Preliminary Itinerary

Day 1 - Friday, May 29, 2015
The group will depart Miami on a charter flight to Havana. Upon arrival, we will meet the bus driver and Cuban guide before transferring to the hotel. Enjoy a walking tour of the architecture of La Habana Vieja in small groups, and enjoy a welcome reception and dinner with your travel companions and hosts at the hotel, before an excursion into Old Havana in Havana's unique 2 person cocotaxis and a chance to chat with the drivers about their work and experiences. [Dinner only]

Day 2 - Saturday, May 30, 2015
The group will take the ferry to Regla across Havana Harbor. We will visit the Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Regla, one of Cuba's most important churches for Catholics as well as for Afro-Cuban religious practitioners, and then learn more about the town and about syncretic religions at the Museo de Regla. After lunch, we will visit the Havana neighborhood of Cerro to see the work of Caritas Cubana, Cuba's Catholic Charities, at the Quinta Santovenia, and talk with the sisters there about their work with the Cuban elderly. [Breakfast and Lunch]

Day 3 - Sunday, May 31, 2015
Visit the Patronato de la Habana in a cultural exchange with the members of the Jewish community in Havana. The group will visit the John Lennon Park and see the statue of John Lennon seated on a park bench. We will also visit the elaborate mausoleums of the Cementerio de Colón with a guide from the Cemetery, followed by lunch at a local restaurant. In the afternoon we will see the Casa de la Amistad, a beautiful rose-colored mansion with interiors designed by Rene Lalique and speak with project directors about the history of the house and the renovation. We'll visit the famous ice cream parlor Coppelia, and then the Hotel Nacional (designed by McKim, Mead, and White) where the Hotel historian will recount to us its history. The group will also visit the landmarks of La Rampa, as Vedado’s main thoroughfare of 23rd Street is called. [Breakfast and Lunch]

Day 4 - Monday, June 1, 2015
We will take a walking tour of Old Havana with an expert on the ongoing renovation of the Old City, focusing on the four main squares: the Plaza de Armas, Plaza de San Francisco de Asis, Plaza Vieja, and Plaza de la Catedral. Following the excursion, we'll visit the famous Workshop School, Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, where students are trained in historic restoration trades, including brickwork, carpentry, painting, and stonemasonry. In the afternoon the group will explore the Murallas district and the ongoing rehabilitation of the Capitolio before visiting the Colegio Universitario San Gerónimo, where historic preservation, archaeology, and museology are taught. There will be a reception with faculty and staff at the School. [Breakfast and Lunch]

Day 5 - Tuesday, June 2, 2015
This morning we will travel by bus from Havana to the City of Cienfuegos, taking time to visit Cuba's oldest Botanical Garden alongside botanical researchers. Explore what was once the Harvard Experimental Station in Cuba – a well-preserved garden full of tropical and rare garden species, including over 400 varieties of orchids, 230 palms, at least 65 ficus, and over 30 species of bamboo. Spend the afternoon and evening in Cienfuegos, whose historic center was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2005 in recognition of its 19th-century urban planning. Enjoy dinner with fellow travelers at a local restaurant. [Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]
Day 6 - Wednesday, June 3, 2015
Travel today to the town of Trinidad, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Cuba’s best-preserved colonial city, intact since the 18th century. We will have the chance to meet with historic rehabilitation specialists. Enjoy a special lunch in Trinidad before heading to Valle de los Ingenios – the Valley of the Sugar Mills – where the group will meet with urban agriculturalists to learn more about the early history of sugar. Spend the evening in Trinidad, including dinner at a local restaurant. [Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]

Day 7 - Thursday, June 4, 2015
This morning we return to Havana by way of Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs). The group will walk on the historic beach, which was one of the two landing sites for the 1961 US-backed invasion, visit the museum and meet with docents. We will return to Havana after lunch. The remainder of the day will be dedicated to visiting exhibitions of the Bienal 2015. [Breakfast and Lunch]

Day 8 - Friday, June 5, 2015
This morning we will visit the Instituto Superior de Arte, a campus for the arts first imagined by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, where visual and performing arts come to life on what used to be the most exclusive country club in Havana, and where we’ll meet with various members of the arts community. We’ll make a mid day visit to the famous Tropicana Club, a six-acre suburban estate with lush tropical gardens built as a cabaret nightclub. After lunch, the group will visit the community arts center, La Lavandería, which is home to several artists, including “The Merger” with Alain Pino, a friend to the BAC for more than a decade. [Breakfast and Lunch]

Day 9 - Saturday, June 6, 2015
Visiting the suburbs of Havana, we will stop by the early 1960s housing development Alamar where we will talk with members of the urban agriculture cooperative Organiponico de Alamar. We will enjoy lunch in Cojimar, a small fishing village that was the inspiration for Ernest Hemingway’s The Old Man and the Sea. In the afternoon the group will learn more about the continued restoration and preservation of Hemingway’s home, Finca Vigía, as well as the preservation and documentation of his personal articles and papers. [Breakfast and Lunch]

Day 10 - Sunday, June 7, 2015
Small group exploration of the Bienal, meeting with artists and exhibitors. We'll have a farewell dinner on this last night in Cuba to thank our Cuban hosts for sharing their work with us. [Breakfast and Dinner]

Day 11 - Monday, June 8, 2015
Depart from Havana to Miami. Please note: charter flights from Havana to Miami do not always depart at their scheduled hour. Allow a minimum of four hours between the predicted time for the charter's arrival in Miami and your flight departing from there to your final destination.

The above itinerary is a joint program of the BAC and the Center for Cuban Studies which holds a special license from OFAC, the U.S. Treasury Department, 31 C.F.R. §515.565(b)(2). It is a requirement of the license that each traveler have a full-time schedule of educational exchange activities that will result in meaningful interaction between the travelers and individuals in Cuba. See www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions

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