

Celebration · ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

13 Day Cuba By Land & Sea



ESCORTED ITINERARY – PRE-SET DATES – NON-FLEXIBLE INCLUSIONS

A Celebrity Escorted Tour

Detailed Itinerary: Included meals are shown with the letters B, L and D. 10670DBL

Sunday 3 March: Arrive Havana

The suggested flight with Aeromexico arrives this evening at c.10:45pm. Overnight Havana

Monday 4 March: Havana & Hemingway

In the late morning we meet our fellow tour participants in the lobby of the hotel, before tour leader Stephen Wilkinson takes us on a walking tour through some of Havana's lesser known

www.celebraionescapes.com

678-500-9548

Celebration

· ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

quarters. After a break for lunch, we travel to Finca Vigia, on the outskirts of Havana. Here Hemingway settled down in 1939 and stayed for much of his life, writing, marlin-fishing and falling in love. This evening we gather for a briefing and dinner in the hotel restaurant. Overnight Havana (B, D)

Tuesday 5 March: Colonial Havana

Havana's historic centre is a World Cultural Heritage site. This morning we embark on a walking tour with a local architect through the alleys and squares of Old Havana, including the Plaza de Armas and *el Templete*, a monument commemorating the foundation of Havana in 1519. At the Palace of the Generals, a Baroque edifice of 1770's, we explore the City Museum, which outlines important events from Cuban history. Nearby is the Cathedral of San Cristobal also from the 1770's. Plaza Vieja was originally laid out in 1559 and has the most varied architecture of Havana's squares, ranging from Baroque to Gaudí-inspired modernism. Lunch is in a local restaurant. This afternoon we call into the Hotel Ambos Mundos where the author Ernest Hemingway wrote his celebrated novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, in Room 511. After a tour of the Gran Teatro de la Habana, one of Havana's most beautiful architectural works, we stop and visit the city's *camera obscura*, located atop the historic Gómez Vila building, a singular gift from the Spanish city of Cadiz, offering good views over Havana. Overnight Havana (B, L)

Wednesday 6 March: Modern Havana, History, Politics and Architecture

Our tour of modern Havana commences with a visit to the *Maqueta de la Habana* in Miramar, for a talk on the development of the Cuban capital and its architectural and social history. Afterwards, we travel in a fleet of iconic classic American cars along the Malecón, or sea front, a popular gathering place for locals. We visit the Hotel Riviera, built by the Mafia as a gambling mecca in the 1950s, and stop in at the US Embassy and the Maine monument to learn about Cuba's complex historical relationship with the United States. After a cocktail at the History Bar of the Hotel Nacional we visit the Parque Maceo and enjoy lunch in a restaurant with balcony views of the sea. Later on, we visit the *Cristo de la Habana* statue, created by the esteemed sculptress Rita Longa. From the statue there are also views of the city. Towards the end of the day we visit the José Martí museum, where we learn about Cuba's 'apostle of Independence.' Overnight Havana (B, L)

Thursday 7 March: A day with Che

We depart Havana this morning and travel to the inland town of Santa Clara, indelibly linked to one of Cuba's most celebrated revolutionaries, Ernesto Che Guevara. After a coffee break at a coffee farm en route, we visit the Che Guevara memorial, completed in 1997 with the transfer of Che Guevara's remains from Bolivia to Santa Clara. As well as the mausoleum, there is a small

Celebration

· ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

museum, documenting aspects of the revolutionary's life and death. We then visit the armoured military train which Che Guevara derailed and captured at Santa Clara, thereby marking the victory of the rebels over the Batista regime. We continue to Cienfuegos, a port city that still retains significant French colonial architecture. On a brief orientation walk in Cienfuegos we visit the Parque Martí and other sites. Overnight Cienfuegos (B)

Friday 8 March: Cienfuegos & Embarkation

This morning we explore some of the historical and architectural highlights of Cienfuegos. The colonial French architecture has earned the town a World Heritage listing and we visit some of the grand buildings, including the Palacio del Valle and the Tomás Terry theatre, where Caruso sang. After lunch at a private, family-run restaurant (known locally as a *Paladar*), overlooking the sea, we board the Variety Voyager and settle into our cabins and life at sea. Overnight Variety Voyager (B, L, D)

Saturday 9 March: Cruise to Trinidad

The ship docks in Trinidad this morning, where we disembark and take an excursion with a local guide into Topes De Collantes National Park. A walk of approximately six kilometres along well-made paths takes us through the forest and past waterfalls and natural pools for bathing. Coffee is grown in the area and we may be able to stop at a *Campesino* (farmer's house) and enjoy a brew from hand-picked coffee beans, freshly ground and roasted on wood-burning stoves. We return to the ship in the afternoon. Overnight Variety Voyager (B, L, D)

Sunday 10 March: At Sea

We spend the majority of the day at sea, enjoying views of Cuba's coastline. In the late afternoon we arrive at the picturesque Bay of Singuanea, where we spend the night. Overnight Variety Voyager (B, L, D)

Monday 11 March: Juventud Island

Until 1977, the island was called the Isle of Pines. In 1978 Fidel Castro turned the island into one grand Communist school for students from around the world and it became the Island of Youth. We disembark and visit the Presidio Modelo, an abandoned panopticon prison where both Fidel and Raul Castro were imprisoned from 1953-1955. After lunch we visit an art school and the maternity ward of a local hospital before free time to explore Nueva Gerona's grand boulevard. We return to the ship and sail overnight to María La Gorda. Overnight Variety Voyager (B, L, D)

Celebration

· ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

Tuesday 12 March: María La Gorda

After breakfast, we disembark in María La Gorda and visit the local school to meet the Cuban children and their teachers, to discuss the differences between the Cuban and American educational systems – particularly in the rural areas of the country. We visit Guanahacabibes National Park on the westernmost tip of the island. The peninsula is one of the last refuges of the aboriginals known as Guanahatabeyes who fled from the Spanish conquistadors and has some 140 archaeological sites. This afternoon we meet the locals and enjoy a swim in the sea. Overnight Variety Voyager (B, L, D)

Wednesday 13 March: Havana

The ship docks in Havana this morning, where we visit the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes for a guided tour of the museum's comprehensive collection of Cuban art. A Chinatown in Cuba may seem somewhat out of place, but Havana in once had one of the largest Chinese communities in Latin America, dating back to the mid-19th century, when indentured workers were brought in to work in the sugar cane fields. We enjoy lunch in one of the colourful restaurants before some free time to stroll through old Havana. This evening we make our way to Café El Mercurio for dinner, and then to the Café Taberna to experience some wonderful salsa, in the style of the Buena Vista Social Club, the 1999 documentary which brought Cuban salsa to the world. Overnight Variety Voyager (B, L, D)

Thursday 14 March: Havana

This morning we visit Fusterlandia, the studio of artist José Rodríguez Fuster. Inspired by Gaudí in Barcelona and Brancusi in Rome, but most of all by Picasso and Dubuffet, the artist has turned his neighbourhood into a street art extravaganza using intricate, colourful tile work. Enjoy a rum tasting before lunch at La Barraca Restaurant, located in the Hotel Nacional de Cuba, which specializes in Cuban cuisine and offers breathtaking views of the Bay of Havana. After lunch well-known architect Pedro Vazquez will give a lecture. We return to the Voyager for the Captain's Farewell Dinner and our final night on board in Sierra Maestra Port. Overnight Variety Voyager (B, L, D)

Friday 15 March: Depart Havana

Our cruise concludes after breakfast with disembarkation at 9.00am. There will be a morning's activity before we travel to the international airport in time to check in for the suggested 4.10pm Aeromexico flight to Mexico City. Alternatively, you might like to stay on in Havana for a few days' individual sightseeing. (B)

Celebration

· ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —



Celebrity Host: Dr Stephen Wilkinson

Is chairman of the International Institute for the Study of Cuba and holds a PHD in Hispanic Studies.

Dr Stephen Wilkinson is Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at the University of Buckingham. Stephen first visited Cuba in 1986 and has been travelling to and writing about the island ever since.

Now the Chairman of the International Institute for the Study of Cuba, based in the UK, Stephen has a PhD on the subject of Cuban literature. He has written numerous articles on diverse questions such as the history of European and US – Cuba relations, Cuban attitudes and policy towards homosexuals, Cuban art and the nature of the Cuban state. Stephen's book, *Detective Fiction in Cuban Society and Culture*, was published in 2006 by Peter Lang.

A recent publication on the current economic and political situation in Cuba and its relationship with the United States may be downloaded for no cost

here: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ecaf.12221/full?refreshCitedByCounter=true>

Among his other commitments, Stephen teaches at King's College London, is *Editor of the International Journal of Cuban Studies*, is a contributor to IHS Sentinel Reports on Cuba and consults on a variety of media projects related to the island. He consulted on the film *638 Ways to Kill Castro* in 2006: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7zf3cUPAa8>

Stephen is an experienced guide and tour leader to Cuba and frequently leads academic study groups and people-to-people exchanges to the island. In 2000 he led and designed numerous study tours for a number of US clients including the Art Institute of Chicago, the National Geographic Society and Smithsonian Institute. Between 2006 and 2011 he designed and led week-long study tours for MBA students at Cranfield School of Management in the UK. His other tour projects have included leading birdwatching and trekking tours. His wealth of contacts in Cuba adds greatly to the experience.

End of Services.

Ready to plan your journey? Contact us today ! 678-500-9548

Schedule Your Creative Planning Session Now!

www.celebraionescapes.com

678-500-9548