

Discover CUBA!

A People-to-People Exploration of Cuba

March 30 - April 7, 2018

Dear Friends:

We invite you to join us as we explore Cuba in 2018! On this fascinating program, we will travel on a General License from the U.S. Treasury Dept. on a **People-to People Discovery of Cuba**.

Soak up the sights and sounds of Cuba's historic cities, fascinating natural heritage, unique culture, art and music, as we explore several of Cuba's UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Our journey begins in **Havana—a World Heritage city**—where we will explore the Spanish colonial heritage of Cuba in La Habana Vieja. Havana's old town is rich with memorabilia including wonderful music, museums, and famous fortifications.

Visit the **Planetarium**, commemorated in 2010, for the 400th anniversary of Galileo's astronomical discoveries, and explore the **National Botanic Garden**. See where **Hemingway** lived and wrote, and mingle with the local people along the **Malecon**, Havana's famous seashore.

Travel to scenic **Vinales Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site**, famous for its beautiful mogotes and picturesque limestone formations.

See the monument to the historic revolutionary **Che Guevara** and meet with amateur astronomers in the island's central city of **Santa Clara**.

Stay in the beautiful **Escambray Mountains**. With a local expert, look for intriguing flora and



fauna including the smallest bird in the world (the bee hummingbird).

Wander through history in **Trinidad's** colonial old town. Walk the cobblestone streets while listening to music, viewing local artist's studios, and enjoying the unique charms of the **500-year-old UNESCO city**.

Travel along Cuba's coast to the **UNESCO city of Cienfuegos** "Pearl of the South". It surrounds Cuba's most spectacular natural bay. See and hear music and art thriving with a visit to big band icon **Benny More Art School**, and enjoy a performance by the world renowned **Cienfuegos Choir**.

As we travel around this amazing island, the largest in the Caribbean, we will meet with Cuban naturalists, and local experts. Throughout our journey, we will engage Cubans directly in discussions about their lives and work, culture, and traditions.

Our journey will be a rich expedition of discovery. We hope you will join us for this fascinating visit to Cuba!

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Margaret'.

Margaret M. Betchart
President, Betchart Expeditions Inc.
for AAAS, Sigma Xi, ACS
& the Planetary Society



Discover Cuba Itinerary

Pre Night: Home to Miami

Arrive Miami and spend the night at the group hotel located near the Miami Airport.

Day 1: Miami to Havana, Cuba

This morning, check in for our group flight from Miami to Havana, Cuba. Visit the historic Square of the Revolution where Castro addressed the country and see the Jose Marti Memorial. *Habana Libre or similar (4 nights)*. Welcome dinner. (D)

Day 2: Historic Havana & The Planetarium

Our day begins with a visit to the Havana Planetarium housed in the former Habana Cinema in lively Plaza Vieja. The Planetarium opened in 2010 commemorating the 400th anniversary of Galileo's astronomical discoveries. See the reproduction of the solar system, a simulation of the Big Bang, the Cosmonautics and Space Technique Hall illustrating the relationship of man with space, and a theatre that allows viewing of over 6,000 stars. Spend the afternoon walking through the many plazas and squares of Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Accompanied by our local guide, mingle with the local Cuban people. Evening performance (Buena Vista Social Club or similar). (B,L,D)

Day 3: Vinales Valley

Today we will travel west to explore the Vinales Valley UNESCO World Heritage Site famed for its mogotes and picturesque limestone formations dating back to the Jurassic. The valley is surrounded by mountains covered with pine and oak forest. The valley is farmed by traditional agriculture techniques, primarily cultivating tobacco. The culture of the valley is a blend of the indigenous people, Spanish heritage, and black slaves. Return to Havana. (B,L,D)



LEADERSHIP

A licensed Cuban guide will accompany the group throughout the tour, in addition to Dr. Lee Harper and Dr. Carlos Sanchez.

Dr. Lee Harper is a tropical ecologist who has conducted research in the Caribbean and in Brazil. He

has been leading trips to Cuba for Betchart Expeditions for several years to great acclaim. He currently works with government agencies doing research along the St. Lawrence Seaway and is a licensed boat captain and sailor.

Dr. Carlos Sanchez is a professor of biology at the University of Havana and a botanist for the National Botanic Garden. Carlos speaks fluent English and enjoys sharing his interest and knowledge of the gardens and natural areas of Cuba.

He has led many Cuba trips for Betchart Expeditions.



Day 4: Hemingway, National Botanical Garden & Havana's Museums

Today, visit Finca La Vigia, where Hemingway lived and wrote works including *The Old Man and the Sea*. Continue to the National Botanical Garden for a special tour and lunch. You have free time this afternoon to visit one of Havana's many museums such as the Natural History or Fine Arts Museum. Dine at a paladar tonight, followed by the Colonial Cannon Firing Ceremony at the "San Carlos de la Cabana" Fortress. (B,L,D)



Day 5: Havana - Santa Clara - Topes de Collantes

This morning, we depart Havana for the Sierra de Escambray Mountains. Drive through the Cuban countryside with small towns and sugar cane fields. Meet with amateur astronomers and Prof. Rolando Cardenas Ortiz of the Central University of Las Villas, Santa Clara (if schedules allow). Afternoon scenic mountain drive to Topes de Collantes. *Los Helechos Hotel*. (2 nights). (B,L,D)

Day 6: Parque de Codina

Today we explore Parque de Codina, just 3 miles from Topes de Collantes. Our mountain adventure begins with a drive in large Soviet-era trucks through this mountainous area. Explore the interpretive trail Encantos de Codina with a Cuban naturalist. See a variety of orchids and learn about the medicinal use of many of the plants, as well as picturesque landscapes. Visit the House of Coffee and the Museum of Cuban Art. (B,L,D)



Day 7: Trinidad & Cienfuegos

This morning we head to the colorful colonial UNESCO city of Trinidad. We will walk the cobblestone streets, listen to music, visit art studios, and see the colorful church and cathedral with a local historian. Continue to Cienfuegos along the south coast. *Hotel (2 nights).* (B,L,D)

Day 8: Cienfuegos

Visit the Benny More Art School to see firsthand how artists and musicians are cultivated in Cuba. This illustrates Cuba's commitment to arts and education. In the afternoon see the central Jose Marti Plaza and visit the Palacio del Valle. There will also be a short performance by the world renowned Cienfuegos Choir (if they are not on tour). (B,L,D)

Day 9: To Miami

Transfer to the Cienfuegos or Havana airport for our return flight to Miami. Arrive in the evening. (B)

Note: 3 hour minimum connection time required. The optional Post Night Miami group hotel is recommended, with flight departing from Miami for home the following morning.

IMPORTANT: Flight times are based on 2017 schedules. Updated schedules may not be available until approximately 30 days prior to departure. We recommend booking your flights to/from Miami/



Home with an overnight in Miami before and after the trip. Rooms at our group hotel near the Miami airport will be offered and will be added to your final invoice.

Cuban Hotels: The hotels will be the best available in each location and confirmed before the tour.

Reservations

#1493

Yes! I/We want to join the **CUBA Expedition, March 30 - April 7, 2018**, offered by **Betchart Expeditions Inc. and The Planetary Society.**

Please reserve _____ space(s) on the expedition. As a deposit, I/we have enclosed a check for \$_____ (\$1,000 per person), payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account. A copy of the information page of my/our passport is/are enclosed. Yes _____ No _____

Name(s): _____ Age _____
 _____ Age _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home (_____) _____
 Work (_____) _____

Email: _____

Member: ☐ Planetary Society ☐ AAAS ☐ Sigma Xi ☐ ACS

Accommodations Preference:

☐ Twin ☐ Single ☐ Twin Share ☐ with a friend or
☐ Nonsmoker ☐ Smoker ☐ assign a roommate

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Please Mail To: CUBA 2018
 Betchart Expeditions Inc.
 17050 Montebello Road
 Cupertino, CA 95014-5435**

AAAS Travels ACS & Sigma Xi Expeditions The Planetary Society

BETCHART EXPEDITIONS Inc.
17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435

FIRST CLASS

Discover CUBA!
March 30 - April 7, 2018

COSTS & CONDITIONS

Expedition Fee: \$4,595 per person twin share + air fare from Miami to Havana, Cuba, with return Cienfuegos or Havana to Miami, approximately \$650. This is based on a minimum of 17 paying participants.

Singles: We encourage singles to register on a "twin share" basis. Should you desire single accommodations, the single supplement is \$795. If you do not have a roommate and we cannot assign one, you must pay the single supplement. There are limited single accommodations available on this expedition.

Expedition Fee Includes: Group airport transfers in Havana and Cienfuegos, transportation by air conditioned motorcoach or vans, accommodations twin share with private bath in Cuban 3-star or 4-star hotels which reflect the culture of the country; all meals from dinner on Day 1 until breakfast on Day 9; entrance fees; gratuities to bellboys and waiters; leadership by an excellent naturalist and a biologist from the University of Havana; special meetings with Cuban guests; leadership, administration.



Expedition Fee Does Not Include: Air fare and Cuba visa (quoted separately); pre-night in Miami, gratuities to your expedition leader, guide and driver; luggage charges; items of strictly a personal nature (passport, phone calls, alcoholic beverages, laundry, internet, phone, fax, snacks or sodas); tips to hotel staff; personal insurance; foreign airport departure tax.

Air Fare & Airline Ticketing: All passengers fly together from Miami to Havana on a group flight March 30 and return together to Miami on April 7. All passengers should book independent flights to arrive in Miami by 4:30 pm on March 29, 2018 and to depart Miami after 10:30 pm on April 7 or overnight in Miami. AIR FARES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE UNTIL TICKETED.

Reservations, Deposits & Payments: Please mail the completed reservation form with a deposit check for \$1,000 per person to:

**Discover Cuba 2018
Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road
Cupertino, CA 95014-5435**

Final payment is due December 21, 2016.

Cancellations & Refunds: The initial deposit is refundable up to 100 days before departure less a \$100 handling fee per person. There is no refund after December 18, 2017 unless your place is resold, then a \$100 per person handling fee is withheld. There are no refunds for unused meals, entrance fees, or other expedition features.

Questions? Please call **Taunya DeYoung**
Betchart Expeditions Inc.,

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or (408) 252-4910 (International)

Fax: (408) 252-1444

Email: Taunya@betchartexpeditions.com

Look on the Web: www.betchartexpeditions.com