

YUVAL RON ENSEMBLE CONCERT TOUR TO HAVANA, CUBA, FEBRUARY 28 – MARCH 6, 2017

DAY 1, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

9:45 am ~ Departure to Cuba from Miami International Airport

10:45 am ~ Arrive in Havana

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

11:45 am ~ Transfer to Havana

When everyone is on the bus 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 buses but should only be used in emergency situations. We will keep our bags locked underneath until we check into our “casas particulares” accommodations in late afternoon.

12:30 pm ~ Welcome Lunch at Río Mar

3ra y Final #11, La Puntilla, Miramar

Eat lunch 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.

2:00 pm ~ Orientation and Walking Tour

Capitolio, Parque Central, Paseo de Prado

After lunch 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-19th 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).

3:30 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.

7:30 pm ~ 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 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 ~ 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

An exclusive meeting with one of the most influential leaders in Cuba’s Jewish community to hear about the **Jewish history of Cuba** and the context for the historic visit of the Yuval Ron Ensemble to Cuba.

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 ~ return to the casa's accommodations to rest and prepare for the evening premier concert of Yuval Ron Ensemble in Cuba.

6:00 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)*

8:00 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

Escort, hear and celebrate your favorite international peace promoting, music and dance ensemble led by Yuval Ron in 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 ~ An Exclusive 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 “Obba Irawo” in Centro Habana

Industria # 266 Altos e/ Neptuno y Virtudes, Centro Habana

This **family of master Afro-Cuban drummers**, under the direction of **Octavio Rodriguez Rivera**, will give us a 60-minute workshop that breaks down the complex drumming, song, and dance patterns that are used in Cuba to communicate directly to the African gods. Octavio is considered **one of the foremost authorities on Afro-Cuban folkloric music**. He began his study of percussion in the 1970's with master and Omo Aña drummer Papo Angarica. He was a professor at the National Art School and he participated for a long time in carnivals in the comparsas of Andrés Escandon (BAYOYA). After the workshop, **Octavio's drummers and musicians of Yuval Ron Ensemble will have an exclusive jam session** to experiment in improvisation and fusion of their two different musical traditions.

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 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. (*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 who will perform Cuban music for us. The **Yuval Ron Ensemble will perform a few pieces and lead a workshop for the children**. 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 Hemmingway'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, sing along and dance with your favorite ensemble from Los Angeles perform in Havana. The Yuval Ron Ensemble will be performing a second concert 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 and interacting with Yuval Ron regarding Yuval's work, writings and the power of music and sound.

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 leisurely time for shopping at **Mercado San José**, one of Cuba's largest and best markets for artisans and souvenirs.

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

Centro Hebreo Sefardí, 17 y E, El Vedado

Participate in a **music and dance workshop with Yuval Ron and his Ensemble** at the historic Sephardic Synagogue in Havana.

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

An exclusive meeting with the artist Jose Fuster, 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, and many other attractions of the Havana nightlife (*optional - price not included*).

DAY 7, MONDAY, MARCH 6

10:30 am ~ Check Out of Casas

11:00 am ~ Transfer to José Martí International Airport Terminal 2

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

Flight AA9443 leaves from José Martí International Airport, Terminal 2. Our Cuban guide will help us check in and get us through customs. Make sure to bring your Cuban visa inside your passport for the immigrations clerk to stamp and collect on your way out.

2:00 pm ~ Flight Departs Havana for Miami

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

Check in time is 11:30 am. Our Cuban guide will help us check in and get us through customs.

3:00 pm ~ Arrival in Miami

We'll go through US customs, say goodbye, and catch our connecting flights to our home cities.

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.