

CORAZÓN CUBA

LEARN SPANISH, CULTURE & VOLUNTEER



IT'S TIME FOR CUBA

A UNIQUE BLEND OF LEARNING SPANISH, CULTURE & DANCE, AND VOLUNTEER PROJECTS

Amazing things are happening in Cuba right now – it starts in Havana!

Happily we have made a strong recovery since COVID and now receive over 30 clients per month who stay an average 2 weeks to learn Spanish, dance, enjoy cultural excursions and exchanges, volunteer... engage and enjoy this beautiful and bewildering country. Our local team in Havana and network of partners around the country are fully seasoned and really enjoy the energy that our clients bring to their country.

We continue to add elements to our programs to make them relevant to the constant changes and innovations happening around us; but the essentials stay the same. We think we have hit upon a winning formula for our clients and look forward to hosting them through 2024.



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PROGRAM CHANGES - SUMMARY

As usual we try to keep changes to a minimal. However, please note below the following;

- **Airport transfer** – despite rising prices everywhere we are doing our best to maintain competitive prices. The only price increase for 2024 is a small increase in airport transfers to €40 each way (up to 4 pax per car if sharing).
- **Learn Spanish, Dance & Culture** – can be taken as a one, two, three or four week program and works well combined with other programs such as Learn Spanish & Volunteer to make a longer stay experience (4-6 weeks).

There follows a description of each program with supplementary notes – for more information please email;

info@corazoncuba.com



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SUMMARY OF PROGRAMS & PRICES

	EURO
1) Learn Spanish *	
One Week Program	€395
Two Week Program	€775
<i>Start Dates 2024: Every Sunday</i>	
2) Learn Spanish, Dance & Culture *	
One Week Program	€445
Two Week Program	€890
Four Week Program (+ optional week 3 in Viñales)	€1,750
<i>Start Dates 2024: Every Sunday</i>	
3) Learn Spanish & Dance *	
One Week Program	€495
Two Week Program	€990
<i>Start Dates 2024: Every Sunday</i>	
4) Learn Spanish & Volunteer *	
Two Week Program	€875
<i>Start Dates 2024: First two weeks of every month, from 1st Sunday!</i>	
5) Learn Spanish & Adventure in Viñales *	
One Week Program	€495
<i>Start Dates 2024: Every Sunday</i>	
Additional Night Bed & Breakfast in Havana <i>(Program start date is 'Sunday' but clients are welcome to arrive early or extend and prepay as required)</i>	€40
Airport Transfer (each way)	€40
Single Room Supplement (per night - subject to availability)	€10
* Notes: Weekly price includes 15 intensive Spanish lessons per week, accommodation, breakfast & lunch, and cultural activities/excursions listed	

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PROGRAM 1

LEARN SPANISH / 1 OR 2 WEEKS

Learn Spanish in Old Havana – a UNESCO World Heritage Site bursting with atmosphere, music and dance. Homestay with Cuban family in a vibrant maze of neoclassical buildings.

This program is based in ‘Habana Vieja’ – in the heart of the historic old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The area is a myriad of gorgeous neo classical buildings packed with local people living cheek by jowl. At street level there is a constant buzz with musicians plying their trade in the many fantastic bars to be found in this popular neighbourhood. The area is VERY safe, and you will quickly feel comfortably at home. There are lots of interesting shops and quirky art galleries here and most of Cuba’s cultural heritage including national museums also.

Accommodation is a licensed Casa Particulare in the atmospheric heart of Old Havana; shared single sex dorm rooms with other program participants (couples or friends booking together automatically upgraded to private room with en suite/private bathroom) OR upon payment of a single room supplement you have the option to stay in another nearby Casa with your own room and private en suite bathroom. Either way breakfast and lunch are served at our main Casa and this is the hub of program activities. This is also where Spanish lessons are taken as well as group discussions, planning meetings and impromptu social gatherings.



Intensive Spanish language lessons take place Monday to Friday in the mornings, leaving the afternoons, evenings and weekends free to enjoy this amazing country.

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Our 'Learn Spanish in Habana Vieja' 1 or 2 week program has been crafted to maximize your time in Old Havana (a UNESCO World Heritage Site).

Upon arrival Havana International Airport you are picked up for a transfer to our hostel and language school, or Casa Particulares*. Opened at the end of 2015 our hostel features shared single sex bedrooms (all with air con), separate shower and toilet facilities, dining rooms and lots of comfortable indoor and outdoor space (including spacious roof terraces). Here you can enjoy hanging out with new friends or chilling on your own to enjoy the cool breezes and great views of the streets below. As with most of Havana you will enjoy taking in the atmosphere in this central location which is truly unique.



* **Casa Particulares** are government licenced 'private homestay' accommodation whereby Cubans are permitted to rent out one or two bedrooms in their home to paying guests. However, the licensing regime has recently been extended to include larger hostel style accommodation. Our hostel falls under this latter category and whether you stay here or at another Casa Particulare breakfast & lunch and Spanish lessons are taken at the main hostel and language school.

Welcome Camino

On your first day in Havana you are taken on a short walking tour – usually within 24 hours of your arrival – to familiarize you with your new surroundings, such as money change and internet services, and to give you a flavor of the opportunities to enjoy your free time in this exciting location.

Spanish Lessons

Monday to Friday's intensive Spanish lessons take place shortly after breakfast. Your teacher is licensed and on day one you receive a short test to establish your level and objectives. Lessons take the format of 3 x 45 minute lessons each morning, with 15 minute breaks to refresh, making approximately 3 hours of Spanish lessons each day – 15 hours per week. Lessons are held from 09:00 sharp until 11:45, Monday to Friday.

There are many activities and excursions to occupy your free time. Our Program Managers and other staff will give you ideas, and we list some of these in the section 'Excursions' below.

This program runs from Sunday until Sunday. However, you are welcome to arrive early and/or extend.

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Above : welcome party at our hostel

PRICES

Cost of 1 week program * EURO 395

Cost of 2 week program * EURO 790

* weekly price includes 7 nights accommodation, breakfast & lunch plus 15 hours intensive Spanish lessons

Cost of extra night – accommodation & breakfast EURO 40

Airport transfer – EURO 40 each way

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Each morning Monday to Friday from 09:00-11:45 you receive intensive Spanish tuition comprising 3 x 45 minute lessons spaced with 15 minute breaks. Tuition is delivered by an accredited and licensed Cuban teacher. On the first morning there is a short test to establish your level and requirements.

Accommodation Sunday to Sunday (7 nights) in a shared room.

Meals – breakfast & lunch included.

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WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Dinner – there is a restaurant boom going on in Cuba with Parladares and Peso Café's opening to visitors for the first time. Cuban's and long-term travelers on a budget are the target market, so there are lots of characterful, good value eateries to choose from.



Above : our team of teachers led by Leandro (left)

For ideas how to spend your free time, see 'Excursions' below.

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PROGRAM 2

LEARN SPANISH, DANCE & CULTURE / 1-4 WEEKS

One to four weeks full cultural immersion based in Old Havana. Spanish classes are supplemented with dance classes, cultural tours, excursions and trips out of town.

Based in Old Havana, Spanish language lessons take place Monday to Friday in the mornings, and in the afternoons you receive dance classes and 'Discover Cuba' cultural excursions. Weekend trips feature the beach and a three day/two night weekend road trip to Viñales (four week program only). There is also the opportunity to spend a whole week in Viñales instead of a weekend.

Accommodation is a licensed Casa Particulare in the atmospheric heart of Old Havana; shared single sex dorm rooms with other program participants (couples or friends booking together automatically upgraded to private room with en suite/private bathroom) OR upon payment of a single room supplement you have the option to stay in another nearby Casa with your own room and private en suite bathroom. Either way breakfast and lunch are served at our main Casa and this is the hub of program activities. This is also where Spanish lessons are taken as well as group discussions, planning meetings and impromptu social gatherings.

This is a busy program and offers the possibility of a full immersion into Cuban life – past and present – and an opportunity to really understand what makes this amazing country so special.



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LEARN SPANISH, CULTURE & VOLUNTEER



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Our 'Learn Spanish, Culture & Dance' 1-4 week program has been crafted to maximize your time in Old Havana (a UNESCO World Heritage Site).

Upon arrival Havana International Airport you are picked up for a transfer to our hostel and language school, or Casa Particulares*. Opened at the end of 2015 our hostel features shared single sex bedrooms (all with air con), separate shower and toilet facilities, dining rooms and lots of comfortable indoor and outdoor space (including spacious roof terraces). Here you can enjoy hanging out with new friends or chilling on your own to enjoy the cool breezes and great views of the streets below. As with most of Havana you will enjoy taking in the atmosphere in this central location which is truly unique.

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Welcome Camino

On your first day in Havana you are taken on a short walking tour – usually within 24 hours of your arrival – to familiarize you with your new surroundings, such as money change and internet services, and to give you a flavor of the opportunities to enjoy your free time in this exciting location.

Spanish Lessons

Monday to Friday's intensive Spanish lessons take place shortly after breakfast. Your teacher is licensed and on day one you receive a short test to establish your level and objectives. Lessons take the format of 3 x 45 minute lessons each morning, with 15 minute breaks to refresh, making approximately 3 hours of Spanish lessons each day – 15 hours per week. Lessons are held from 09:00 sharp, Monday to Friday.

* *The Discover Cuba content features additional Spanish language tuition, oral comprehension and dialogue (approx. 4 hours per week).*

Dance Classes

There are 2 dance classes per week, usually Tuesday and Thursday from 14:00-15:00. You are taken through your paces – lessons feature Salsa but depending your progress you may also be introduced to Son, Rueda de Casino, Mambo, Cha Cha Cha, and Rumba and perhaps a few moves you haven't heard of! The lessons are delivered a short walk from your Casa by a licensed dance instructor, and in the evenings there are MANY free live music venues where you can do your homework!

Discover Cuba

Hop onto a Wah-Wah (fume belching local bendy bus) or Colectivo (classic car/communal taxi) and take to the streets to discover the real Habana. Understand how Habaneros live; the practical day to day issues Cubans face living in this complicated country at this exciting time and help us take away some answers to our own 'first world' problems!

Three times weekly (usually Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons 14:00-17:00 approx.) we take you on an adventure to help you understand and enjoy the history of Cuba and Habana. Understand the source of her amazing wealth, the rich cultural mix,

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Marvel at the faded patina of Habana's famous gorgeous neo classical architecture, the rumble of classic American cars, curious soviet era high rise buildings, ubiquitous live music on every street, dance, exotic religions etc etc the list is endless.

You will quickly feel at home, gain the knowledge and confidence to enjoy the city during your own time, with new found traveller and Cuban friends. You have been immersed into the Cuban culture - enjoy!



These cultural experiences and excursions are with our trained local guides who will show you how to buy (and spend!) local peso's, take local transport and generally make you feel at home and comfortable with your new surroundings.

Weekend Excursions

During the 4 week program* you have three weekends with us, and we have included activities for each of these. For two weekends you are accompanied on a daytrip to the beaches directly east of Havana. Journey time is 30 minutes by bus and you can enjoy the exhilarating rollers that break on these pristine sandy beaches.

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The second weekend features a three-day/two-night trip to Viñales; a three hour drive to the central western region of Cuba*.

Viñales is a UNESCO World Heritage destination owing to the outstanding landscape, traditional architecture and agricultural techniques still used.

The trip includes a horseride into the valley to drying houses where you can learn about the art of curing tobacco and rolling cigars, and an early morning hike to view a spectacular sunrise.

* **OR** if you book our 4 week program starting on the first Sunday of the month, you have the option to spend the whole of week 3 in Viñales. For more information about what this week involves see below p. 30 **Program 5 – Learn Spanish & Adventure in Viñales**. During this week return transfer to Viñales on Sunday is included as are Spanish lessons that continue Monday to Friday while after lunch we explore; hiking, horse-riding and cycling through some of the most wonderful landscapes in Cuba.

* *During the 2 week program if your time permits then you are welcome to join the trip to Viñales for payment locally CUC 140*

PRICES

Cost of program per week EURO 445

Cost of 4 week program* EURO 1,750

* 4 week price includes accommodation (28 nights), breakfast & lunch, 60 hours intensive Spanish lessons, twice weekly dance lessons, three times weekly cultural excursions/activities, two escorted trips to the beach and a weekend in Viñales Valley.

Cost of extra night – accommodation & breakfast EURO 40

Airport transfer – EURO 40 each way

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Each morning Monday to Friday from 09:00-11:45 you receive 3 x 45 minute intensive structured Spanish lessons (each lesson is followed by a 15 minute break). The 'Discover Cuba' content features additional Spanish language tuition, oral comprehension and dialogue (approx. 4 hours per week).

Each week there are two dance lessons featuring Salsa – Tuesday and Thursday usually commencing 14:00 – in a licensed dance school (approximately one hour each lesson). Ratio of instructor to student 1:1

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Each week there are three Discover Cuba cultural excursions/activities Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoon (usually commencing 14:00).

Two weekends feature a guided trip to the beach and the four-week program features a weekend in Viñales Valley.

Accommodation Sunday to Sunday (14 or 28 nights) in a shared room with breakfast & lunch included.

Dinner IS NOT included. There is a restaurant boom going on in Cuba with Paladares and Peso Café's opening to visitors for the first time. Cuban's and long term travelers on a budget are the target market, so there are lots of characterful, good value eateries to choose from.



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PROGRAM 3

LEARN SPANISH & DANCE / ONE or MORE WEEKS

One or more weeks combining Spanish language tuition and dance lessons delivered by professional instructors and supplemented by cultural immersion and orientation. This program can be taken in either Old Havana OR Trinidad or combined to make a two, three or four week program.

Building on the success and popularity of our 4 week Learn Spanish, Dance & Culture program (see above) we have developed a program that can be enjoyed in either HAVANA and/or TRINIDAD. The format and price is the same for either location and can be combined into a 4 week program for those who wish to spend 2 weeks in Havana followed by 2 weeks in Trinidad.

This program features Spanish language tuition and dance lessons delivered by professional instructors. Cuba is the most musical nation on the planet and where there is music... there is dance! After breakfast you enjoy Spanish language tuition and then in the afternoon we hit the dance school.



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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

We have selected Havana and Trinidad as the destinations for this program – see BACKGROUND NOTES below. Both destinations are bursting with atmosphere and vibrancy, they are culturally rich and tell the story of Cuba's colonial era wealth and importance. Both have a rich musical and dance heritage and boast a fantastic nightlife.

Spanish Lessons

Each morning Monday to Friday from 09:00-11:45 you receive 3* x 45 minute intensive structured Spanish lessons (each lesson is followed by a 15 minute break). Tuition is delivered by an accredited and licensed Cuban teacher. On the first morning there is a short test to establish your level and requirements - we cater for beginner, intermediate and advanced.

** In Trinidad you receive 2 x 45 minute lessons each morning Monday to Friday from 09:00-10:45.*

Dance Classes

Each afternoon Monday to Friday, usually from 14:00-15:00, you receive a structured private dance class (teacher student ratio 1:1). You are taken through your paces – lessons feature Salsa but depending your progress you may also be introduced to Son, Rueda de Casino, Mambo, Cha Cha Cha, and Rumba and perhaps a few moves you haven't heard of... (Trinidad is the home of Salsa 'Casino'). The lessons are delivered a short walk from your Casa by a licensed dance instructor, and in the evenings there are MANY free live music venues where you can do your homework!

Right : Men and women are separated into different classes so each can concentrate on their own footsteps!



There are many activities and excursions to occupy your free time. Your host at the Casa will advise you, and we list some of these in the section 'Excursions' below.

Welcome Camino

On your first day in Havana or Trinidad you are taken on a short walking tour – usually within 24 hours of your arrival – to familiarize you with your new surroundings and to give you a flavor of the opportunities to enjoy your free time in these exciting locations.

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In Trinidad you are treated to talks in Spanish by your host Alex on the 'Origins of Cuban Dance & Music'. This is a pretty extensive subject on which Alex is both knowledgeable and passionate. Trinidad is home to Afro Cuban music and culture but you will discover that most musical genres the world over contain elements that can be traced to Cuba.

PRICES

Cost of 1 week program * EURO 495

Cost of 2 week program * EURO 990

* price includes accommodation (shared room), breakfast, 15 hours intensive Spanish lessons per week (10 weekly in Trinidad), 5 professional dance lessons per week, welcome meeting, orientation and cultural immersion.

Cost of extra night – accommodation & breakfast USD 40

Airport transfer (Havana) – EURO 40 each way

Bus transfer (from Havana to Trinidad) – EURO 60 each way

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Welcome meeting & orientation upon arrival and welcome camino on first day.

Each morning Monday to Friday from 09:00-11:45 you receive 3 x 45 minute intensive structured Spanish lessons (each lesson is followed by a 15 minute break) (see note for Trinidad).

Each afternoon usually Monday to Friday from 14:00-15:00 you receive intensive structured dance classes.

Accommodation Sunday to Sunday (7 nights) in a shared room with breakfast included (plus lunch if staying in Havana).

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Bus transfer to Trinidad – there are several options regarding travel from Havana to Trinidad. The distance is 330km and journey time by bus approximately 4 ½ hours. We advise on these options when you are in country and you can pay for this service locally. If you are flying into Havana mid afternoon or later and need to overnight Havana before continuing your journey to Trinidad we can arrange airport transfer and accommodation in Havana (see prices above).

Single Room Supplement – subject to availability, a single room will be made available on request, for a daily supplement of USD 10 per night.

Lunch and Dinner – there is a restaurant boom going on in Cuba with Paladares and Peso Café's opening to visitors for the first time. Cuban's and long term travelers on a budget are the target market, so there are lots of characterful, good value eateries to choose from.


OPTIONAL EXTRAS


In both Havana and Trinidad there is the possibility to enjoy guided trips and activities during weekends and free time. For example, while in Havana you may wish to take an overnight trip to Viñales to learn about the art of cigar rolling and there are many refreshing waterfalls to be enjoyed in the hills surrounding Trinidad. Your host will be happy to explain all these options to you when you are in country.


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PROGRAM 4

LEARN SPANISH & VOLUNTEER / 2 WEEKS

A two week 'cultural immersion' program to help you enjoy and understand what's happening in Cuba right now! Our volunteer placements will help you connect with Cuban people, understand their culture and history, and turbo charge your Spanish language tuition.

As with all our programs, this program includes accommodation, breakfast & lunch throughout, plus Spanish language tuition, meaningful volunteer placements and other activities. This program runs first two weeks of EVERY month (from 1st Sunday), though clients are welcome to arrive early or extend – we are open 365 days a year!

This is a two week program (14 nights) though can be combined with other programs to make longer duration and more varied experience.



* *Please note – there is an upper age limit of 35 years, for this program (see Supplementary Notes below).*

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Upon arrival Havana International Airport you are picked up for a transfer to our Casa Particulares* in the atmospheric heart of Old Havana; shared single sex dorm rooms with other program participants (couples or friends booking together automatically upgraded to private room with en suite/private bathroom) OR upon payment of a single room supplement you have the option to stay in another nearby Casa with your own room and private en suite bathroom. Either way breakfast and lunch are served at our main Casa and this is the hub of program activities. This is also where Spanish lessons are taken as well as group discussions, planning meetings and impromptu social gatherings.

* *Casa Particulares* are government licenced 'private homestay' accommodation whereby Cubans are permitted to rent out one or two bedrooms in their home to paying guests. However, the licensing regime has recently been extended to include larger hostel style accommodation. Our hostel falls under this latter category and whether you stay here or at another Casa Particulare breakfast & lunch and Spanish lessons are taken at the main hostel and language school.

The program runs from Sunday to Sunday, and includes 14 nights as follows;

Week 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
07:00-08:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Free	Free
09:00-11:45	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Brunch 09:00-11:00	Brunch 09:00-11:00
12:00-13:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Beach	Volunteer Paseo del Prado
14:00-17:00	Volunteer (Intro. Walking Tour)	Volunteer	Discover Cuba	Volunteer	Discover Cuba		

Week 2	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
07:00-08:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Free	Free
09:00-11:45	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Brunch 09:00-11:00	Brunch 09:00-11:00
12:00-13:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Beach	Program end
14:00-17:00	Volunteer	Volunteer	Discover Cuba	Volunteer	Volunteer		

Welcome Camino

On your first day in Havana you are taken on a short walking tour – usually within 24 hours of your arrival – to familiarize you with your new surroundings, such as money change and internet services, and to give you a flavor of the opportunities to enjoy your free time in this exciting location.

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LEARN SPANISH, CULTURE & VOLUNTEER



Spanish Lessons

Monday to Friday's intensive Spanish lessons take place shortly after breakfast. Your teacher is licensed and on day one you receive a short test to establish your level and objectives. Lessons take the format of 3 x 45 minute lessons each morning, with 15 minute breaks to refresh, making approximately 3 hours of Spanish lessons each day – 15 hours per week. Lessons are held from 09:00 sharp, Monday to Friday.

** The Discover content features additional Spanish language tuition, oral comprehension and dialogue (approx. 4 hours per week).*

Discover Cuba

Hop onto a Wah-Wah (fume belching local bendy bus) or Colectivo (classic car/communal taxi) and take to the streets to discover the real Habana. Understand how Habaneros live; the practical day to day issues Cubans face living in this complicated country at this exciting time and help us take away some answers to our own 'first world' problems!

We take you on an adventure to help you understand and enjoy the history of Cuba and Habana. Understand the source of her amazing wealth, the rich cultural mix, marvel at the faded patina of Habana's famous gorgeous neo classical architecture, the rumble of classic American cars, curious soviet era high rise buildings, ubiquitous live music on every street, dance, exotic religions etc etc the list is endless.

You will quickly feel at home, gain the knowledge and confidence to enjoy the city during your own time, with new found traveller and Cuban friends. You have been immersed into the Cuban culture - enjoy!



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Volunteer Placement - Havana

Our volunteering begins with a group 'orientation' walk around Habana Vieja & Centro, during which we visit our projects; to discuss the issues and bring everyone comfortably up to speed and feeling welcome. Work begins the next day and depending where our need is greatest will include a combination of the following projects.

- **Suspiro & Arco Iris Community Centre's**

We work with two children's community centers supporting activities for local kids aged 5-15 years. The kids include those from broken and troubled families and our focus – in addition to creating a fun filled environment – is to give its members better preparation for adulthood and parenthood. A variety of classes are given but focus always remains on social skills and confidence building. Activities include acting, dancing and singing classes and we often make presentations with our volunteers.

Our work as volunteers includes assisting with needed renovation and maintenance work to the facilities, assisting teachers in preparation and planning of activities, assisting teachers carry-out activities and classes with the kids, hosting and planning our own activities for the kids and donating needed resources.



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▪ Sports Complejo

The sports complejo has been the main sports facility for all the schools in Habana Vieja for generations. It is very established but lacks basic facilities. Sports supported at this location include; baseball, volleyball, athletics, olympic wrestling, basketball and judo.

We support sports in Cuba whenever possible, the benefits sports bring to society are well known to Cubans and we follow their lead. Our work as volunteers includes, renovation and maintenance of facilities, donating equipment, assisting in sports training and hosting sports events and matches.

▪ 'El Gimnasio' Boxing Gym

Following the work accomplished at the legendary 'Rafael Trejo Gimnasio' – including rewiring, painting and a huge amount of donativo – we are now working with another, younger, boxing gym that needs our help.

The facilities are quite poor and in a desperate situation; equipment is almost nonexistent. The coaches are passionate and therefore have a large following of kids, with ages ranging from 5-21 years old. Our work as volunteers includes renovation and maintenance of facilities, donating equipment, assisting in sports training and hosting events.



• Paseo Del Prado

Weekends are generally free but we also include activities to help you interact and enjoy your surroundings. On Saturdays, weather permitting, we take a trip to the beaches that lie 30 mins by 'collectivo' taxi or bus, immediately east of the city, known as Playas del Este.

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Sunday afternoon from 12-3pm we take a short walk to the famous Paseo del Prado, where a collective of local artists gives free 'arts and crafts' classes to local kids. We bring supplies to donate as well as helping out, depending what's going on. It's all very casual and a great way to enjoy and learn about the diversity of local art, as well as mingling with the locals and helping out the kids.



PRICES

Cost of 2 week program* EURO 875

* price includes accommodation, breakfast & lunch plus 30 intensive Spanish lessons, three Discover Cuba cultural excursions, volunteer placements & support described, and escorted trips to the beach.

Cost of extra night – accommodation, breakfast & lunch EURO 40

Airport transfer – EURO 40 each way

WHAT'S INCLUDED

During your two weeks in Havana each morning Monday to Friday from 09:00-11:45 you receive intensive Spanish language tuition comprising 3 x 45 minute lessons spaced with 15 minute breaks. Tuition is delivered by an accredited and licensed Cuban teacher. On the first morning there will be a short test to establish your level and requirements.

Three 'Discover Cuba' cultural excursions.

Volunteer placements and support per timetable and descriptions above.

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A guided trip to the beach.

Accommodation in Casa Particulares throughout. Shared rooms (single sex). Meals – breakfast & lunch included.

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PROGRAM 5

VINALES – LEARN SPANISH & ADVENTURE / 1 WEEK

Step back in time and enjoy traditional Cuba. Viñales is a beautiful agricultural town utilising horse power to cultivate plantations including the best tobacco fields in the country. The perfect contrast to your time in Havana here we enjoy the fresh air and natural world including stunning UNESCO heritage status limestone mountains and tobacco drying houses.

This is a one week starting EVERY Sunday. Spanish lessons continue Monday to Friday but after lunch we explore; hiking, horse-riding and cycling through some of the most wonderful landscapes in Cuba. Can be taken as a stand-alone or 'follow on' program. The program starts and finishes in Viñales but transportation from Havana can be arranged.

Program includes 7 nights accommodation, half board, Spanish lessons each morning and an afternoon activity every day Monday to Friday to help you maximise your time.



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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Program starts and finishes in Viñales BUT transportation can be arranged from Habana Vieja direct to your Casa Particulare in Viñales departing after breakfast Sunday morning and arriving lunchtime. As usual there is a 'welcome camino' to familiarize yourself with the neighbourhood and various services. Very quickly you will sense a totally different atmosphere and pace to the chaotic energy of Habana.

This is farming country and the horse is used to get around town and used to work the rust coloured tobacco fields. The town itself is very pretty nestled in a valley surrounded by distinctive limestone mountains. The main square is lively during the evenings with an outdoor 'Casa de Musica' being the central hub for nightlife.

Accommodation is shared rooms in a family run Casa Particulare. Breakfast and lunch are provided each day and features locally grown produce – usually organic. Monday to Friday Spanish lessons continue in the usual format 3 x 45 minute lessons from 09:00-11:45. After lunch there are daily activities, listed below, to help you enjoy and explore this beautiful part of the country.

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
07:00-08:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	Sunrise Hike	Breakfast	Breakfast	Free	Breakfast
09:00-11:45	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Spanish Lesson	Brunch 09:00-11:00	Program End – return to Habana
12:00-14:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Optional Activities	Free
14:00-17:00	Horseback Finca Tour	Trek Valley of Silence	Free	Bike tour Indian Cave	Discover Viñales		

Spanish Lessons

Monday to Friday's intensive Spanish lessons take place shortly after breakfast. Your teacher is licensed and on day one you receive a short test followed by a discussion to establish your level and objectives (OR if doing this as a 'follow on' program, teacher in Havana will prepare continuation classes in Viñales). Lessons take the format of 3 x 45 minute lessons each morning, with 15 minute breaks to refresh, making approximately 3 hours of Spanish lessons each day – 15 hours per week. Lessons are held from 09:00 sharp, Monday to Friday at your Casa.

Activities

Each day Monday to Friday an activity has been scheduled to help you enjoy and explore the town and countryside. These include;

- **Horseback Finca & Tobacco Tour**

The best way to explore the valley and lush plantations is as the local farmers do; on horseback. This is a gentle trot through the countryside to take in the scenery and traditional farming techniques. We stop at one of the distinctive tobacco drying houses and learn more about this famous crop – and the processes involved in cultivating tobacco, drying/curing and finally how to roll a cigar. We then continue to the spectacular 'Mirador' viewing point before returning home late afternoon.

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If you prefer, this activity can be taken as a walking tour – without the horse!



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- **Trek Valley of Silence**

This time we enjoy exploring the valley on foot. Learning more about the various crops cultivated here including sugar cane – a refreshing cane juice helps energise us along the way. As we walk your local guide will help you understand how people live here, some of the challenges and the importance of agriculture and tourism to create a balanced and sustainable economy.



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- **Sunrise & Prehistory Mural**

This morning we have a particularly early start as we aim to catch a spectacular sunrise with a local community, Los Acuáticos. We enjoy stories about the history – and mythology – of this community. After a coffee or fruit juice we continue to the famous ‘prehistory mural’ – actually an art piece created in the 60’s and often hyped but nonetheless a popular attraction and the location itself is very special.

Back to our Casa ready for breakfast... and Spanish classes. As the afternoon is free any sleepy heads can enjoy a well-earned siesta!



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- **Bicy tour to Indian Cave**

This time we hop on bicycles and head out of town and explore one of the many limestone caves that make Viñales so distinctive. Some of these caves were used as shelters for indigenous peoples and used as hideouts for runaway slaves. There is also a cave that doubles as a nightclub!

Today we take a boat trip to admire one of the most extensive cave formations with distinctive mineral and limestone formations.

- **Viñales village & Botanical Gardens**

Our final activity during this busy week is to learn more about the evolution of the town, different construction techniques and pointers to her future. We also learn more about the indigenous flora at the beautifully manicured botanical gardens.

PRICE PER WEEK

Cost of week 1 'Learn Spanish & Adventure' program* EURO 495

* price includes 'welcome camino', 7 nights accommodation, breakfast & lunch plus 15 intensive Spanish lessons and activities described above.

Cost of extra night – accommodation, breakfast & lunch EURO 40

Transfer Habana to Viñales – EURO 35 each way

EXTENSION WEEKS

This program can be taken as a stand-alone program OR a 'follow on program'. For example, 1st Sunday of each month there are two 2 week program options available, based in Habana – Learn Spanish, Dance & Culture OR Learn Spanish & Volunteer. What better way to get an all round view of Cuba than a three week program starting with two weeks in Habana followed by a week in Viñales!

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SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

DONATIVO

Owing to the sanctions imposed by Cuba's nearest neighbour for over 50 years, many basics that we take for granted are in short supply. Together with our Cuban partners, we have created an innovative scheme to help deliver real practical assistance to the Cubanos.

We invite all our guests to bring a few kg's of items from the list below. You can ask family, friends and neighbours to contribute to this effort. Be creative! We are not asking you to spend money buying these items new – in our experience most households already have some of these items, unused or underutilized, e.g. unwanted gifts. By asking around and using up some of your baggage allowance you will making a huge difference to the lives of the people you will be living with during your time in Cuba. You will be AMAZED how little waste there is here – recycling is not a lifestyle choice, it is a way of life.

When you arrive at your Casa, your host will sort these items into appropriate themes and explain the strategy for distributing them. Hopefully it may be possible to accompany your host when he makes a delivery of themed items to our donor institutions/partners. It is important when giving that this is done in a thoughtful and sensitive way and we have taken care to ensure that recipients need these items and appreciate our involvement.



A few ideas...

By bringing some of these items you will feel better about your time here, knowing that you have shared and cared!!

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Theme			
Arts & Crafts	Pens, pencils, paints & brushes and other drawing materials	Crafts – adhesive shapes, glitter & jewels, glue, felt and other materials	Paper – plain, coloured, colouring in books, labels
Kids Educational	Boardgames – traditional (chess, chequers), new (Connect 4, Kerplunk)	School supplies – calculators, stationery, school bags	Books – picture and number books (Spanish & English), Spanish language reading (all ages)
Sports Equipment	Football – balls, boots, clothes	Baseball – balls, bats, gloves, clothes	Boxing – gumshields, gloves, headgear, clothes
General Play	Girls – dolls, accessories, dressing up	Balls, Lego, construction games & toys	Bicycle accessories and parts
Electronics	Old cell phones	Lap tops, handheld devices	Speakers and other consumer electronics
General Other	Hygiene – soap, toothpaste & brushes, shampoo, feminine products. Home – cooking utensils, pots and pans. Outdoors – assorted camping, technical.	Clothing – assorted in good condition please, towels, bed linen, footwear.	Musical instruments – parts and supplies, e.g. reeds, valve oil, pads, guitar and bass strings, cables etc

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SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

ACCOMMODATIONS

Havana is an exciting city with many interesting neighbourhoods. However, to experience the 'real' Havana you need to stay in Habana Vieja. From here you are a very comfortable walk to the best bars and nightlife, and during the daytime you will be living among the real Habaneros working in shops, bars, art galleries and going about their daily lives in this atmospheric part of the city.

Havana has a unique distinction, being the safest city in the Caribbean and Latin America generally. There are a number of reasons for this, but what it means for the curious traveller is that you will be able to enjoy unprecedented access to local people as you wander around the 'barrio' that makes up Habana Vieja.

You will stay at our hostel and language school, a licensed Casa Particulare, sharing a dorm room with other clients OR upon payment single room supplement you have the option to stay in another nearby Casa with your own room including private bathroom. Either way breakfast and lunch are served at our hostel and this is the hub of program activities, including; Spanish lessons, group discussions, planning meetings and impromptu social gatherings.



* **Casa Particulares** are government licenced 'private homestay' accommodation whereby Cubans are permitted to rent out one or two bedrooms in their home to paying guests. However, the licensing regime has recently been extended to include larger hostel style accommodation. Our hostel falls under this latter category and whether you stay here or at another Casa Particulare breakfast & lunch and Spanish lessons are taken at the main hostel and language school.

The excellent educational system for which Cuba is famed combined with a natural curiosity to learn about the outside world, and a willingness to share insights about what it means to live in Cuba, mean that you will learn a lot from our team who will be hosting you and their friends.

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Weekly Schedule

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Saturday 3	Día 15 Lunes 19/1	Día 16 Martes 20/1	Día 17 Miércoles 21/1	Día 18 Jueves 22/1	Día 19 Viernes 23/1	Día 20 Sábado 24/1
Mañana 10:00	Spanish Class (Everyone)	Spanish Class (Everyone)	Spanish Class (Everyone)	Spanish Class (Everyone)	Spanish Class (Everyone)	Trip to the Prado 11:30 (ISC-0)
Tarde 14:00	Dance Class (ISC-0) Culture Walk (ISC-0)	Dance Class (Everyone)	Dance Class (ISC-0) Culture Walk 8 (ISC-0)	Dance Class (Everyone)	Dance Class (ISC-0) Culture Walk 9 (ISC-0)	Free

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Trinidad is one of the Caribbean's best-preserved examples of a town from the era of the sugar-trade and Spanish colonialism. The architecture is impressive and beautiful, and the town as a whole is one of the most typical and characteristic examples of classic Cuba with pastel coloured houses, pretty churches and cobbled streets.

The town is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site due to its outstanding cultural and architectural importance. Around Trinidad there are plenty things to see: the beautiful El Escambray mountains; Casilda Bay and it's nearby islet with crystal clear waters, white sand and fantastic diving and snorkelling opportunities; the Valley de los Ingenios (the Valley of the Sugarmills) is another World Heritage site.

Be immersed in the Afro-Cuban rhythms of Trinidad's music scene. Colourful houses, cobblestone streets, wonderful people, great food and breath taking vistas over cerulean seas make Trinidad a firm favourite among visitors.

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SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

VINALES

Viñales is a beautiful and lush valley in the Pinar del Río province of Cuba. Its landscape is scattered with dramatic rocky outcrops. The small town of the same name is a pleasant, relaxed, and wonderfully traditional settlement with friendly and laid-back locals, one story houses and colorful landscapes. This is an area where crops of fruit, vegetables, coffee and especially tobacco are grown by traditional methods. The red farmland and unique microclimate help produce the best cigars in the world.

You will be staying in a licensed Casa Particular* at one end of the village on the main street, sharing a twin room with another participant (same sex) OR upon payment single room supplement (€10 per night) you have the option to stay in your own room with en suite private bathroom. Two meals daily are provided; breakfast and lunch. All amenities are an easy walk including the main square and outdoor 'Casa de Musica' which is the hub of local night life, less than 5 minutes away.



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SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

EXCURSIONS

The following is a short list of some of places to visit and things to do in Havana City and countrywide;

HAVANA CITY

Museums <i>(all within short walk – check opening times!)</i>	Restaurants	Live Music
Museo de Arte Cubano between Paseo del Prado and Avenida Belgica, Habana Vieja Entry CUC 5	Los Nardos Paseo de Marti 563, Habana Vieja. A Havana institution – no bookings but constant stream of diners... Mahogany interior cowboy ranch style. <i>Good value!</i>	There are over 6 bars within 3 minute walk from your front door featuring resident bands playing music from 11-23:00 each day. <i>Free</i>
Museo de la Revolucion between Paseo del Prado and Avenida Belgica, Habana Vieja Entry CUC 5	La Bodeguita del Medio Empedrado & San Ignacio, Habana Vieja. Famous with Hollywood celebrities it its day, but retains great atmosphere. Bring a pen so you can add to graffiti... <i>Moderate prices!</i>	Bar Monserrate Excellent resident band on corner Obrapia & Bernaza, Habana Vieja. On opposite corner is a bar Fidel used to frequent – good cigars from CUC 3. <i>Free</i>
Museo de los Capitaes Generales O'Reilly & Mercaderes, Habana Vieja Entry CUC 5	Paladar Vistamar Ave 1ra. e/22 y 24, no. 2206, Miramar Upmarket seafood on sea front in embassy district. <i>Pricy!</i>	El Floridita Bar Obispo, Habana Vieja. Favourite of Ernest & Mary Hemingway and famed for Daiquiri at CUC 5. <i>Free</i>

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<p>Fabrica de Artes 'FAC' Calle 26 Corner 11, Havana 10400 Across town but more than worth the trip – open Thurs-Sunday nighttime. As well as outstanding collection of modern art there is great live music.</p>	<p>Bar 304 & Bar del Frente 304 O'Reilly, Habana Vieja Cuba's first 'hipster' gin bar and one of the coolest places you'll find anywhere... best cocktails in the world!</p>	<p>Café de Paris Corner of Obispo and San Ignacio, Habana Vieja Great resident band – 'Cozazones de Fuego'</p>
<p>Museo de Arte Universal top of O'Reilly (behind Floridita Bar), Habana Vieja <i>Entry CUC 5</i></p>	<p>Casa Miglis Lealtad no. 120, Animas & Lagunas, Centro. Creative décor – owned by a Swedish/Cuban couple. <i>Pricey!</i></p>	<p>Jazz Café 3rd level Galeria Paseo Mall (Ave Paseo & 3 Vedado), Malecon. Top jazz venue. <i>Entry 10 CUC (deducted from food & drinks bill)</i></p>
<p>Museu Nacional de la Música Calle Capdevila No. 1 e/ Aguiar y Habana, Habana Vieja <i>Entry CUC 5</i></p>	<p>Paladar la Guarida (also known as 'Fresa y Chocolate'). Concordia no. 418, Garvasio & Escobar. Jaw dropping entrance – the most special of Cuban restaurants. <i>Expensive!</i></p>	<p>La Zorra Jazz Club 23 v O, Vedado. Serious jazz in a classic basement setting. <i>Entry 10 CUC (deducted from food & drinks bill)</i></p>

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COUNTRYWIDE

Your host will advise the best way – bus, train or taxi – to get to the following exciting destinations;

VINALES (mid South West)	Visit Cuba's famous tobacco farms in Vinales. Surrounded by a unique karst valley, tobacco plantations and atmospheric caves. Vinales is a peaceful, charming town with some of Cuba's most welcoming people.
MARIA LA GORDA (South West tip)	Renowned for its diving, idyllic beaches, untouched nature and laidback vibe, Maria la Gorda is the perfect spot to wile away some time under the Cuban sun.
BARACOA (Eastern tip)	Remote, unique and arguably one of the most beautiful places in Cuba, Baracoa has a wealth of natural gems to discover and swoon over.
SANTIAGO DE CUBA (South East tip)	Santiago de Cuba has a revolutionary history and an exciting mix of cultures, which results in a vibrancy in the air and an artistic flair in the streets.
CAMAGUEY (South East)	Built to stop ongoing raids by pirates, the maze-like streets of Camaguey are slightly confusing, but nevertheless an amazing place of colour, culture and discovery.
TRINIDAD (South mid)	Be immersed in the Afro-Cuban rhythms of Trinidad's music scene. Colourful houses, cobblestone streets, wonderful people, great food and breathtaking vistas over cerulean seas make Trinidad a firm favourite among visitors.
CIENFUEGOS (South)	A delightful city referred to as the 'Pearl of the South', Cienfuegos was designed beautifully by the French but emits a definite Caribbean vibe.

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