



Students will be immersed in Cuban culture through a truly educational experience. In Havana, Cuba's capital city, participants will discuss the region's conservation efforts, educational resources and national identity with locals. Next, they will journey east to Cienfuegos and discover Cuba's culture firsthand with a trip to an art studio as well as music and dance performances.

Learning Outcomes

- Learn to access humanitarian values (e.g. using social justice rhetoric, understanding personal and social responsibility, and serving as positive social change agents)
- Explore the dimensions of difference in communities
- Engage with the local Los Angeles community in appreciation of civic duty
- Gain knowledge of a new culture and the natural world

"Service in the City"

Each participant is required to complete 7 hours of community service between November 18 and May 24.

Monthly Themes and Special Events

November 18

Participants will sign-up for a topic to present on (see below). Students will be asked to create a "Citizen in the Community" newsletter that showcases their dream service project, current volunteer experiences, Cal State LA-specific improvement opportunities, and their ideal community culture. The group will be encouraged to connect these pieces to the concepts of social inequality, financial stability, and global citizenship. Participants should also include thoughts about the purpose of service learning and need for global engagement. Students are encouraged to be creative in terms of format, visuals, and overall presentation. Newsletters will be shared at the January 21 meeting.

November 18

Group fundraiser at Dog Haus, 410 E Main St, Alhambra, CA 91801. Alternative Break participants will receive a percentage of sales during regular happy hour. Invite your friends and family!

January 21

Community Service Project with ASI and Heal The Bay. For details and registration instructions, contact Cinnamon Thompson at asipa@calstatela.edu. Lunch and transportation provided.

January 27

"Citizen in the Community" newsletter presentations. Participants will also discuss service opportunities on-campus and in the Greater Los Angeles area. Remember, each participant is required to complete 7 hours of

community service between November 18 and May 24. The group will also discuss service needs in Cuba and sign their travel documents.

February 24

Participants will discuss The History of Cuba and report on their “Service in the City” efforts. Students will be provided information on trip spending and transaction caveats.

April 28

Participants will discuss The Afro Cuban Experience and report on their “Service in the City” efforts.

May 5

Participants will discuss Cuban Culture and Tradition and will prepare for departure. The group will also report on their “Service in the City” efforts.

June 9

The Aftermath: What Now? Trip participants will dialogue about how to integrate service learning into their student experience and personal, possibly professional, expectations.

Excursion Journals

Each evening during the trip, students are encouraged to journal utilizing the prompts below.

Journal Entry #1

Using all four of your senses (taste, touch, sight, hearing), describe your first day in Cuba.

Journal Entry #2

Throughout the day, we have connected with both people and places. List six words that describe today’s interactions/experiences. How are these six words interconnected?

Journal Entry #3

Reflect on a recent service day. Pretend that you were a “fly on the wall” watching, but not participating, in the activity. Write a short descriptive passage based on your observations.

Journal Entry #4

Write a letter to yourself. Reflect on the months of preparation for your trip to Cuba, discussions, conversations, and past journal entries. Think about your interactions with communities in Cuba and what you hope to bring back. Include the following:

- What was your initial perception of Cuba and how do you feel today?
- What was positive about traveling to serve in Cuba?
- What messages or ideas will you take back to your local community?
- Is there a special project you’d like to implement back home?
- Were there special people you met during this experience? How will you appreciate them and the impact they’ve made on you?
- Review our learning objectives. In what areas would you say you’ve developed? In what areas do you feel like you still like to grow?
- Reflect and offer your thoughts on how the community partnership projects contributed to your understanding of conservation, culture, tradition, social expression, and/or community.
- How has this experience affected any personal or professional goals you’ve set for yourself?



Day 1: Miami

- Fly to Miami
- Take a walking tour of Little Havana (time permitting)
- Attend an orientation meeting

Day 2: Havana

- Fly to Havana
- Meet your Cuban Tour Director at the airport
- Meet with faculty and students at the University of Havana
- Engage in discussions about access to education, available subjects, university resources, and preparation for post-education careers
- Visit a Children's Community Project

Day 3: Havana

- Visit a Community Day Care Center
- Discuss the types of projects that can help young Cubans overcome hardships and challenges
- Participate in a discussion about private enterprise in Cuba at a local restaurant and organic farm
- Visit the Muraleando Community Project
- Discuss the impact of art on communities with the artists and their students

Day 4: Havana • Mayabeque Province

- Travel to Mayabeque Province
- Interact with members of the Las Terrazas community
- Engage in a discussion with a local naturalist
- Meet with a local landscape artist
- Return to Havana
- Visit José Fuster's home and studio
- Discuss the impact of his artwork on the community

Day 5: Havana

- Travel to the Zapata Peninsula
- Participate in a workshop at Zapata National Park
- Discuss the importance of diverse ecosystems and the need for conservation efforts in swampy areas
- Engage with villagers of a Taíno village
- Discuss their efforts to share their culture and traditions with younger generations



Day 5 (cont.) Cienfuegos

- Travel to Cienfuegos
- Attend a performance by the Cienfuegos Orchestra
- Discuss cultural influences in classical music with the performers

Day 6: Cienfuegos • Trinidad

- Participate in a hike and nature talk in El Cubano Park
- Travel to Trinidad
- Engage with a local photographer and horse whisperer
- Return to Cienfuegos

Day 7: Cienfuegos • Santa Clara

- Visit an art school
- Discuss the role of music and dance in social expression
- Travel to Santa Clara
- Participate in activities at the Santa Clara Community Center

Day 8: Santa Clara

- Travel to Remedios
- Meet with Bici-Taxi private owners
- Learn about the sugar industry at a former sugar mill
- Play a game and interact with a local sports team
- Return to Santa Clara

Day 9: Return to Miami/Depart for home



Is it legal for travelers to travel to Cuba with EF?

Yes. Because you are traveling with EF on a People-to-People itinerary operated under a specific license given by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), you are legally licensed and authorized to travel to Cuba. Before departing on the trip, each traveler will receive a Letter of Authorization stating that they have permission to travel under that license.

What is OFAC?

The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) administers and enforces economic and trade sanctions based on U.S. foreign policy and national security. Due to trade and travel restrictions concerning Cuba, all matters relating to the travel of US citizens to Cuba are handled by OFAC.

What does a “People-to-People” itinerary mean?

People-to-People travel is an initiative allowing US citizens to travel to Cuba to participate in cultural experiences and have direct contact with the Cuban people in order to learn more about them and their culture. People-to-People travel encourages your direct engagement with the Cuban people you will meet during activities focusing on education and cultural exchange.

This kind of itinerary will be different than tours you may have participated in previously. This program, per licensing requirements, is a full-time program with lots of inclusions. There will be little to no free time on most days of this tour. You may have some down time in the evenings when dinner is not included. Please note that this is not a tourist experience – this is a People-to-People education exchange.

People-to-People interactions have been included in your program, and on many occasions it will be up to you to involve yourself in conversations and interactions with the locals to gain as much knowledge as possible about the country and the people. The Tour Director will facilitate many of these interactions, but it is always a good idea to ask questions and utilize the guide as best as possible in order to get the most out of the experience. Though sometimes the people you’ll interact with don’t speak English, you’d be surprised at how much you can gain by using body language and having the Tour Director translate.

Can I travel to Cuba if I am not a US Citizen?

Yes, you can travel with EF to Cuba if you are not a US citizen but legally reside in the US, as long as you have a valid passport from your country of citizenship, as well as a residency card or alien card (or “green card”).

Travelers who are neither US citizens nor legal US residents may travel to Cuba under EF’s license, but must be sure to have the proper documentation that allows them to exit/re-enter the US at the start and end of the trip.



Travelers should contact a Cuban consulate or embassy to determine what travel documentation is required for citizens of their country to travel to Cuba.

Will I need a passport to travel to Cuba?

Yes, you will need a passport valid for six months after the tour ends.

Is a visa required for travel to Cuba?

Yes. EF will assist with obtaining your Cuban visa and you will receive it in Miami prior to your departure. In order to obtain this visa EF will need a passport list from the group 110 days prior to departure. Each GL will also receive a FedEx packet with the required documents and forms (1 copy of each for every traveler enrolled) between 110-100 days prior to departure. They are to send the ORIGINAL COMPLETED forms from their entire group back to EF no later than 85 DPD. A prepaid FedEx return envelope will be included in every packet that goes out

PLEASE NOTE: IF A TRAVELER IS CUBAN-BORN (regardless of current citizenship) THERE ARE DIFFERENT VISA REQUIREMENTS WHICH CAN TAKE UP TO 6 MONTHS TO PROCESS, AND WILL DIFFER FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL. If a traveler is Cuban-born, please direct them to luisa@cubatravelservices.com for instructions.

Do I need any other travel documents?

As part of the requirements under the license, each traveler must keep a copy of their People-to-People itinerary (the itinerary provided by EF will suffice), letter of authorization to travel to Cuba under EF's license (you will receive this in Miami) and airline ticket receipt on file for 5 years upon returning - in case asked for it by US officials.

Additionally, each traveler will be receive 3 paper documents that must be filled out, signed and returned to EF no later than 85 DPD, along with a copy of each traveler's passport (picture and signature page):

- Travel certificate
- Visa application
- Charter flight form

All these forms will be sent to the Group Leader who needs to collect them from the group and return them all to EF (FedEx envelope will be provided). The Group Leader also needs to collect rooming information and assign specific roommates for all students and adults. This rooming list must also be sent to EF.

All this additional paperwork is needed and mandatory as part of the OFAC regulations. As a result of this, no late adds are accepted for tours going to Cuba.

When checking in for the charter flight to Cuba you will receive the following:

- Airline ticket (3 pieces - 1 departure ticket, 1 return ticket and 1 receipt)
- Cuba Medical Insurance/Asistur Stamp (located on the back of the airline ticket). This medical insurance is included for all travelers from the US to Cuba.
- Flight Itinerary (Check-in time designated for the group will be printed on this form. Please disregard check-in times located on the ticket itself, as this is the max time required for check-in).
- Visa (to be filled out individually by each traveler)
- Sanitary Statement. This paper form will be taken by officials upon arrival in Havana, and it is recommended to say no to every question to avoid problems.
- Customs Declaration

How does medical insurance work when traveling to Cuba?

The Cuban government requires all foreigners traveling to carry medical insurance under an approved plan. Cuba offers medical care through a network of clinics and hospitals located throughout the island. This on-island coverage is part of your People-to-People trip for the duration of your tour and is included in the cost of your charter flight. The back of your paper ticket will have a stamp that will work as your insurance certificate while in Cuba. Make sure to keep this record with you at all times while traveling.

The Global Travel Protection plan offered by EF will be valid for medical needs outside of Cuba, such as medical evacuation by plane.

Are there luggage restrictions on the charter flight to Cuba?

For the outbound flight to Cuba, travelers will be charged \$20 per checked bag (up to 44lbs). Anything over 44lbs will be charged an additional \$2/lb. Any larger carry-on may be weighed and added into the 44lb allowance per person. Travelers are allowed to bring 1 personal item with them on the plane (purse or small backpack). This one will not be weighed. Payment at the airport is by cash only. On the return flight, there is no charge for luggage as long as it stays under 44lbs per person. Anything over 44lbs will be charged \$2/lb (same as the outbound).

Is there a Tour Director in Miami and Cuba?

In Miami, each group will meet (1-2hrs) with a representative trained to brief groups traveling to Cuba for the first time. This will be a chance to go through the required documentation, as well as ask any last minute questions that may come up. Depending on timing, groups may also be provided with a guided sightseeing of Miami, as well as an included hotel overnight prior to their departure for Cuba. An airport transfer to and from Miami International will be provided for all groups, as well as 1 included meal (either dinner the evening prior to departure for Cuba or lunch the day of). Note: THERE WILL NOT BE AN EF TD WITH GROUPS WHILE IN MIAMI. All of the necessary information will be made available to their Tour Consultant (bus driver contact info, hotel info, etc.) Upon arriving in Havana you will be met by your Cuban Tour Director, who will accompany your group throughout the trip.

Is internet access available in Cuba?

The internet penetration rate (i.e. the number of people who have access to the web) is less than 25% in Cuba. That compares with over 80% in the US. What that means is that the internet is effectively non-existent in Cuba. Cafes and restaurants will not have it and you certainly will not find any internet zones or good Wi-Fi hotspots. The only place you are going to be able to find any kind of internet connections will be in a large hotel – primarily in Havana. Access rates are mostly for 30 minute sessions and costs \$8-10.

Will my US cell phone work in Cuba?

Most likely not. You can call home from the hotel (up to \$3/minute) or buy pre-paid phone cards in Cuba. However, be prepared that this will not be a destination where you will have an easy time communicating home.

Will I need an adapter and/or converter in Cuba?

In most cases, round, two-pronged wall outlets are used. Most US electrical devices can be used. Outlets clearly marked with 220V can take US electrical devices (i.e. iPhone and camera chargers). Others marked with 110V may need an additional convertor/adaptor.

What currency is used in Cuba?

Cuba has a dual-economy system with one currency for foreign visitors – Cuban Convertible Pesos (or CUCs) – and another for Cubans – Cuban Pesos (or CUPs). Foreign visitors are expected to use CUCs for any purchases made in Cuba, and are not permitted to change their CUCs into Cuban Pesos or CUPs.

Because CUCs are not part of the international currency exchange, they cannot be bought, sold or exchanged outside of Cuba. A limit of 200 CUCs may be taken out of the country.

The exchange rate is at a 1:1 ratio (subject to change), but there is a 13% exchange fee. The exchange rate is the same everywhere – hotel, airport etc. Example: \$100 USD = 87 CUCs, \$200 USD = 174 CUCs

Will I be able to use US dollars to make purchases in Cuba?

No.

Will I be able to use my US credit or debit card while traveling in Cuba?

No. US bank-issued credit cards and debit cards do not work yet in Cuba. Make sure to bring enough cash with you to exchange into CUCs. We recommend \$400-\$600. You will want to make sure to have enough money for water (only provided with included meals), restrooms (it is common to have to pay for use of these), gratuities, souvenirs and any additional food/drinks you may purchase that are not a part of the package.

Will I be able to use traveler's checks in Cuba?

Traveler's checks drawn on US banks are accepted in Cuba but they cannot be used to make purchases. They must first be exchanged for CUCs which can then be used for purchases. This method is not recommended, only because it is not easy to facilitate and often very time consuming.

Can I purchase items in Cuba and bring them back to the US?

Yes, US travelers can now bring back up to \$400 of any kind of merchandise, \$100 of which can be alcohol or cigars and there is no limit on the amount of artwork and books you can bring back.

What are the hotels like?

Hotels and other buildings have undergone virtually no renovations for decades. Our groups will be staying in hotels that are comfortable, clean, and with solid infrastructure - however no modern systems or amenities should be expected. Vast majority of rooms are double rooms and not many triples are offered. Travelers may choose to pay additional for single room upgrades, however the rooming for each group must be completed no later than 110 DPD. Late rooming changes after this date will not be guaranteed. Some hotels will be of bungalow style set up. Many rooms have safes, but you often have to pay an extra fee for the use of them. Non-smoking rooms do not exist. See EF's sample hotel sheet for examples of hotels used.

What will my meals be like?

All meals are included while in Cuba. Rice and beans will be standard and often accompanied by chicken or pork. The food is tasty, but not spicy. Do not expect a lot of vegetables to be served; cabbage salad with carrots and cucumbers is a staple. Vegetarians should not have high expectations of their meals in Cuba – please advise them to bring along some snacks. Vast majority of meals will be at a local restaurant, a so called "paladar." Soft drinks or water will be included. Some meals may be served family style, and some may also be a buffet (mainly those at the hotels). If anyone traveling has any dietary restrictions, it is important to communicate those to your Tour Director upon landing in Havana.

What is the weather like in Cuba?

Cuba enjoys a semi-subtropical climate, with generally warm temperatures year-round, and two main seasons: a wet season (May to October) and a dry season (November to April). The country's tropical temperature remains fairly constant throughout the year, with an average temperature of 77-78 °F.

What should I pack for my trip to Cuba?

Comfortable, cotton clothing is suggested. High temperatures and humidity in most areas make lightweight clothing practical. Bring plenty of sun screen and bug spray – you will need it and both are hard to find in Cuba. Also, it is worth bringing some toilet paper along to use in public restrooms. Antibacterial sanitizer will also be useful, as well as comfortable walking shoes!

Medicine and toiletries are in very short supply in Cuba, and may be expensive and very difficult to obtain. Pack an adequate supply of your prescription medication/other needs to last through your entire trip. Make sure to keep these in your carry-on luggage while you travel, never your checked luggage.

It will also be useful to pack rain gear. Even if you are traveling during the 'dry' season, it is likely to rain every day for short amounts of time, and this can be hard to predict. A flashlight is also a good idea, in case of unexpected power outages which can occur.

Are travelers allowed to do Special Travel to/from Cuba?

Travelers are unable to do stay aheads or stay behinds in Cuba. They must take the charter flight Miami-Havana and back to Miami with the group.

Can I drink the tap water in Cuba?

No, you should not drink the tap water in Cuba. Drinks are included with all meals and the cost of a bottle of water is about \$1.

How do tipping and donations work?

In Cuba, tipping is a way of life. Local salaries are extremely low and don't suffice to buy everyday items. Tourism touches the lives of many Cubans and they truly depend on small donations and tips to feed their families.

It's customary to tip your Tour Director and coach driver as a token of appreciation at the end of the tour. The suggested tipping amounts for your Cuban Tour Director and driver are:

- 8 CUCs per day for your Tour Director
- 5 CUCs per day for your driver

In addition to these recommended amounts to the Tour Director and driver, the group should also be prepared to make donations to the schools, artists etc. they will be meeting with during their trip. The total amount for these donations will be approximately 25-30 CUCs per traveler. *Please note: It is always preferable to tip in local currency (CUC).

It is ok to bring small items such as pens, colored pens, pencils, colored pencils, chalk, small notebooks, coloring books and/or small toys/school supplies to give out to local kids and students. Backpacks and small elastic athletic bags are also very useful. **If you are asked at the customs area in Cuba, you are NOT bringing donations; you may have some small gifts to hand out. Donations require prior authorization and are usually given in large quantities.**

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