

# YUVAL RON ENSEMBLE CONCERT TOUR TO HAVANA FEBRUARY 28 – MARCH 6, 2017 (Revised Oct 25)

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*Please note that this is a draft itinerary for planning purposes and is still subject to changes between now and our travel dates. The first day's activities will depend on everyone's arrival times.*

## **DAY 1, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28**

### **TBD am ~ Arrive and Meet in Havana's José Martí International Airport**

*José Martí International Airport, Terminal 2, Los Boyeros, Havana*

Because of the historic improvements in airline travel to Cuba, we are now removing the cost of airfare from the trip package. You can book flights directly to Havana from your home city through a number of convenient flight options. We will wait for you at the Havana airport to greet you and bring you to your Cuban homes for the week to settle in while our group arrives throughout the day

### **TBD ~ Transfer to Havana**

When everyone is on the buss our Cuban guides will introduce themselves and give us an orientation of what we need to know to be safe and function in Havana. There will be a refrigerator of cold bottled waters to take and drink when desired at all times. Please remember to hydrate constantly. There will be bathrooms on the busses but should only be used in emergency situations. We will keep our bags locked underneath until we check into the hotel late at night. Beth will collect all passports again and hold them to give to Sage when he returns with the group.

### **TBD pm ~ Arrive and Check-in to Your Bed & Breakfasts**

*El Vedado Neighborhood, La Habana*

We will be staying in private homes called "casas particulares" that are clustered close together in Cuba's most modern and central neighborhood of El Vedado. Take some time to get settled, meet your host family, and relax before dinner.

### **6:00 pm ~ Orientation and Walking Tour**

*Capitolio, Parque Central, Paseo de Prado*

Before dinner we will get acquainted with the historic neighborhood constructed just after the independence from Spain and the formation of the Republic of Cuba. Bordering Old Havana and Central Havana municipalities, this area is notable for significant architectural structures that exemplify the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century urban center. We will start with a tour of the newly remodeled capitol building (1929) modeled on the U.S. Capitol. Then we'll see the Grand Theater (1915), walk through Central Park (1877), and see the Neo-Moorish style Inglaterra (1879) and Sevilla (1908) hotels. We'll walk down the famous Promenade, El Paseo del Prado (1929) considered in its time as one of the greatest open spaces in the world, designed by French landscape designer JCN Forestier. Here we'll see the original Bacardí building (1930), an example of tropical Cuban Art

Deco and the National Museum of Fine Arts Cuban Collection designed by Cuban architect Alfonso Rodríguez Pichardo (1955).

**7:30 pm ~ Welcome Dinner at San Cristobal Paladar**

*San Rafael #469 e/ Lealtad y Campanario, Centro Habana*

Located in a cluttered and eclectic bottom floor home of an early 20th century mansion in Centro Habana, The Guardian rated this as the number one paladar in Havana.

**9:30 pm ~ Night Activity**

After dinner we will attend a music or dance performance, to be determined, depending on what is happening in the city that night. Such activities could include the National Ballet, National Contemporary Dance Company, National Symphony Orchestra, jazz concerts, salsa clubs, Tropicana Cabaret, drag shows, baseball games, boxing matches and many other attractions of the Havana nightlife (*optional - price not included*).

## **DAY 2, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1**

**9:00 am ~ Breakfast at Your Casa**

Every morning your hosts will cook you breakfast. Make sure to talk to tell them what your preferences are.

**10:00 am ~ Colonial Architecture and Contemporary Art**

*Centro de Desarrollo de las Artes Visuales, Esquina Teniente Rey San Ignacio, Plaza Vieja, Habana Vieja*

*Fototeca de Cuba, 307 Mercaderes, Plaza Vieja, Habana Vieja*

*Taller Experimental de Gráfica, Callejon del Chorro, Habana Vieja*

Curator Gretel Medina will guide us through an exhibit of contemporary Cuban art at one of Havana's most important contemporary art museums, El Centro del Desarrollo de Arte Contemporánea. Then we'll walk around the Plaza Vieja to mingle through its boutique museums and markets. We'll also see a contemporary photo exhibit at la Fototeca de Cuba. We will continue down Calle Los Mercaderes to la Plaza de las Armas, Havana's first square which is now an outdoor book market. Our Cuban guide will give us a history of the city's settlement. We'll then continue to the Plaza de la Catedral where we'll visit the collective graphic arts workshop, Taller de Gráfica. This public studio for local artists was established by Pablo Neruda and Che Guevara at the beginning of the Revolution as a place where artists living and visiting Havana can work on printmaking.

**12:30 pm ~ Lunch at Doña Eutimia Paladar**

*Callejón del Chorro #60-C, Habana Vieja*

Doña Eutimia is one of Cuba's oldest favorites. This little paladar is nestled in the alley next to the Taller de Gráfica. Suggested menu items: ropa vieja with limón frapé.

**2:00 pm ~ Contemporary Art and Colonial Architecture**

*Centro Wilfredo Lam, Calle San Ignacio 22, Habana Vieja*

*La Factoría Habana, Calle O'Reilly, 308 e/ Habana y Aguiar, La Habana Vieja*

We'll then see an exhibit at the Wilfredo Lam Center. We'll continue on to a new three-story art exhibiting space called La Factoría. We'll visit the Plazuela del Santo Angel, an area experiencing significant progress fostered by the emerging private sector. Then we'll visit la Plaza del Cristo del Buen Viaje, an area undergoing current restoration.

**4:00 pm ~ Meeting with Adela Dorwin, the President of the Casa de la Comunidad Hebrea, Cuba's Largest Jewish Community Center and Synagogue**

*Calle I, esquina 13, Vedado*

Those of you who are interested in meeting and learning more about the Jewish Community in Cuba can join us on this special arrangement to meet one of the most influential leaders in Cuba's Jewish community.

**6:00 pm ~ Dinner at Río Mar**

*3ra y Final #11, La Puntilla, Miramar*

Have dinner where the Almendares river meets the Caribbean Sea dividing the El Vedado and Miramar neighborhoods. These private home restaurants called "paladares", along with other types of small businesses, are nascent experiments in Cuban entrepreneurialism.

**8:00 pm ~ Meet to Leave for Yuval Ron Ensemble Concert**

Please be on time because our bus will leave promptly to not be late.

**8:30 pm ~ Yuval Ron Ensemble Concert #1 at Cuban Venue**

Hear your favorite ensemble from Los Angeles perform in Havana. The Yuval Ron Ensemble will be performing their first concert for the Cuban public. More details to be announced.

**11:30 pm ~ Late Night Music: Interactivo**

*Café Teatro Bertolt Brecht, Calle 13 Esquina I y Línea, El Vedado*

For those of you die hard music fans who are interested in experiencing one of today's greatest Latin fusion bands, we recommend you catch Interactivo at the Café Teatro Bertolt Brecht. This band creates one of the deepest grooves in the Caribbean and is regularly attended by Havana's hippest audiences (*Optional - cost not included*).

## **DAY 3, THURSDAY, MARCH 2**

**8:00 am ~ Breakfast at Your Casa**

Every morning your hosts will cook you breakfast. Make sure to talk to tell them what your preferences are.

**10:00 am ~ Visit to the Homes of Afro-Cuban Spiritual Leaders**

*Meet in Parque Trillo, Calles Hospital y San Rafael, Centro Habana*

Meet Afro-Cuban religious practitioners in this authentic and once-in-a-lifetime invitation to go inside the homes of a "palero" (Palo del Monte) and a "babalawo" (Santería). As sacred Congo and Nigerian worldviews, respectively, combined with

Catholicism, new belief systems emerged in Colonial Cuba. Members of these religious traditions will share their altars that are made to communicate with the dead, the saints, and a pantheon of African deities. The journey will take place in Cayo Hueso, beginning in Parque Trillo and ending at the Callejón de Hamel. This is an opportunity to discuss and photograph religious practices that continue to have great importance in Cuban culture.

**12:00 pm ~ Afro-Cuban Lunch at the Callejón de Hamel**

*Callejón de Hamel, entre calles Espada y Aramburu, Cayo Hueso*

Enjoy a delicious traditional buffet in the home of artist Salvador Gonzalez in Centro Habana and learn about some of the traditional creole dishes that make Cuban cuisine so rich.

**2:00 pm ~ Batá Workshop with “Obini Batá” at Havana’s Yoruba Cultural Association**

*Paseo de Martí (Prado) #615 e/ Calle Montes y Calle Dragones, Centro Habana*

The Yuval Ron Ensemble will have a musical workshop with the all-female Obini Bata. Obini means “woman” in the Yoruba language of Nigeria, and Bata is the name given to the hourglass-shaped drums that accompany Yoruba dance and song. The culture of Bata drumming originates with Africans who were brought to Cuba as slaves and is still widely practiced throughout Cuba in today’s religious communities. This ensemble of sacred Cuban music will give us a presentation of their music and then the Yuval Ron Ensemble will join them to experiment with ways of combining sacred music from different regions of the world.

**4:00 pm ~ Return to Your Casas to Relax**

Take the late afternoon to relax, catch up on email, or explore Havana on your own.

**6:30 pm ~ Dinner On Your Own**

Split into small groups to explore Havana’s booming new foodie scene. We’ll recommend options and make reservations at the best restaurants in town such as El Cocinero, Doña Eutimia, La Guarida, El Litoral, Vista al Mar, El Atelier, La Moraleja, and El Mediterráneo. You can also arrange to eat a home cooked meal by your Cuban hosts at your bed & breakfast (*Optional – not included*).

**10:30 pm ~ Late Night Music: Jazz at La Zorra y El Cuervo**

For those of you who are interested in experiencing one of today’s greatest jazz night lives in action, our tour manager Douglas Little will make reservations and take groups to Havana’s hottest jazz clubs. If we’re lucky then Roberto Fonseca will be performing tonight at the Zorra y el Cuervo. If you want to get a good seat please give \$10 CUC to Doug Little a day or two beforehand (*Optional - cost not included*).

## **DAY 4, FRIDAY, MARCH 3**

**8:00 am ~ Breakfast at Your Casa**

Every morning your hosts will cook you breakfast. Make sure to talk to tell them what your preferences are.

**10:00 am ~ In-School Concert Workshop with Music Students at the Conservatorio de Música Alejandro García Caturla**

*Conservatorio Alejandro García Caturlo, Avenida 31, Municipio Marianao, Habana, 7-260-7157*

Visit one of Cuba's top elementary and middle school level music conservatories. We will be hosted by Cuban children who are studying music and will perform Cuban music for us. The Yuval Ron Ensemble will perform a few pieces and lead a workshop. Afterward there will be time for casual socializing with the Cuban kids.

**12:00 pm ~ Lunch at Ajiaco Paladar**

*Calle 92 (Los Pinos), #267 entre 5ta y 3ra E, Cojimar*

We will have lunch in Cojimar, the famous fishing village where Hemingway kept his boat, the Pilar.

**2:00 pm ~ Ernest Hemingway's Finca Vigía**

*San Francisco de Paula Carretera Central Km 12.5 891-0809*

Visit the hilltop house of American writer Ernest Hemingway where he lived from 1940 – 1960 with his wife, Martha Gellhorn, and their children. Cuba was Hemingway's most frequented country where he wrote the Old Man and the Sea, To Have and Have Not, and For Whom the Bell Tolls. Hemingway donated his Nobel Prize to the Cuban people. His home in San Francisco de Paula has recently been the subject of a massive preservation effort by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. At this farm you will see his sport fishing boat, the Pilar. The Finca Vigía estate and the fishing village of Cojimar are considered the most significant locales for those interested in Hemingway's history.

**3:30 pm ~ Visit Artist Hector Gallo's Studio in Alamar**

*Edificio 11-C Apto. 1, Zona 10, Alamar, Havana 12500*

Hidden in the Soviet era housing project of Alamar is the extraordinary "World of Gallo." A neighborhood junkyard was transformed into an expanse of obsessed creativity, insight, and humor through this artist's endless outdoor folk constructions. His intimate galleria offers the opportunity to share a Cuban view of the world as distilled through the indomitable intelligence and wit of this retired Cuban diplomat and undiscovered artist.

**4:30 pm ~ Return to Your Casas to Relax**

Take the late afternoon to relax, catch up on email, or explore Havana on your own.

**6:30 pm ~ Dinner at El Cocinero Paladar**

**8:30 pm ~ Yuval Ron Ensemble Concert #2 at Cuban Venue**

Hear your favorite ensemble from Los Angeles perform in Havana. The Yuval Ron Ensemble will be performing for the Cuban public. More details to be announced.

## **DAY 5, SATURDAY, MARCH 4**

### **8:00 am ~ Breakfast at Your Casa**

Every morning your hosts will cook you breakfast. Make sure to talk to tell them what your preferences are.

**10:00 am ~ Class on the Music of Cuba by Musicologist Dr. Olavo Alén Rodriguez**  
*Hotel Ambos Mundos Conference Room, Obispo #153, esquina Mercaderes, La Habana Vieja, Contacts Olavo Alen 7-690-3217 and Hotel Ambos Mundos 7-860-9529*

Olavo Alén is the Director at the Center for the Research and Development of Cuban Music. He gives a dynamic multi-media presentation about the history of Cuban music, speaks perfect English, and is also great at simplifying the history of Cuban music for younger students. This classroom style presentation will give the Chicago Children's Choir an exciting and authentic introduction to the many styles of Cuban music and where they came from. This will provide an important context for the children as they are experiencing a diverse panorama of many of Cuba's different ensembles today.

### **11:30 am ~ Walk Down Neptuno to Central Park**

We will walk down Mercaderes Street to, Plaza de Armas, and down Neptuno to Parque Central. We'll then walk down the Prado Promenade to the Malecón to have lunch at La California. Our Cuban tour guide will lead us on this walking tour. Please be very careful to stay together and not wander off to sight see independently.

### **12:30 pm ~ Lunch at La California**

*Calle Crespo #55 entre San Lázaro y Refugio, Centro Habana, 7-863-7510*

We will eat lunch at this private restaurant in Centro Habana.

### **2:00 pm ~ Shopping at Mercado San José Artisan Market**

*Ave. del Puerto, Havana, Cuba*

Take 45 minutes to go shopping in one of Cuba's largest and best markets for artisans and souvenirs.

### **3:00 pm ~ Ice Cream at Coppelia**

*Malecón*

Also known as the Cathedral of Ice Cream, Coppelia is an iconic government-run cream park that opened in 1966. It was named after the comic ballet and is the setting of the opening scene of the famous Cuban film, Strawberry and Chocolate.

### **4:00 pm ~ Yuval Ron Ensemble Music Workshop at Sephardic Synagogue**

*Centro Hebreo Sefardí, 17 y E, El Vedado*

Yuval Ron and his musicians will impart a music workshop open to the Jewish Community in Cuba and the Jewish Cultural Festival participants.

### **6:30 pm ~ Dinner On Your Own**

Split into small groups to explore Havana's booming new foodie scene. We'll recommend options and make reservations at the best restaurants in town such as El

Cocinero, Doña Eutimia, La Guarida, El Litoral, Vista al Mar, El Atelier, La Moraleja, and El Mediterráneo. You can also arrange to eat a home cooked meal by your Cuban hosts at your bed & breakfast (*Optional – not included*).

**8:30 pm ~ La Fábrica de Arte Cubano**

*Calle 26 esquina 11, El Vedado*

Experience Havana's hippest new magnet for the urban and chic: an old peanut factory transformed into a multi-level and almost infinite art and music space. This new cultural hangout is an entrepreneurial project of Cuban celebrity musician X Alfonso. It's a shining reflection of what the future might hold for Havana as the cosmopolitan trend-setting cultural capital of Latin America (*optional – cost not included*).

## **DAY 6, SUNDAY, MARCH 5**

**8:00 am ~ Breakfast at Your Casa**

Every morning your hosts will cook you breakfast. Make sure to talk to tell them what your preferences are.

**11:30 am ~ Rumba at the Callejón de Hamel**

*Callejón de Hamel, entre calles Espada y Aramburu, Cayo Hueso*

Rumba (guaguancó) is a secular Afro-Cuban music, song, and dance tradition that lies at the heart of all Cuban rhythms. In this Sunday tradition, rumberos from Centro Habana will play afro-Cuban songs and rhythms while the neighborhood gathers to dance. The setting is the Callejón de Hamel, a back alley where, 20 years ago, artist Salvador Gonzalez decided to eschew the traditional art scene and paint on the outside walls of his apartment. After the neighbors started to applaud his artistic effort, he transformed it into a large-scale mural and public art installation inspired by Afro-Cuban spiritual practices where rumba music, dance, and rituals happen every Sunday.

**12:30 pm ~ Lunch at La Guarida Paladar**

*Concordia. No. 418 e/ Gervasio y Escobar, Centro Habana*

Anyone who has been to La Guarida will find it difficult to disagree that Enrique and Odeisys have managed to create their own magical home restaurant. The building, originally known as La Mansión Camagüey, shows its former grandeur from the magnificent wooden entrance door through the marble staircase up the two flights of stairs to the restaurant itself. The location for a classic scene from Cuba's most iconic film "Fresa y Chocolate," La Guarida has gone on to become one of the most popular restaurants in Cuba. Make sure to stop on the first floor and wander a bit for some amazing photo ops.

**2:30 pm ~ Visit to Artist Jose Fuster's Studio in Jaimanitas**

*Calle 3A e/ Calle 226 y Calle 222, Jaimanitas*

Meet the artist who has transformed his entire neighborhood into a Gaudi or Brancusiesque wonderland of sculptures, mosaics, and murals. Fuster has become internationally renowned for community projects where neighbors volunteer their homes

to become part of a sprawling masterpiece known as “Fusterlandia.” José Fuster’s Home and neighborhood gallery.

**3:30 pm ~ Visit to Kcho’s Studio in Romerillo**

*Calle 7 y 120, Romerillo, Playa, Havana*

Cuba’s most well known contemporary artist has his own studio and cultural center in the suburb of Romerillo. Not only does he offer free art exhibits at the highest level, it is the first and only place in Cuba to offer free high-speed public wi-fi to anyone who wants it. You can see throngs of Cubans gather here around the clock to log on and connect with the outside world.

**4:30 pm ~ Return to Your Casas to Relax**

Take the late afternoon to relax, catch up on email, or explore Havana on your own.

**6:45 pm ~ Old Cars**

We will travel to dinner from “Havana Style” in a fleet of specially selected 1950s American convertibles that will take us to dinner on a scenic route through the city.

**7:30 pm ~ Farewell Dinner at La Cocina de Lilliam**

*Calle 48 no 1311 e/ 13 y 15, Miramar*

Celebrate our last night in Cuba at a party at the house of chef Lilliam. One of the oldest paladares in Havana serving traditional Cuban cuisine, this back yard open-air garden setting provides the perfect atmosphere to savor the flavors and sounds of Havana.

**9:30 pm ~ Night Activity**

After dinner we will attend a music or dance performance, to be determined, depending on what is happening in the city that night. Such activities could include the National Ballet, National Contemporary Dance Company, National Symphony Orchestra, jazz concerts, salsa clubs, Tropicana Cabaret, drag shows, baseball games, boxing matches and many other attractions of the Havana nightlife (*optional - price not included*).

## **DAY 7, MONDAY, MARCH 6**

**TBD am ~ Check Out of Casas**

**TBD am ~ Transfer to José Martí International Airport Terminal 2**

*José Martí International Airport, Terminal 2, Los Boyeros, Havana*

Depending on your departure time, we will transfer you to the Havana Airport three hours before take off. We will assist you through check in and customs to make sure that you are well on your way home.

***Please note:*** Cuba remains a developing country, and guests traveling here should adjust their expectations accordingly. Delays commonly occur, and flexibility and patience on the part of visitors is a must. Traveling to Cuba on a cultural exchange is quite unlike journeying to other destinations. While every effort will be made to operate the program as scheduled,



*all activities are subject to change without notice. In the event that an individual or location becomes unavailable, a comparable activity will be substituted.*