

# THE ART AND SOUL OF CUBA™

2022

A guided cultural adventure with David Julian  
for photographers, artists and curious travelers

December 5-14 with optional extensions





## JOIN OUR ADVENTURES IN CUBA!

**Professional photographer David Julian invites you to experience the authentic Cuba few Americans ever see.**

Avid photographers and cultural travelers will love this opportunity to enjoy Cuba's diverse cultural landscape and the renowned warmth and resilience of its people. The vibrant colors and historical elegance of classic Cuba captivate even the most seasoned traveler and photographer. And of course, there are those gorgeous vintage cars! Most who have travelled there return, saying things like: "There is no place like Cuba!" or "Cuba has won my heart."

Our daily outings range from exploring colonial city streets, roaming rural villages and farms, to spontaneously discovering gems in the pulsing rhythms of daily Cuban life. We'll have a variety of authentic cultural exchanges and endless opportunities for photography and experiencing Cuban creativity and mechanical ingenuity. We'll meet and have guidance to capture musicians, dancers, artists, historians, vendors, elders and children who love curious travelers. There is always time to ride in a classic 1950's car and see how they are ingeniously restored and lovingly maintained.

Dave has forged ongoing relationships to provide access well beyond what is possible for solo travelers. Our dedicated bilingual guide, lodging hosts and driver handle all logistics so you can focus on your personal adventures. Our Cuban friends are humble, generous and share their wisdom, perspectives and joie de vivre. Their lives have many challenges met in part due to their community, resilience, ingenuity and pride. Our experiences are authentic and relaxed, not contrived for the orchestrated cashflow of tourism. Our goal is for you to understand and experience the true art and soul of this island.

Dave shares his love for Cuba and photographic guidance to help you create your own collection of iconic images and Cuban memories. We'll explore morning light as towns awaken and afternoon light where shadows stretch and textures appear. Dave also leads night walks to compose stark noir landscapes on a stage of cobblestoned streets. He provides shooting tips on location, and is adept at finding opportunities in any light and weather. We'll make street portraits, capture casual gestures, dancers in motion, classic autos and 'old beaters' too, Musicians and fishermen along the malecon, richly-hued mountain sunsets and so much more awaits us. When you have a spirit of adventure, Cuba opens its arms.

We keep our group size small for ease of travel, serendipitous opportunities, and to allow time for personal exploration. If you're not focused on photography, we also provide options including Salsa lessons, Cuban cooking, and nature walks to name a few. As the Trump administration blocked Americans from using Old Havana's hotels, we reside in better Cuban Casa B&Bs and dine at selected 'Paladar' restaurants so guests can safely enjoy authentic organic cuisine by Cuban chefs.



- > Itinerary details are on pages 3-7
- > Pricing, booking info and logistics are found on pages 9-10
- > See Dave's CUBA images in the Journeys galleries: [Davidjulian.com](http://Davidjulian.com)

Our "Support For the Cuban People" tour is 100% legal under the latest US government's travel to Cuba guidelines.



## ITINERARY DETAILS

### Day 1, Monday 12/5: We meet in Havana! (D)

Transfer to our lodging and enjoy some rest before we meet late afternoon for our greetings, to meet our Cuban guide Joel, and for our welcome drink. Our orientation meeting follows with Dave's photographic slideshow and briefing on creatively and respectfully photographing life in Cuba. We'll spend a few hours to acclimate, sink into Cuba's daily rhythm, learn about Havana's key landmarks and begin to interact with the local community for serendipitous street photography.

Our welcome dinner is at the highly decorated San Cristobal Paladar. *Paladares* are Cuba's privately-owned restaurants. We reside in Cuban-owned *Casas Particulares*.

### Day 2, Tuesday 12/6: Old Havana (B, L)

After a traditional Cuban breakfast at your Casa, enjoy a briefing by the insightful architect, [Miguel Coyula](#) to learn the history and development of Cuba so you'll have a greater understanding of what you'll encounter as we tour in Havana.

Opportunity favors the keen observer on foot, so our day begins with a walk through Old Havana. The time-worn photogenic beauty of Havana's oldest neighborhoods contrasts massive restoration efforts to promote economic growth and improve conditions for local residents. We explore the main plazas of the 18th-century colony and meet with a local photographer to visit neighborhoods where life is less touched by tourism. Lunchtime along the Barber's Alley at El Figaro is included.



## ITINERARY

**Day 1: Meet in Havana**

**Day 2: Havana**

**Day 3: Havana**

**Day 4: Havana**

**Day 5: Pinar del Rio & Vinales**

**Day 6: Vinales**

**Day 7: Vinales & Havana**

**Day 8: Havana & Playa de Este**

**Day 9: Havana & Regla**

**Day 10: Havana to Home**

### Includes:

**B = Breakfast L = Lunch D = Dinner**

**Our itinerary may shift to accommodate logistics and additional opportunities.**



Next, we visit the world of Pepito's famous photogenic barbershop and learn about how this prideful tradition is being preserved to educate young barbers. Time allowing, we can cab to El Morro across Havana harbor and tour the fortress.

This evening we have a special treat to drive across town to the other side of Havana to enjoy the incredible dining, performance and arts space, **Fabrica de Arte Cubano**. FAC literally vibrates with creativity—with its multi-level array of bars, dining, dance floors, performance spaces and art galleries. We will drink and dine here on our own. Afterwards we will taxi back to casas as a group or alone.

### Day 3, Wednesday 12/7: Old Havana (B)

After breakfast have a morning studio visit with one of Cuba's leading fine art and documentary photographers, Daylene Rodriguez Moreno. Returning to town, we explore the old district on foot with Dave before lunch near our next visit, with Cuban street photographer and artist Adrian Garrido at his gallery off Cathedral square. Afternoon continues with a photo walk with Adrian to see him in action and learn from his unique approach to street photography. We then shoot together or separately, practicing street styles that match our opportunities. Optional visit to **Fototeca de Cuba**, Havana's center for historic and contemporary photography. After time to rest, we have dinner at La Guarida, perhaps Havana's most famous paladar as stars eat here and it also appeared in the movie *Fresa y Chocolate*.

### Day 4, Thursday 12/8: Old Havana (B, L)

Early AM photo option. For those who want to wake early, we down a quick coffee and pastry and hit the street with Dave to capture long shadows and sweetlight as the city awakens. Returning to our casa, we meet the others and head to **Rafael Trejo Boxing Gym**, famous for training boxers who have competed around the world. A perfect spot to practice both fast and slow shutter speeds to freeze the punch or blur the colorful action and gestures. Afterwards we walk north towards a wonderful lunch at **Paladar Doña Eutemia**.

One of the timeless prides of Cuba is dance, especially Ballet. We will photograph young Ballet dancers in a funky old 'abandoned' theater space full of textures and the details of its former glory days. We can then visit the Malecon for sweetlight and our evening is free to dine and explore the the potential of Havana's streets.



Experience the Real Cuba



### Day 5, Friday 12/9: Havana to Pinar Del Rio & Viñales (B, L)

After breakfast we can store items unneeded for Viñales and check out of our Casa. Today we head east towards the verdant Viñales Valley – situated in one of the most picturesque parts of Cuba, among the limestone “mogotes” hills of the Pinar del Rio province. It is a small and culturally rich rural village, with friendly and welcoming residents. Upon reaching Viñales, we’ll visit a hilltop organic farm, **Finca el Paraiso**, and learn about sustainable farming in Cuba. Their family will show us around and explain the workings of the organic farm he has created. With the beautiful views as our backdrop, we will enjoy a deliciously fresh organic meal prepared by the family—a truly authentic farm-to-fork experience!

Lastly we will visit to the Viñales Valley Town and a Tobacco *despalillo* processing plant nearby. Here you can photograph ‘behind the scenes’ where tobacco is sorted, prepared, aged, fermented and packed to become Cuba’s famous cigars.

We will check into our accommodations, then dinner is our choice and can be followed by an evening photo walk to capture the evening lights and happenings of quaint and unhurried Vinales.

### Day 6, Saturday 12/10: Viñales + birding option (B, L)

Today will include a morning walk with Cuban bird expert **Nils Navarro** to observe species endemic to the valley. Afterwards, a walking tour of the valley and farms. We will engage with local farmers and photograph the quiet side of Cuba. Lunch at **Balcon de Valle**, providing another view of the Mogotes. The afternoon is free to wander and photograph in town or rest before Dinner. Dinner is free on our own and can be followed a visit to the gatherings near Cultural Center of Polo Montañez.



### Capture Cuba in Color



### Day 7, Sunday 12/11: Vinales to Havana + cooking class option (B, L)

Early AM photo option. After breakfast check out of our casas for a return to Havana. Our highlight upon arrival is to visit an auto restoration garage where we will story on how Cuba has maintained its fleet of vintage cars. There is a great storytelling opportunity to capture this unique story in pictures or perhaps video.

Lunch at a local paladar along our travel route. Check into our Havana casa. We then drive to explore and photograph the enormous and beautifully-sculptured Colon Cemetery. Afterwards, the chefs amongst you will have an optional opportunity for a late afternoon cooking class and dinner at the organic Paladar **Jardín de los Milagros**. The evening is open to explore on foot solo, with Dave, or for cultural activities including reserved VIP seats for live Cuban Jazz with Joel at la **Zorra y el Cuervo**.

### Day 8, Monday 12/12 Havana + beach & lunch option (B, L)

Meet Dave after breakfast as you have a day with him to vtravel by public bus to enjoy **Playas del Este**, the coastal beaches just 35 minutes outside of la Habana. You will organically support the Cuban people as you have beachside lunch there and return in afternoon by bus. Camera welcome but pack light for that trip.

After a little refreshing downtime, grab your camera as we head out to pass the gate into historic Barrio Chino (aka Chinatown), and explore the colorful streets. Dinner there and evening are free for personal exploration to enjoy Old Havana at night.



Feel the Rhythms of Cuba



**Day 9, Tuesday 12/13 Regla Excursion (B, D)**

Early AM photo option. After breakfast, we take the passenger ferry across the harbor to Regla. Regla is a small quiet town compared to Havana. Explore the town alone, or with Joel and guide, including the dock area, the Church of the Black Virgin, the Museum of Regla, the town square, the gas works and other areas, climbing the hill to the main road to Guanabacoa. Exchange at the municipal museum and learn about the Afrodiaspora in Cuba, Santeria and attend dances and rhythms of the Orishas— the spirits and saints of the Cuban religion of Santeria.

Free time for lunch in Regla at a local paladar or we'll arrange nearby in Havana.

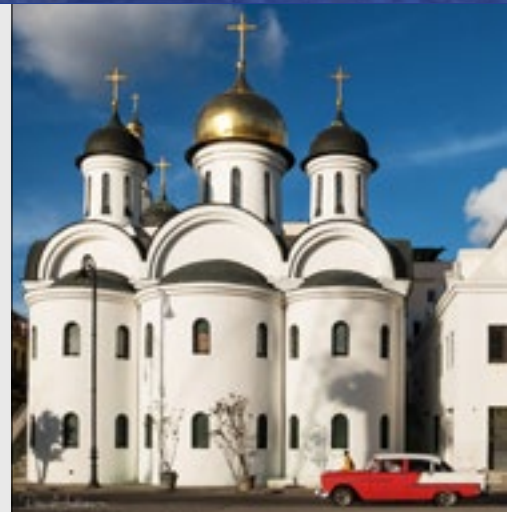
Free time to explore the huge [San Jose de Almancen](#) Caribbean craft market for gifts and souvenirs, or wander the Puerto de Avenida and see the remains of the wall that once protected lower Havana. After some solo exploring and downtime, we have our Farewell Dinner at **Ivan Chef Justo**, a leading paladar near the Museum of the Revolution.

After dinner, time to pack for the trip home unless you've arranged to stay longer.

**Day 10, Wednesday 12/14 Havana to Home (B)**

Say **adios** to our fellow travelers and gracious Cuban hosts! Those departing today are transferred to Marti Airport where they will check in, check luggage and fly home.

Those who have pre-arranged a trip extension with Dave will meet him at the Casa.



Classic Cuba Preserved



### STAFF AND LODGING:

We are joined by our own expert Cuban guides. They handle all the logistics and keep us housed, transported and well fed. We stay in higher-end family-owned Casas Particulares, Cuba's B&B-style guest houses. Travelers experience true Cuban life and hospitality there, and are welcome to practice Spanish. By staying in casa guesthouses, you'll enjoy a more authentic Cuban experience, and your tourism dollars go directly into communities rather than into corporations. Plus, this method allows us to offer a lower per-day cost despite such a rich itinerary, inclusions and daily photographic instruction.

### The Island of Cuba



### Habana Centro

### Habana Vieja



### Regla



# Join us for The Art and Soul of Cuba!

*"Dave, we can't thank you enough for such an incredible experience in Cuba!" – Mike & Diana, Bothell, WA*

*"This was the best Cuba photo trip of my four. You provided so much more as well See you next year!" – Sara, Bend OR*

**Dates:** December 5 - 4, 2022 **Group size limited to just 10 travelers.**

**Published Price: \$4995\*** **Deposit is \$750.** *If you are one of Dave's UW course students, contact him for a discount!*

Tour Price is with double-occupancy and estimated pending final booking or lodging for actual number of travelers.

Single room supplement adds \$650, and is based on availability at time of registration. As space is very limited and we usually fill, we advise registering now. Purchase your airfare to Cuba and any additional accommodations needed before our tour. More flights should open up during Spring and early Summer. It is wise to purchase trip insurance once you purchase flights.

We can arrange for you to extend your stay if we know at or soon after registration. See next page for cancellations policy.

**To reserve your spot, just fill out the form at this link:** AltruVistas [Online Registration Form](#). Use "Art and Soul of Cuba". Use your Credit Card, PayPal balance or arrange to send a personal check by [emailing AltruVistas](#).

## For additional assistance, email or call:

- [David Julian](#) (email link) or 206-364-9077 for inquiries relating to itinerary, travel, photo-related and preparations.
- [AltruVistas](#) (email link) or 415-735-5407 for inquiries relating to registration / booking / documents / extension lodging  
Responses may be delayed if we are traveling. Text Dave if you need to.

## To complete your booking after deposit, you will need:

1. A valid passport dated for use *at least 6 months past tour dates*.
2. Once fully booked, you can book your round-trip air from USA to Havana and back. More flights should open during Q2 and Q3, 2022.
3. AltruVistas will send a detailed info packet to fully-booked travelers.

## What is included:

- 10 days and 9 nights in Cuba staying in Casas Particulares
- 9 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 2 special dinners
- Transportation to listed locations
- **Photography Guidance:** Daily group and individual guidance on location
- Daily cultural exchanges, as dictated by the US Treasury OFAC license for all US resident travelers coming to Cuba
- Our own dedicated bilingual Cuban guides and drivers
- Individual Health Insurance as required for entry into Cuba and exit tax is included with your purchased airfare.
- Transfers between airports to lodgings on first and last day of trip
- Dave can also work with travelers who want to review their favorite Cuba captures on their mobile tablet or laptop

## What is not included: (See pages 10-11 for more details on the topics below)

- Your round-trip airfare from US to Havana's Jose Marti Airport (compare flights/times vfrom Miami and other US airports)
- Tourist card for Cuba (Averages \$70-100 when purchased from your US airline or online. Most will sell it at the airport.
- Travel insurance such as the plans available at time of airfare purchase. We list options next page.
- Personal expenditures or purchases, including tips, personal Taxi rides, gifts, meds, art, additional foods or drinks, etc.
- Options such as cooking class, Salsa lessons and birding, or trip extensions requested and described at time of registration.
- Trip extensions can include private photography instruction with Dave, Ballet, Museums, etc. [Email Dave with your ideas](#).

## Adventure and Expectations:

Participants for this tour should be in good enough physical condition to walk unaided on cobblestones and board transportation. Have a spirit for travel adventure and an understanding that developing Cuba cannot always meet some westerners' expectations. Our itinerary may shift to accommodate local changes and new opportunities. Our Cuban BnB 'casas particulares' are inspected to be safe, clean and as comfortable as Cubanly possible. We strive to keep you happy and earn your trust. Experience Cuba on it's own terms, and you will feel most welcomed. **All travelers love Cuba, and many have returned for more!**



**Logistics:**

Our tour begins in Havana's Jose Marti Airport (or for those arriving earlier, our published meeting point is given to fully-booked travelers.) Travelers arriving 12/5 will be met at the airport by an AltruVistas contact for free transfer to the assigned lodging. Book your domestic and Cuba airfare soon after you register. (see below) Furnish your flight information to AltruVistas at least 20 days prior to travel so we can be ready for your arrival. Do not expect to be able to use your American cell phone from the Airport, though Wifi cards *may* be available there.

**Getting There:**

There are several options for flying to/from Cuba. Most Americans fly there from Florida, Texas or other US hubs. Check airlines for such options. Consider a route that offers the best timing. Check prices after registering for our tour. I have used [Kayak.com](https://www.kayak.com), [SkyScanner](https://www.skyscanner.com) or [Hipmunk](https://www.hipmunk.com). If you need to arrive or depart Cuba a day or two on either end, let AltruVista know during the final booking process. Once in Cuba, the entry process is actually pretty easy, and they are used to Americans!

**Money:**

For 2022, based on exchange rates as of this writing, we will bring Euros. Cuba does not yet accept transactions in any form of American currency. Bring crisp paper currency as well-worn money may be rejected in Cuba. *Americans cannot access money from Cuban ATMs.* We will talk more about how much cash to bring once we meet via Zoom or in an email.

AltruVistas suggests bringing a few hundred Euros to exchange for things like tips, personal gift purchases, taxis, snacks, meals and drinks, personal needs, photo subject tips or gifts to families. Your exit tax is now included in your round-trip airfare to Cuba. Remember, your US ATM cards won't yet work in Cuba. Some Americans also bring a few extra \$100 bills stashed on their person in case of an unlikely emergency en route. Plan to keep your money with you as we travel, though many Casas have a room safe. A money belt or wearable passport wallet is a popular method. In my experiences, Cuba is a very safe place to travel. My guests have never felt at risk, even walking at night with cameras in Havana.

**Tipping:**

We work hard here and in Cuba to provide a memorable and rewarding experience. When dining out, you can tip as normal. 10-15% is common. We always gather tips for our full time guide and our driver that Dave gives out the last day.

**Travel and Health Insurance:**

Americans must have Cuban Health Insurance in order to travel to Cuba. For US travelers flying to Cuba on a US-based commercial airlines, *Cuban Health insurance as well as the departure taxes should be built in to the ticket fare.* For general travel, tour cancellation and medical evacuation insurance please purchase a plan when purchasing airfare, or through companies such as [Allianz](https://www.allianz.com) and [Travelex](https://www.travelex.com).

**Tourist Card (for American travelers):**

If you are purchasing your Havana flight on a US carrier or Cuban partner airline, that airline will sell you a tourist card, often at your gate. Prices vary between \$75-100. If you want to have the card in hand before heading to the airport, go to [Cuba Visa Services](https://www.cuba-visa.com) or elsewhere to purchase one for about \$100. You'll need our provided Affidavit and sometimes a Tour Itinerary to get a tourist card. *It's really easy!*

**Terms and Cancellations, etc:**

Please see AltruVistas' [website and Booking Conditions](#) PDF for details.



Capture Life's Gestures



### What to Wear in Cuba:

Tropical travel is most comfortable in light, portable, packable layers of breathable cotton or quick-dry blends. Most people need no more than a few hand-washable T's, one or two long sleeve and maybe a short-sleeve button-down tropical-weight shirts, a light jacket or windbreaker is handy for cooler hours. Light-weight travel pants or convertible 'zip-offs' are most versatile. Ladies enjoy tropical-weight skirts or wraparounds. A simple poncho or very light, waterproof jacket will keep you dry, as it can rain at any time of year. A brimmed hat or cap is a must for sun protection. Stylish airy Cuban hats are sold everywhere we're going! Sunglasses and sun-screen are an obvious must, and [Natrapel](#) insect repellent wipes fit into any pocket. A sturdy and broken-in pair of walking shoes or sneakers is great for the many uneven streets in cities and unpaved roads in rural areas. Bring a swimsuit and optionally, flipflops. Citizens of Cuba dress casually yet respectfully, so anything you'd wear dining near home is fine. Please avoid gawdy fluorescent colors as they can limit the blend-in benefits of street photography. Despite Cuba's great reputation for being very safe for tourists, we recommend leaving valuable jewelry at home.

### Notes on Packing and Camera Gear:

Firstly and most importantly: Avoid big suitcases or heavy cameras on this trip. The best advice we can give you on camera gear is: **"Keep It Simple"**. In Cuba it's best to go light, compact and remain comfortable. I've even made [excellent travel images with my phone](#) or my compact Fujifilm X100F fixed 35mm camera. Carry water, a hat, sunscreen, a poncho and an energy bar snack. Bring some Electrolytes like these if you sweat a lot or are prone to heat issues. I use [these capsules](#).

**When flying, all [Lithium camera batteries](#) must be bagged together and in your carry-on luggage.** Those using DSLR or Mirrorless cameras should consider a wide-to-mid zoom and maybe add a lightweight tele zoom. For prime lenses, fast 35, 50 or 85mm equivalent are great for street work. Drones are [prohibited](#).

**Note:** You should already know how to use your camera or any devices you bring as we do not offer basic device instruction. You cannot access US cell networks but can use Wifi and What's App. You can buy WiFi by the hour in many locations.

If you plan to shoot at 'blue hour' or the streets at night, you can bring a light travel tripod like the simple [Sirui 5C](#) or the [Sirui 7C](#), or use higher ISOs with recent cameras. Bring a few [microfiber cloths](#), [Lens Pen](#), two extra batteries, charger and two extra cards. A laptop is not necessary. In lieu of a laptop, consider several SD cards or an iPad. I use a Fujifilm mirrorless camera, an iPhone and Sony compact as a backup. Several of my best images were made with the 18-55 kit lens! It's unassuming size helps when street shooting. I shoot with available light. Rather than a sweaty backpack, my daily bag is a [Tenba DNA 13](#) messenger-style bag with a nice set of pockets and bottle pouches. My other gear, tripod and clothing pack into my 22" rolling Osprey bag, so moving between locations is super easy. Most of the electrical outlets are US-style 110v, but I bring along [this](#) Euro adapter just in case. This evaporative [cooling towel](#) works like magic. Well before our tour we Zoom and cover more preparation ideas and also what to consider bringing as goodwill gifts.



### Capture Cuba in B&W



*AltruVistas*

Our international tour partner

This brochure will be periodically updated.



**David Julian** is a Seattle-based photographer and educator. Along with editorial, corporate, travel and entertainment assignments, he teaches photography and the creative process. He has taught at Maine Media Workshops, Santa Fe Workshops, Anderson Ranch, UnCruise, Vancouver Photo Workshops, Glazer's Photo, Photographic Center Northwest, The Art Institute, and leads private tours in Washington, Oregon, Europe, Cuba, India, Hawaii, and other top destinations. Photo tours to Asia and Indonesia are being added for 2023.

He is faculty at The University of Washington's Certificate Program and Seattle Creative Academy. Dave loves sharing his knowledge with other travelers and photographers. His articles appear in books and publications including *Nikon World*, *Outside*, *National Geographic Traveler*, *Islands*, *After Capture*, *SHOTS*, *Outdoor Photographer*, *Digital PhotoPro*, *FujiLove* and *Hit the Streets* podcast. He is on the Fujifilm X/GFX creator team. Dave's [Website](#) [Instagram](#) [Facebook Page](#) [Art of Travel Photography](#)