



# Discover Cuba!

Gardens, Culture, History, Art and Dance  
*With Garden Host Walter Reeves!*

October 10- 18, 2013



Join Walter Reeves and a group of like-minded travelers on a culturally rich garden adventure to Cuba. Visit the National Museum of Fine Arts, enjoy salsa dance lessons, stroll through Old Havana, visit the National Botanical Garden, Hemingway's home and enjoy meaningful exchanges with the people of Cuba. This "people to people" journey has been specially designed for the curious traveler who has an interest in gardens, music, art, history and culture.

## TRIP AT A GLANCE

1 Night Miami  
3 Nights Havana  
2 Nights Viñales Valley  
2 Nights Havana

## WHERE YOU'LL BE STAYING...

Miami: Crowne Plaza  
Havana: Hotel Nacional  
Viñales Valley: Hotel Ermita  
Havana: Hotel Nacional

Questions and Reservations at: **800.723.8454**  
[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)



**Earthbound Expeditions Inc.**

POB 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA  
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## IT'S INCLUDED



- With the Georgia Gardener, Walter Reeves
- Accompanied by an Earthbound program director
- License provided by Vaya Sojourns
- An expert bilingual Cuban guide
- Accommodations as listed in your itinerary
- Cuban government emergency medical insurance plan up to \$1,000
- All meals (*except one breakfast and one evening meal in Havana*)
- Bottled water daily
- Transport by private motor coach while in Cuba
- Charter flight from Miami
- All entrances as listed in your itinerary
- Airport transfers while in Cuba
- Special insider “people to people” experiences
- Gratuities for your driver and guides
- City and country maps
- Alumni discounts applied towards future trips with Earthbound Expeditions

## TRIP FACTS

9 Days/8 Nights

\$3,975 per person double occupancy (*land and charter air from Miami*)

\$ 590 Single Supplement (waived if you are willing to share and a roommate is found)

Starting in Miami on Thursday, October 10, 2013 at 8:00pm

Returning to Miami Int'l airport on October 18 (*exact time TBA*)

## NOT INCLUDED

- Air from your home to/from Miami
  - Cuba visa fee of \$75
  - Travel Insurance up and above
  - Cuban airport departure tax of \$30
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## YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS...

### Day 1 – October 10: Gather in Miami at 8:00pm

8:00PM: Meet your host Walter Reeves in our pre-reserved meeting room in the hotel.  
Sleep in Miami

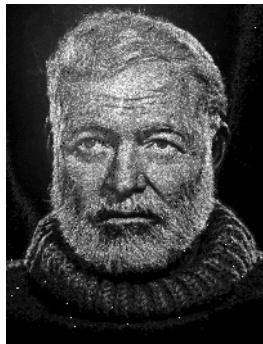


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## Day 2 – October 11: Miami to Havana, Cuba

This morning you will depart your hotel for the airport to check in for our charter flight from Miami to Havana, Cuba. Charter flight times are not released until one month prior to departure. Your airline tickets and Cuban visas will be given to you when you check-in for your flight.

**Note:** You will be given a Cuban arrival card which needs to be completed prior to your arrival in Havana. Be sure to check the “Tourista” or “Tourist” box on the card when it asks for the reason you are traveling to Cuba.

### Havana Immigration and Customs

Upon your arrival in Cuba you will first go through Immigration and Customs. The immigration officer will ask you to present your passport and Cuban visa. If you’re holding a US passport, a Cuban Immigration Officer will then stamp an entry approval on the visa, and give it back to you. The visa officially authorizes your entry into Cuba and serves as a “stamp” in your passport (please note they will generally not stamp US passports.) The visa card must be surrendered upon your departure from Cuba so be sure to keep it someplace safe during your stay in Cuba.

Collect your luggage and proceed through Cuban Customs which can, but rarely does, involve a luggage search and wait for the remainder of the group outside the customs area where your guide is waiting to greet you outside the terminal.

After clearing Cuban immigrations and customs, you are welcomed by your Cuban National guide holding an **EARTHBBOUND EXPEDITIONS** sign outside the terminal, who will assist with the transfer to Old Havana (Habana Vieja) where we have lunch together at one of “Papa” Hemingway’s favorite restaurants, La Bodeguita del Medio, located in the heart of Old Havana. After lunch, our guide leads us on a stroll through the colorful cobblestone streets of Old Havana and Morro Castle with its magnificent views of Havana. We check into our hotel later this afternoon.

7:00PM: Meet host Walter Reeves and Earthbound Expeditions guide and walk to dinner this evening to one of Havana’s best known Paladars. *Sleep in Havana (L, D)*

## Day 3 – October 12: Salsa Dance Lessons and Havana’s National Art Schools

This morning we’ll enjoy a lively dance lesson featuring some of the island’s most popular rhythms taught by local instructors. After, we’ll discuss the origin and evolution of Cuban music with Cuban teachers and students.



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Lunch today is served at El Aljibe Restaurant located in the elegant Miramar section of Havana.

Continue on to Cuba's National Art Schools (Escuelas Nacionales de Arte, now known as the Instituto Superior de Arte), whose structures are considered by historians to be one of the most outstanding architectural achievements of the Cuban Revolution. These innovative, organic Catalan-vaulted brick and terra-cotta buildings were built on the site of a former country club in the far western Havana suburb of Cubanacán, which used to be Havana's "Beverly Hills" and was then mainly reserved for Communist Party officials. The schools were conceived and founded by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara in 1961, and they reflect the utopian optimism and revolutionary exuberance of the early years of the Cuban Revolution. Over their years of active use, the schools served as the primary incubator for Cuba's artists, musicians, actors, and dancers. The schools' design fell out of favor by 1965 and was nearly completely decommissioned until preservation efforts were mounted in force in the 1990's. Now tentatively on the list of World Heritage sites, they are in use, though still in various states of disrepair.

Enjoy dinner at a locally owned Palador this evening. After, attend the historic ceremony as described below.

**Tour highlight this evening:** We behold a most dramatic ceremony – **El Cañonazo** – the Firing of the 9PM Cannon at the Fortress of San Carlos de la Cabaña.

*Sleep in Havana (B, L)*

#### **Day 4 – October 13: Urban Organic Farm - Matanzas – Cojímar**

We'll visit the UBPC Vivero Organopónico Alamar, 15 km (9.3 miles) east of Havana. It's one of the most successful urban organic farms in Cuba raising ornamental plants, medicinal herbs, and millions of seedlings for neighboring residential and collective farms. Established in the early 1990s by a dozen people, today the Alamar cooperative has over 400 members and provides a range of healthy, organic vegetables to nearby communities.

Produce is raised employing the practice of permaculture: no chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Instead, natural biological methods are used to nourish the soil, frustrate pests and conserve water. The result is an increased rate of yield and reduced costs.

Then we're off to Matanzas, a Cuban city famed for its poets, culture, and Afro-Cuban folklore. Settled by freed slaves who were brought in to work on the sugar plantations, many of them united in secret brotherhoods called "cabildos" and began measuring out drum patterns that gave birth to the Rumba. We will see and hear present day "cabildos" which are still active in Matanzas to this day, such as the Cabildo de San Juan de Bautista which is known for its distinctive ritualistic drumming.

We lunch together at La Dionisia farm located outside Matanzas.



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This afternoon we have the very rare experience of being welcomed into one of the private homes in Matanzas which serves as a local Santeria church. The Santeria religion, its beliefs and methods of worship, will be explained to us by one of the worshipers. Return to Havana in the late afternoon. *Sleep in Havana* (B, L)

#### **Day 5 – October 14: Las Terrazas and Vinales**

After breakfast, depart for Las Terrazas traveling through the lush countryside planted with sugar cane, corn, rice, and taro. With few vestiges of modernization, the region seems set back in time with farming communities still harvesting by hand and using horse and carts to transport goods to free markets. (The horse carts date back to the 15th century when the Spaniards used them to haul sugar cane to the factories). Las Terrazas in Pinar del Rio province is now part of UNESCO's Biosphere Reserve, much of it reforested coffee plantation. Reforestation began in the late 1960s by the local farmers who were concerned that their land had been degraded by former French coffee barons. The first stop is at a quaint village overlooking a quiet lake. Here you visit the home of deceased song writer and musician Polo Montanez, a farmer, who composed songs about peasant life.

Polo Montanez made his living initially as a farmer, but he would entertain his neighborhood at night with songs he wrote about rural life of the tobacco farmer. The Montanez family shows you his home and discusses how he helped his community by giving back financially to Las Terrazas when he became famous. This encounter would benefit travelers in focusing on the local heroes of Cuba, the farmers. Today the farming techniques are the same as they were in the 1960s with everything being done manually.

Mr. Jorge DuPort, watercolorist, is confirmed for your group but if he is not in residence, we have requested a visit with Lester Campas and his artisans in his studio at Las Terrazas. Mr. Campas is a young artist known for his unique paper recycling process, which he then uses for artistic expressions. Your guide will lead a people to people discussion with Campa and our travelers about recycled art in the US and Cuba. This movement to recycle in Cuba is not new – it was born out of the necessity in the late 1990s during the “special period” when Russia collapsed leaving Cuba without a major donor and trading partner.

Enjoy lunch then continue to a former French coffee plantation, the Buena Vista, now in ruins on a ridge. The local farmers started a reforestation project in the 1970s to restore the degraded land. Today it is a key ecological research center and protected reserve. Our visit helps us understand the positive impact one ecological movement had on the society. Afterward we continue our scenic drive to Vinales, where steep-sided limestone karst formations (mogotes) rise dramatically above some of the oldest tobacco farms on the island. A UNESCO World Heritage site, Vinales valley is known for its fruit, vegetable, coffee, and tobacco grown by traditional methods. *Sleep in the Valley of Vinales* (B, L, D)



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## **Day 6 – October 15: Birding, Nature Walks and Ancient Caves**

After breakfast, we depart for a three-hour leisurely walk in the valley. Guests who can't do lengthy walks can enjoy the first stop at Heraldo and Senora Clara's turn-of-the-century farmhouse. On the walking tour of the family's farm, Heraldo will explain how tobacco is fermented in his traditional drying barn which rises to a thatched roof made from palm for ventilation.

Senora Clara will graciously invite us for a cup of home-brewed café Cubana made from beans grown in her backyard and crushed using a wall-mount grinder. This is a people to people experience at its best. U.S. travelers will appreciate seeing how the local older community engages in organic farming.

Afterward Heraldo will take us on an easy walk on a hard dirt path through the fields planted with pineapples or tobacco, past small hamlets. Note: We cannot go up into the mountain caves where slaves hid more than 500 years ago as the climb is too difficult and in parts it can be slippery. Instead, we will take the level path around the mountain, observing locals working the fields. This afternoon we visit the charming town with its traditional one-story wood stores and houses with large porches where the family congregates at night.

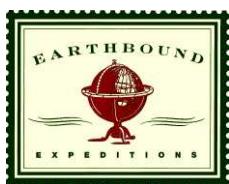
Lunch will be at a local restaurant.

Next we visit a cigar factory. The art of making a Cuban cigar is one of the best examples of group craftsmanship. There is no other culture in the world where this is happening, and in the future it could be replaced by machines. Our travelers will be able to observe all aspects of manual production and talk with the people who are engaged in this craft. We meet workers sitting at rows of wooden tables and watch them separate, roll, press and band thousands of expensive cigars. As we walk through the various levels of the factory, we are able to ask workers about their particular skill such as knowing how tight to roll a cigar, how they select the particular leaves when rolling a cigar, and which leaf to select for the inner wrap and outer wrap for example.

The most unusual aspect of this factory is the reader who reads novels using a microphone to alleviate the monotony of repetitive work, to increase production, and to educate. The idea of a reader emerged from the cigar factory workers who were largely illiterate in the 1950s and wanted a form of adult education that increased awareness through the reading of newspapers, novels, poetry, and non-fiction work. We meet one of the readers who will discuss how he was selected for the position and what books and/or publications he reads, and how he is paid. In the US during the mid-1880s, readers were also employed in cigar factories as a result of Cuban migration.

This evening enjoy a dinner at a local home (Paladar) so famous in Cuba. The food is absolutely delicious and our hosts are delighted to show you their simple home.

*Sleep in the Valley of Vinales (B, L, D)*



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### **Day 7- October 16- Visit a local school and the Art Studio of Jose Fuster**

This morning we visit a local school where we meet Cuban students, teachers and school administrators at an elementary school. Participants will interact with the children in their classrooms and participate in a discussion session with some of the school's students, teachers and administrators about, among other topics, Cuba's education system and how it compares to that of the United States. You may bring pens or pencils as a gift to the school, although it is not mandatory.

Returning to Havana this afternoon we stop at the private home and studio of famed Cuban artist, Jose Fuster who is known as the Picasso of the Caribbean. Mr. Fuster is a ceramicist and painter whose work has contributed to the upgrading of his entire community. Aside from discussing how he makes his art, he talks about how he started giving back to his community. When you drive through the neighborhood which is known as "Fusterlandia" you see ceramic tiled walls in fanciful designs. His first ceramic work was a gift to his neighbor who was a nurse. He transformed her front yard into a Disneyland of ceramic animals and mythical figures. Later, another neighbor asked for the identical work for his house. Soon Fuster was doing this free work for all his neighbors, which attracted many tourists and led to his popularity. As you learn about his work, you may be able to purchase his art directly if desired.

We'll have dinner together this evening at Café del Oriente Restaurant, accompanied by another live musical performance. *Sleep in Havana (B, L, D)*

### **Day 8 – October 17: Finca Vigía - Museum of Fine Arts & Cuban Revolution**

This morning we're off to visit Finca Vigía [Lookout Farm] where North America's literary giant, Ernest Hemingway spent twenty-one of his most important and productive years penning building blocks of English literature. Claimed by both the United States and Cuba as their son, it was Hemingway himself who declared the island his true home. Before returning to Havana we stop by the quaint fishing village of Cojimar which served as the setting for "The Old Man and the Sea". This afternoon lunch is served at La Ferminina Restaurant which is located in the Miramar section of Havana.

After lunch this afternoon, we visit the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (National Museum of Fine Arts), known for its international and Cuban art. You will visit the comprehensive Colección de Arte Cubano comprised of three floors of art, spanning works from the 16th to the 20th Centuries by prominent Cuban artists concentrating mostly on pieces from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

You'll find just across the street from the Fine Arts Museum, the impressive Museum of the Revolution. Sitting outside you'll find American Jeeps and planes used during the failed Bay of Pigs landing. Also worth noting, the yacht named "Granma" that was used to transport 82 Cuban fighters and Fidel Castro to the shores of Cuba from Mexico in 1956. We'll have a brief tour of this museum after lunch.



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Our gala dinner this evening is at La Fontana Paladar, a lovely private home restaurant. We'll have a local band perform for us as we say our fond farewells to Cuba.  
*Sleep in Havana (B, L, D)*

**Day 9- October 18: Havana – Miami**

We transfer to Havana's Jose Marti Airport where we check in for our flight to Miami.  
*(Charter flight time TBA). (B)*

*-Itinerary Subject to Change-*

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**RESERVATIONS**

1. A \$250 pp non-refundable deposit is required to reserve your space. Payment is accepted by check only for Cuba journeys.
2. Make checks payable to "Vaya Sojourns Trust Account" and mail along with Cuba Visa Form to Earthbound Expeditions, PO Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110
3. Once check is received, we will email you a deposit packet and travel insurance quote from iTravelInsured. In order to allow ample time to book your travel insurance and waive pre-existing conditions, please contact our office to let us know you're mailing your deposit. 1-800-723-8454

We're looking forward to travelling with you!



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**CUBAN VISA FORM**  
**Oct 10-18, 2013**

**First Name**

**Middle Name**

**Last Name**

**Mother's Maiden Name**

**Country of Birth**

**Date of Birth**

**Passport #**

**Passport Date of Issue**

**Passport Date of Expiry**

**Nationality**

**Male or Female**

**Address**

**Phone Number**

**Email:**

**Emergency Contact Name & number:**

**Special Requests**



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