



Cuba Photography with Stephen Ingraham
March 17-25, 2020
\$1600

Optics for the Tropics is an authorized group that can escort you on a Support for the Cuban People educational adventure in Cuba.



Join us for this unique opportunity to photograph a variety of historic architecture, people, cultural lifestyle, landscapes and birds. We will have ample opportunity to have meaningful interactions with many Cuban people along the way.

DAY 1 Fly Tampa to Havana, we will have a independent driver to drive us about an hour to Matanzas; the Athens of Cuba, and explore the gems of this delightful little town. We can visit the Pharmacy Museum, independent artists on the river front, the independent spelunking visitor center with 3D films of caves from around the world, Ediciones Vigia an independent bookstore where handmade books are created and sold. Check-in at Hotel Velasco on Liberty Square. Dinner at an privately owned restaurant. Evening cultural activity may also be available at a local theater or plaza.

DAY 2 Matanzas, we will explore an exclusive cave system not open to the public, available only by special appointment with the spelunking association who manages and protects the cave. We will meet with the Director of the spelunking association to discuss caves and the geological history of the area. Lunch at a private restaurant and then a visit to the art district of Callejon de las Tradiciones, an independent community run organization to preserve traditional culture and address social issues.

DAY 3 Drive to Cienfuegos, about 2.5 hours, and explore the architecture of this colonial city. Watch the sunset and have dinner at a private restaurant. Check into our rooms at private houses.

Day 4 Drive about 2 hours to Trinidad, for a walking tour of this historic city with an independent guide. Check into our rooms at a casa particular. Dinner at a private restaurant.

DAY 5 Depart for Playa Larga about 3 hours. Visit Playa Giron Museum and learn a new perspective on the Bay of Pigs Invasion. Visit a private house in Palpite and see the worlds smallest bird, the bee hummingbird.

Day 6 More field trips around Zapata Swamp.

DAY 7 Day trip options include exploration of the following topics as decide by the group: endemic birds of Cuba, Karst topography and coral reefs, and/or community agriculture.

DAY 8 Depart for Havana about 2 hours, city tour, lunch, museums and exploration.

DAY 9 Pack up and have our bags ready to go. We have a few hours to explore the city before departing to the airport at 3 PM.

All this for only \$1,600 a person, all inclusive; meals, lodging, entrance fees, and in country transportation. Airfare, tips and incidentals are not included. (I use Southwest Airlines from Tampa to Havana, 2 free bags and reduced price on visa.)

For more information contact Joni Ellis at joni@OpticsfortheTropics.org. A deposit of \$500 is requested to hold your place, balance due by February 1, 2020.

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Make checks payable to: Optics for the Tropics and mail to 2205 SE 23 Place, Gainesville, FL 32641

We travel under the general license of the Treasury Department as outlined below for the category of **Support for the Cuban People. This is the category you choose when purchasing your airline ticket.**

(a) **General license.** The travel-related transactions set forth in § 515.560(c) and other transactions that are intended to provide support for the Cuban people are authorized, provided that:

(1) The activities are of:

(iii) Individuals and non-governmental organizations that promote independent activity intended to strengthen civil society in Cuba;

(iii) is what applies to our tours. Our guides are undertaking independent activity that will generate economic activity in the civil sector, and will raise appreciation and support by citizens for birds and other natural resources. We also contribute to independent business by providing guides with binoculars and other materials such as field guides, tee shirts, educational material, etc. to do their job.

(2) Each traveler engages in a full-time schedule of activities that:

(i) Enhance contact with the Cuban people, support civil society in Cuba, or promote the Cuban people's independence from Cuban authorities; and

We enhance contact by meeting Cubans in their homes, businesses and on the street. We hire independent drivers, guides, use privately owned restaurants and lodging in private homes.

(ii) Result in meaningful interaction with individuals in Cuba.

We have guests that meet us for meals and conversation. We interact with Cuban people wherever we go. What can be more meaningful than working to conserve Cuba's natural treasures together. I do believe that our justification of meaningful interactions are strengthened when groups have an opportunity to hear from a variety of speakers on a variety of topics. Hearing a speaker talk about the Cuban economy is as important as hearing about park management.

(3) The traveler's schedule of activities does not include free time or recreation in excess of that consistent with a full-time schedule.

The bird monitoring portion of the trip adds to the scientific data of a global database known as eBird, the tours also have a purpose in contributing to conserving Cuban citizens' natural legacy. The tours have a full-schedule of eight hours a day.

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Name:

First: _____ Middle: _____ Last: _____

Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Occupation: _____

Passport #: _____ Expiration: _____

U.S. Citizen? Yes _____ No _____ if not, citizen of: _____

Date of birth: _____ Place of birth: _____

Gender (used for matching room mates): _____

Person to contact in case of emergency: _____

Relation: _____ Phone: _____

Spanish language ability: None _____ Basic _____ Conversational _____ Fluent _____

Assign me a roommate: _____ Do you smoke: No _____ Yes _____

I wish to share a room with: _____

I prefer a single room with the additional cost of \$30 a night. _____ please initial.

List special dietary needs, medical conditions, or special needs I should be aware of.

Briefly describe your expectations for this program.

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Registration Includes all accommodations, breakfast and dinner, activities and entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary, in-country transportation, full-time guide for the duration of the program. Does not include international airfare, gratuities, alcoholic beverages, or other items of a personal nature.

Registration cost is based on double occupancy. Single supplement is available for \$150 per person.

To reserve space please submit the registration form with your \$500 non-refundable deposit.

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If you have any questions please contact Joni Ellis at Joni@OpticsfortheTropics.org or 352-262-7300.

Final payment must be made 60 days before departure. If it is necessary for you to cancel your trip, we will make every effort to refund what we can. Some expenses must be paid before we arrive and not refundable such as bus transportation.

Flight info from FL airports

Southwest Airlines is my favorite, they allow 2 free bags. I prefer the Tampa flight, depending on your location you may need to check with other airlines.

VISA - a tourist visa is required, Depending on the airline, you might purchase it online, and pick it up at the airport when you check in. Other times you buy it at the airport near the gate. ALWAYS print out your confirmation and bring with you.

It is highly recommended that you journal every evening to document how this trip...

- **Promoted independent activity** intended to strengthen civil society in Cuba. *I.e. the use and name of private guides, drivers, homes, restaurants, businesses or organizations visited each day.*
- **Enhanced contact with the Cuban people**, support civil society in Cuba, or **promoted the Cuban people's independence** from Cuban authorities. *Names of everyone you talk and interact with, what was discussed.*
- **Resulted in meaningful interaction with individuals in Cuba.** *What was meaningful each day, each interaction.*
- **Document a full time schedule.** *You may want to add detail to the itinerary as we go along. Sometimes things change due to unexpected circumstances.*