freestanding rock formations called **mogotes**.

After lunch we will visit the **Cueva del Indio**, used by the **Guanahatabey Amerindians** as a burial site in ancient time, and as refuge from the Spaniards for both Indians and Black slaves alike. We'll take a short boat ride on the subterranean river running through the cave.

Visit to **Mural de la Prehistoria**, a huge painting on the side of a Mogote.

Explore Viñales Village at your leisure: its open-air craft market, Parque Marti, town church, and other interesting sites of this charming colonial hamlet.

Visit Carmen and Caridad Miranda's botanical and herb garden, called the **Viñales Botanical Garden**. The two widows maintain a garden full of fruits, orchids and medicinal plants.

DAY 8 - SATURDAY 24 MARCH. DEPARTURE

Early morning departure to Havana City International Airport for departure.