

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF SOUTHERN MAINE

JEWISH MISSION TO CUBA

March 8 – 15, 2015

ITINERARY

(Subject to Changes)

SUN, March 8

DEPART TO MIAMI

Fly from your home city to Miami, Florida (*on own account*) –Overnight. *Crowne Plaza Miami International airport. Orientation Meeting at 8:00 pm*

OVERNIGHT: MIAMI

MON, March 9

DEPART FOR HAVANA

Transfer to Miami international airport at approximately 8:30 am and depart Miami for Havana – estimated departure time is 11:00 AM, the flight is approximately 50 minutes. Upon arrival at Havana's Jose Marti Airport, go through passport control, security, retrieve your luggage and wait for all in the group before going through customs. Proceed outside to meet your Guide.



Board the bus and take a **City Tour of Modern Havana**. Stop at **Revolution Square**, the administrative and political center of Cuba. Continue to the neighborhoods of **Miramar** and **Cubacan** which retain their pre-revolution air of exclusivity. The beautiful houses are now used for embassies and commercial offices.

Next we will visit the home and studio of Jose Fuster, The Guadi of Cuba. His home and his neighborhood are his canvas. A truly unique experience.

Visit, Beth Shalom synagogue for a briefing by Adela Dworin, President of Cuba's Jewish Community as well a visit to the synagogue, pharmacy and Sunday school location.

Check into your hotel. (Melia Cohiba)

Dinner is evening at **El Ajibe Restaurant** for your first 'taste' of Cuba. (*included meal*)

OVERNIGHT: Melia Cohiba, HAVANA

TUES, March 10

HABANA VIEJA

Following breakfast we will have a **walking tour of Havana Vieja (The Old City)**. Habana Vieja is a UNESCO world heritage city and has architecture designed over the 480 year life of the city. Visit and see all 4 of **Plazas in Habana Vieja**, Obispo Street, and feel the pulse of life in Old Havana. You will visit **Plaza de Iglesia** and **Convento de San Francisco de Asis**, built between 1580 and 1591 and is one of the finest churches from the colonial era.



Stop for lunch today at **La Dominica** (*included meal*).



Continue to the **Plaza de la Cathedral** and **Plaza de Armas** where Old Havana originated. Here we find the **Palacio de los Capitanes Generales**, begun in 1776. This stately palace remains as a testament to Cuban's importance as Spain's principal port of the Americas during the 18th century.



We will visit the only Orthodox synagogue in Cuba, Adath Israel. We will be briefed about specific needs of this congregation, drop off some of our humanitarian aid and interact with some of the community members.

Proceed to the Artesian Market.

Dinner is on your own account – you will be provided with an extensive but selective list of restaurants (*privately owned*). Throughout your time in Cuba your Guide is your best source of information and can assist you with your selections and reservations.

Optional trip to the Tropicana Nightclub. In continuous operation since 1939, this is a once in a lifetime experience not to be missed.

OVERNIGHT: Melia Cohiba, HAVANA

WED, March 11



Begin the day by visiting the **Jewish Cemeteries** (Ashkenazi and Sephardic), and see the first **Holocaust Memorial(s)** in the Western hemisphere.

Next, drive close by to La Finca, Ernest **Hemingway's Estate** – enjoy seeing this famous writer's favorite home. You'll see where he worked and also his boat named the Pilar.



Lunch at Las Terrezas (Included)



This afternoon, visit the **Central Sephardic Synagogue** and meet **Dr. Mayra Levy** its President. You will be briefed about the synagogue, hear about the Mitrani Jewish Senior Day Care Center, and visit the pharmacy. Drop off our donations. Tour the Holocaust Exhibit here, created by **ORT** in Cuba. **Deliver Humanitarian Aid.**

Return to your hotel.

Dinner is on your own this evening.

OVERNIGHT: Melia Cohiba HOTEL, HAVANA

THUR, March 12

MORE OF HAVANA

Visit the **Bellas Artes Museum** that exhibits Cuban art collections from the colonial times up to the present.

Next visit the **Museum of the Revolution**. The museum is housed in what was the Presidential Palace of all Cuban presidents from Mario García Menocal to Fulgencio Batista. It became the Museum of the Revolution during the years following the Cuban revolution.



Lunch and the rest of the afternoon is at your leisure.

Dinner on your own. Ask our guide for suggestions and reservations..

FRI, March 13

Santa Clara and KABBALAT SHABBAT

Drive to **Santa Clara**, founded in 1654, where in 1958 Che Guevara fought a decisive battle that cut the island in two and led to Batista fleeing the country days later.

We will stop for beverages and to “stretch your legs” along the way to Santa Clara.



Meet with David Tacher, President of this small Jewish community. Enjoy a Buffet **Lunch with David and Jewish Community Members** in one of Santa Clara’s Paladares (included). This is an opportunity to talk with Jews who live in the provinces of Cuba and how they continue to live a Jewish life.

After lunch **deliver humanitarian aid** at the site of the newest synagogue in Cuba – David’s vision of many years.

Visit the **Jewish Cemetery** that contains the second **Holocaust Memorial** in Cuba. This should prove to be a very special moment.

Continue to Cienfuegos and check in to the Hotel Jagua. Shabbat services and dinner at the hotel with Rebecca Langus and members of the Jewish Community of Cienfuegos. (Included).

OVERNIGHT: Jagua HOTEL, Cienfuegos

SAT, March 14

SHABBAT SHALOM – Trinidad and Cienfuegos

This morning we will take our bus to Trinidad de Cuba, a UNESCO World Heritage City. We will stop at the studio of the primer potter in all of Cuba. Enjoy a walking tour of the city center, visit a Santeria Priest and learn about their religious beliefs. Spend some time on your own enjoying this quaint little city.

Return to Cienfuegos. In the evening we will be entertained either by the Cienfuegos Coral or Cienfuegos Symphony (depending on availability.)

Farewell dinner at Palacio de Valle.

SUN, MARCH 15

DEPART FOR MIAMI

Check out of our hotel, Tour of the main plaza including a visit to the Terry Tomas Theater.

Drive to the airport in **Cienfuegos** for your departure flight to Miami. Arrive Miami approximately 3 pm. Please note that due to US Law, flights can only be confirmed 60 days in advance.