



Blue  **Note**
TRAVEL

HAVANA JAZZ FESTIVAL

Led by world renowned Cuban Pianist
JORGE LUIS PACHECO

JANUARY 27 - FEBRUARY 2, 2026



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

On this intimate Blue Note Travel tour, you will experience Cuba through the lens of one of its most celebrated pianists, Jorge Luis Pacheco. With Pacheco as your guide, you'll go behind the scenes of Cuban musical life—visit top conservatories, attend private performances, and witness an authentic Afro-Cuban ritual and Rumba. You'll meet leading artists from Cuban jazz, classical, and even opera. This is a very unique opportunity to see Cuba alongside a renowned Cuban musician, a one-of-a-kind experience you won't find anywhere else. Beyond the music, you'll explore Old Havana, ride in classic cars, visit Hemingway's home, dine at top paladares, and discover vibrant Cuban art.

Blue Note Travel tours to Cuba are legally compliant with current OFAC regulations

Our Blue Note tour with Cultural Island Travel was excellent! Our guides were the best we've experienced on any group tour we've ever taken anywhere--so knowledgeable, warm, welcoming and well organized. We'd highly recommend traveling to Cuba with this company, especially their joint trip with Blue Note for the Havana Jazz Festival. The whole experience far exceeded our expectations.

Susan Green, Jazz Fest 2025

This trip, arranged by Blue Note Travel, supporting the Havana Jazz Festival - was extraordinary. The music, the food, the tours, the vintage cars, and (perhaps most importantly) the people! We loved every day! And thank you to our amazing guide Laura!

Eric Winston, Jazz Fest 2025

Blue Note Travel made it so easy and fun for this trip. Before the trip, they made sure all paperwork, visas, etc were ready to go. Our Cuban tour guide was the best guide we ever had.

The caliber of talent of the musicians and artists was outstanding!

Christi DeLesio, Jazz Fest 2025

DAY 1

USA - HAVANA



- ARRIVE AT JOSÉ MARTÍ INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (HAV); AIRPORT TRANSFER INCLUDED
- HEAD TO LODGING FOR CHECK IN AND ORIENTATION
- ENJOY A WELCOME ROOFTOP DINNER HAVANA'S MOST EMBLEMATIC PALADAR, LA GUARIDA
- NIGHTTIME SUGGESTION: ENJOY THE VARIOUS SHOWS OF THE JAZZ FESTIVAL AT THE MAIN THEATER OR OTHER INDOOR AND OUTDOOR VENUES THROUGHOUT HAVANA





DAY 2 HAVANA



- BEGIN YOUR DAY WITH A CLASSIC CONVERTIBLE CAR RIDE AROUND HAVANA CITY (1 HOUR)

Havana is beloved by American visitors with its collection of thousands of vintage American cars, manufactured before the Revolution and subsequent US embargo in 1960. In the absence of automobile imports, these living relics are preserved by Cuban mechanics or improvised fixes by the owners themselves. Experience an hour in a classic convertible Chevy, Ford or Oldsmobile.

- VISIT OLD HAVANA AND LEARN ABOUT HAVANA'S WORLD-RENOWNED UNESCO HERITAGE DESIGNATED ARCHITECTURE ON AN EXPERTLY GUIDED WALKING TOUR (2 HRS)

There is no better introduction to Havana than to walk through Old Havana. On this walk you will explore Old Havana's five major plazas and see the interiors of cathedrals and other important buildings. UNESCO designated Old Havana as a world heritage site in 1982. Although today Havana is a sprawling metropolis of more than two million people, the old center retains an interesting mix of Baroque and neoclassical monuments, beautiful balconies, and courtyards.

- LUNCH AT EL DEL FRENTE (A CLIENT FAVORITE – TRY THE DAIQUIRIS!)
- EXPERIENCE A PRIVATE CONCERT WITH CORO LEO, DIRECTED BY CORINA CAMPOS, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CHOIR DIRECTORS IN HAVANA—AND PACHECO'S BELOVED MOM.
- NIGHTTIME SUGGESTION: ENJOY THE VARIOUS SHOWS OF THE JAZZ FESTIVAL AT THE MAIN THEATER OR OTHER INDOOR AND OUTDOOR VENUES THROUGHOUT HAVANA







DAY 3 HAVANA



- VISIT FAMED ABDALA STUDIOS, WHERE MANY FAMOUS CUBAN RECORDS WERE RECORDED.
- LUNCH AT LA RESERVA PALADAR
- VISIT THE NATIONAL LYRICAL THEATER, ONE OF THE OLDEST BUILDINGS IN HAVANA, FOR A PRIVATE RECITAL
- ON THIS EXCLUSIVE VISIT, PACHECO WILL INTRODUCE YOU TO HIS LATE FATHER'S STUDENTS. MAESTRO PACHECO WAS THE DIRECTOR OF THE CUBAN NATIONAL OPERA FOR SIX YEARS. HE WAS ALSO THE ONLY CUBAN OPERA SINGER TO GRADUATE FROM THE PRESTIGIOUS TCHAIKOVSKY CONSERVATORY IN MOSCOW. YOU WILL ENJOY A CONCERT BY HIS TOP STUDENTS SINGING CLASSIC CUBAN AND ITALIAN WORKS AS WELL AS CUBAN OPERA.





DAY 4 HAVANA



- VISIT TWO PRESTIGIOUS MUSIC CONSERVATORIES WHERE PACHECO STUDIED, GUANABACOA AND AMADEO ROLDAN AND ENJOY A BRIEF CONCERT BY CURRENT STUDENTS
- LUNCH AT CAFÉ AJIACO PALADAR AND ENJOY A CIGAR AND RUM TASTING
- EXPERIENCE AN AUTHENTIC AFRO CUBAN TAMBOR CEREMONY, USUALLY NOT SHARED WITH TOURISTS
- NIGHTTIME SUGGESTION: ENJOY THE VARIOUS SHOWS OF THE JAZZ FESTIVAL AT THE MAIN THEATER OR OTHER INDOOR AND OUTDOOR VENUES THROUGHOUT HAVANA.





DAY 5

MATANZAS & LAS TERRAZAS



OPTION A: HEAD TO MATANZAS (1.5 HOURS EACH WAY) THE HOME OF AFRO CUBAN RUMBA FOR AN INCREDIBLE PERFORMANCE

OPTION B: HEAD TO LAS TERRAZAS (1 HOUR EACH WAY)

- ENJOY A TOUR OF A UNESCO SITE AND BIOSPHERE RESERVE WITH AN EXTRAORDINARY GUIDE
- FARM TO TABLE LUNCH IN THE COUNTRYSIDE
- VISIT THE HOME OF POLO MONTAÑEZ, ONE OF CUBA'S MOST PROLIFIC AND BELOVED SINGER SONGWRITERS
- VISIT THE GALLERY OF ARTIST LESTER CAMPA WHO USES HIS VIEW OF LAS TERRAZAS AS INSPIRATION FOR HIS WORK
- NIGHTTIME SUGGESTION: ENJOY THE VARIOUS SHOWS OF THE JAZZ FESTIVAL AT THE MAIN THEATER OR OTHER INDOOR AND OUTDOOR VENUES THROUGHOUT HAVANA





DAY 6 HAVANA



- VISIT THE HOUSE AND GROUNDS OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY, FINCA VIGÍA

In 1940 Hemingway, with his new wife Martha, purchased a home outside Havana, where the couple lived for the next twenty years. The Hemingway's named the site Finca Vigía, or "lookout farm," and shared their home with dozens of Hemingway's beloved cats, as well as trophies from many successful hunts and fishing expeditions. During their time at the Finca, Hemingway became a fixture of Havana, and stayed in the country longer than many Americans chose to, after relations between Cuba and the United States began to deteriorate. He fished extensively aboard his boat, Pilar, and enjoyed the island lifestyle, hanging out in Havana, penning some of his signature works, and entertaining guests. His home, with many original furnishings and personal artifacts can still be viewed today.

- LUNCH AT EL COCINERO PALADAR
- ENJOY A PRIVATE CONCERT AT HAVANA'S MOST POPULAR SPOT FOR LIVE MUSIC AND NIGHTLIFE: THE CUBAN ART FACTORY WITH PACHECO'S HAND-PICKED CUBAN ALL STARS BAND.





DAY 7 HAVANA - USA



- FINAL SHOPPING AT SAN JOSE CRAFT MARKET (TIME PERMITTING)
- HEAD TO JOSE MARTÍ AIRPORT AND SAY FAREWELL TO CUBA!

AS YOUR UNFORGETTABLE JOURNEY COMES TO A CLOSE, YOU WILL LEAVE CUBA WITH LASTING MEMORIES, MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS, NEW FRIENDS AND A DEEPER APPRECIATION FOR ITS RICH MUSICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE. SUPPORTING THE CUBAN PEOPLE AND THE ARTS—SIMPLY YOUR PRESENCE MAKES A REAL DIFFERENCE AND HELPS US CONTINUE TO SUPPORT MUSICIANS AND STUDENTS IN CUBA. WE'RE GRATEFUL TO BE ABLE TO SHARE THIS SPECIAL EXPERIENCE WITH YOU, AND WE HOPE IT STAYS WITH YOU LONG AFTER YOU RETURN HOME. UNTIL NEXT TIME, ¡HASTA PRONTO!

OUR TEAM





**QUOTE
INCLUDES:**







Cuban E-Visa
and Customs
Form



Tour leader



Highly-rated
lodging



Air conditioned
transportation



All breakfasts in
Cuba at your
lodging



Admission to
places listed
in your itinerary



All lunches in
Cuba at the
best paladares



One welcome
dinner at a
top paladar

PLEASE NOTE:

- TIPS FOR YOUR GUIDES AND DRIVERS ARE NOT INCLUDED. THE FOLLOWING AMOUNTS (IN USD) ARE RECOMMENDED:
 - Local city guides in Havana and other cities: 3 USD per person
 - Drivers: 5 USD per person per day
 - Tour Leaders: the amount is up to you, but we suggest 10 USD per person per day
- EACH INCLUDED MEAL WILL INCLUDE ONE NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE.

This itinerary is subject to change. In-country programming is customized for each group to maximize your cultural experience. To maintain authenticity, many of the places we visit are not tourist destinations and are not always available. Our programs are intended to provide meaningful interaction with the Cuban people as described by the "Support for the Cuban people" category. These programs require mandatory participation under our license by the U.S. Department of Treasury.



¡HASTA LA PRÓXIMA!

