



# IVY CULTURAL EXPEDITION

## Cuba Information Packet

For the first time in decades, Cuba's door is slowly creaking open for American travelers.

As one of the first to experience this cobblestoned communist isle of 11 million inhabitants, you'll find the rum is plentiful, the smiles infectious and dancing encouraged. Exclusively for IVY members, we've assembled a cast of Cuban characters to give you a proper welcome: one of Havana's best guides, musicians, local artists, cigar rollers, and entrepreneurs that understand where Cuba came from, where the country sits now and, more importantly, where it's going.

## ITINERARY

*\*\*Below is a sample itinerary from IVY's Spring Cuba Cultural Expedition. Final itinerary subject to change*

## ITINERARY DISCLAIMER

This particular tour has been designed with specific Cuban individuals and artists in mind, whose schedules and availabilities may change without notice. While we do our best to adhere to the itinerary, traveling in Cuba requires significant flexibility, and changes to specific people-to-people interactions and other activities may occur.

In addition, some changes may occur in our itineraries due to inclement weather and common seasonal changes to timetables and transport routes. This can happen with little notice so please be prepared for modifications to the route. The order and timing of included activities in each location may also vary from time to time. Each day we will update you on the program and keep you informed throughout the trip.

## PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE TRAVEL

You will travel with IVY on a people-to-people educational program, operated under a general license issued by the United States Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), and you will therefore be legally licensed and authorized to travel to Cuba. You should be aware that you are not traveling to Cuba as a “tourist.” You will be traveling as part of a people-to-people educational program and must participate in all activities of the program. This means that in order to comply with the terms of OFAC’s people-to-people license, we must arrange and deliver all activities, as well as accommodation and guiding services.

IVY’s people-to-people itinerary has been carefully planned to provide engaging, intimate experiences with Cuba’s dynamic residents, immersing you in everyday life, and allowing you to interact with locals and foster a better understanding of what makes Cuba such a fascinating place. People-to-people travel allows for very little free time, as your time will be spent experiencing Cuba at its most authentic, through one-on-one talks and in-person visits.

Under the requirements set forth by OFAC, you must participate in all scheduled activities on your itinerary.

While full participation in our scheduled program is required during the day, you are able to explore on your own before or after your scheduled itinerary is complete.

## GROUND RULES

- ★ We want everyone to be comfortable on our trips, so we have a few ground rules to help maintain respect for fellow travelers and local communities that we visit. The trip leader and/or local guide has the right to expel any member of the group if the ground rules are transgressed or if otherwise the safety and comfort of the group is put by at risk by a traveler.
- ★ Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on our trips. It is very illegal in Cuba, and even for a very small amount of marijuana you will likely be imprisoned. Harder drugs bring harder time. Upon arrival in Cuba, all carry-on bags, checked luggage, as well as travelers, are thoroughly screened. Do not bring any drugs whatsoever and do not ask for them or buy them in Cuba. It is simply not worth the risk to yourself or the group.
- ★ No exploitation of prostitutes. It is illegal in Cuba. Same prison rules apply.
- ★ **BE ON TIME.** We have a full group of 39 people plus a guide on one bus, and a very busy and awesome itinerary. Please be respectful of your fellow travelers and be at the appropriate meet up points on time; otherwise the entire group will have to wait for you. We understand we will have some late nights and early mornings, but it is not possible to meet up with the group at a later time, and by law, you must stay with the group and participate in the full itinerary of scheduled events.
- ★ If you ever feel another person is behaving inappropriately, or have any concerns, questions, ideas, or suggestions about the trip, please inform the trip leader as soon as you can.
- ★ **HAVE ONE OF THE BEST WEEKENDS OF YOUR LIFE!**





## DAY ONE, THURSDAY

### Arrive in Cuba; Hit the Ground Running and Explore Old Havana

★ Check in opens. Meet for check-in on the second floor of concourse D at Miami International Airport. Look for the check-in areas that say both American Airlines and Marazul, located at the very beginning of concourse D for American Airlines, near Checkpoint 1. Nearby, there will be an IVY sign and area for our group to gather. No need to get there this early, but staff will be there should you have any questions or want to be the first with a boarding pass to Havana.

★ Please make sure to arrive to the IVY check-in area no later than 11:30am (if you are running late and it gets past noon – please call Miranda at 720 939 0696 to give her a status update on your ETA). It will take time to complete your final paperwork, receive your Cuban visa and tickets, and have your bags weighed by the airline (no checked luggage! More on this below).

★ Charter flight #AA9448 from Miami to Havana's José Martí Airport.

★ Arrive in Cuba! All travelers will be required to go through customs and a security check upon arrival, including the re-screening of all of your luggage. After customs, we will meet the IVY Tour Director and Guide and board our transport towards Old Havana—about a 45-minute drive. We will unload near our headquarters for the weekend,

Casa Alta, at the corner of Plaza Vieja, in the heart of the action. Different hosts will then take you to your respective casas (all within a few blocks walking distance) to unload your belongings, get your keys to your casa, and show you where to exchange currency.

★ Take a guided stroll through Old Havana in small groups, highlighting the main historic plazas: the Plaza de la Catedral, Plaza de Armas, Plaza de San Francisco and Plaza Vieja, stopping for informal encounters with local artists and shopkeepers.

★ Return to the roof of Casa Alta for mojitos, the sunset, a live band, and an authentic bbq dinner on a rooftop in the heart of Old Havana with new Cuban friends. We will have some brief presentations on Cuban society with some special guests, with plenty of time to ask questions about the program.

★ For those still standing, we will head out to dance and marvel at Fábrica de Arte Cubano, a once-power plant now converted into a massive haven for the abundant visual and performing arts community, and a great place to mingle and converse with locals.

★ Enjoy an authentic lunch and beer tasting at a café and brewery.

★ Peruse Almacenes de Depósito San José, a giant arts and crafts market, and interact with artists.

★ Enjoy some self-guided exploration of Havana



## DAY TWO, FRIDAY

### Immersion in Cuba's Extraordinary Culture

- ★ Breakfast at your casa and snacks on the roof of Casa Alta. Wear your bathing suits under your clothes!
- ★ Meet outside of the Hotel Armadores de Santander (wifi available) and depart for the day's program.
- ★ Tour a historic Cigar Factory from the 18th century and meet professional cigar rollers.
- ★ Private studio and home tour with the family of acclaimed Cuban muralist and ceramist José Fúster, described as the "Picasso of the Caribbean."
- ★ Drive through Cuba's scenic countryside to Las Terrazas, the pioneering eco- village that is now a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.
- ★ Arrive to Las Terrazas and enjoy an overview of the community before lunch at El Romero, a pioneering, eco- friendly restaurant sourcing farm-fresh local ingredients, and discussion with restaurant's founder on organic food in Cuba.
- ★ Swim with locals in the clean, cascading waters that fall into a series of pools at the Baños del San Juan. Then, return to Old Havana to freshen up for the evening.
- ★ Enjoy a sunset cocktail in the gardens of Hotel

Nacional, a historic and cultural icon of Havana.

- ★ Enjoy dinner and live music at one of the best, family-run restaurants in Havana, Paladar NAO.
- ★ Learn Cuban salsa and dance the night away while enjoying mojitos at La Casa del Son. Walk home at your leisure.

## DAY THREE, SATURDAY

### Arts and Adventure

- ★ Breakfast at your casa and snacks on the roof of Casa Alta.
- ★ Meet in the lobby of the Hotel Armadores de Santander (wifi available) and depart for the day's program.
- ★ Take a fascinating tour of Museo de la Revolución, housed in what was once the presidential palace decorated by Tiffany & Co. of New York, and see anti-capitalism materials firsthand.
- ★ Arrive to the hilltop village of San Francisco de Paula for a private visit and cultural discussion at Ernest Hemingway's Finca Vigía— the eclectic house where he lived for 20 years— now a museum displaying his library, manuscripts and personal effects.



Vieja, the old city, with new friends. The guide will be there to give you plenty of recommendations.

★ Sunset cruise in authentic 1950s American convertibles down the Malecón and en route to La Plaza de la Revolución, where you will learn about some of the most important political legacies in Cuba. Then kick off your final night in Cuba with a bang at El Cañonazo, the canon firing ceremony kept from colonial times at the Fortress of San Carlos de la Cabaña, and discuss the military tradition with the soldiers.

★ Dine al fresco with fellow IVY members tonight on the terrace of Café Laurent.

★ Final Farewell Party with our new Cuban friends at Cabaret Turquino, with gorgeous views of the city and an open-air dance floor to practice and flaunt your new moves.

## DAY FOUR, SUNDAY

### Adiós Cuba—Be back soon!

★ Sunrise surprise for those who simply cannot get enough of this magical country.

★ Breakfast at your casa and snacks on the roof of Casa Alta.

★ Head to Terminal 2 of José Martí Airport for check-in, and for any last-minute cigar or rum purchases at the airport.

★ Depart Havana on charter flight #AA9449 to Miami.

★ Arrive at Miami International Airport, and connect to home destinations.





## GROUP LEADER

All IVY group trips are accompanied by a local guide. The aim of the guide is to facilitate a streamlined and organized trip, in a place not accustomed to providing the smooth logistics and services to which many American travelers are accustomed.

Your leader will provide information on the places you are traveling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local venues and introduce you to local friends. You can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the places visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. Please feel free to ask your guide at any time about the places on the itinerary, additional recommendations, or life in Cuba in general. Our guides are keen to share their personal and professional experiences with you, and have only recently had the opportunity to exchange with more visiting Americans.

## VISAS

While IVY will submit visa applications for all travelers as a service, we cannot guarantee entry by the Cuban government for all applicants. Cuba requires that your passport be valid for 6 months following the date travel. Visitors may be asked to present return tickets as evidence you will be leaving Cuba.

## PACKING LIST

### Necessary Packing List:

- ★ Carry-on Luggage ONLY (No checked baggage)
- ★ Lightweight, comfortable clothing
- ★ Comfortable walking shoes
- ★ Going-out clothing for evenings (if desired)
- ★ Shoes for dancing (if desired)
- ★ Bathing suit
- ★ Small umbrella
- ★ Hat
- ★ Sunglasses
- ★ Standard toiletries (soap, shampoo)
- ★ Sunscreen
- ★ Non-aerosol bug spray
- ★ Toilet paper or tissues (for public toilets)
- ★ CASH for exchange (recommended at least \$400 in Euros, as they are easier to exchange). U.S. Credit and Bank cards will likely not work in Cuba.
- ★ Passport + copy of passport (to carry with you at all times)



### **Additional Recommended Packing Items:**

- ★ Light snacks for touring days
- ★ Face mask (if desired, for diesel fumes)
- ★ Small gift from home for casa family
- ★ Small padlock for luggage and casa
- ★ Neck wallet or money belt

### **Do Not Bring:**

- ★ Any controlled substances (highly illegal in Cuba)
- ★ Flashy clothing items that show-off wealth
- ★ Fine watches or jewelry

## **WHAT TO TAKE**

An adventurous spirit is a necessity in Cuba. Other than that, **PACK LIGHT!**

To be specific—checked luggage is neither necessary nor permitted for this long weekend. Don't let that worry you—let it be liberating! If it doesn't fit in a carry-on bag, you don't need it for this weekend. The main reason we prohibit checked bags is that it slows the arrival process in Havana by upwards of an hour. Because many U.S. residents ferry special supplies and hard-to-purchase-items to Cubans in checked luggage, customs checks each bag carefully upon arrival and it will slow down our adventure. So, please pack only a single carry-on together with a personal item (large purse, etc), just as you would

on a U.S. domestic carrier. You are expected to carry your own luggage, although you won't be required to walk long distances with it.

A second incentive to pack light is cost—charter airlines charge for every piece of luggage you bring, including your carry-on. You will be charged \$20 per piece of luggage (including carry-ons) and you will be charged \$2 per pound over the first 44 lbs. For example, if you take one piece of luggage that weighs 60 lbs, you will be charged \$20 plus \$32 for the excess weight. Please bring the payment you need for your own luggage.

Cuba is hot and tropical. It's the gateway to the Caribbean! Lightweight, comfortable clothing (shorts and T-shirts) is recommended throughout most of the year. In May, the average low temperature is 70°F, average high temperature is 88°F, and there is an average of 8 days of rainfall, so pack a small umbrella!

For footwear, some people can get by with just a pair of sandals, although please bring something you are comfortable walking in over long distances and on uneven terrain. In summer, open footwear is definitely preferable, even in the evenings.

For going out in the evenings, casual dress is acceptable everywhere, so there's no need to bring special clothing or footwear especially for this (although some people may prefer doing so, and feel free to bring some "going out" stuff for the evenings so long as it is light and comfortable). You of course want to bring dancing shoes. Despite low income levels, Cubans love to dress up smartly and fashionably whenever they can.



Pack a bathing suit, sunscreen, non-aerosol bug spray, a hat and sunglasses.

If you are someone who needs snacks to maintain your energy, we suggest bringing something for yourself that is portable for the long touring days.

Bring standard toiletries. We also recommend bringing your own soap and small bottle of shampoo for your casa, in case you are not a fan of what they offer you. Some travelers like to take their own supply of soap and toilet paper to use in public toilets, but you can also get this from your casa. You might also like to bring a facemask, as the strong diesel fumes on busy roads can cause particular sensitivity for some travelers.

Finally, DO NOT bring fancy watches, jewelry, or flashy items that either display wealth or that you would not want to lose. If it is valuable and important to you, we advise leaving it at home. Also, Cuba is a relatively poor country and you do not want to attract undue attention to you and your belongings.

## ACCOMODATIONS

For most travelers, guesthouse accommodation is a major highlight of their visit to Cuba. The guesthouses, known as casas particulares, provide an opportunity for travelers to interact with everyday Cubans. The houses we use are luxurious compared to the average Cuban dwelling, as the family needs to have enough resources to afford a spare room to accommodate guests. All the houses we use have a private bathroom for the guests with a hot water shower. Towels are provided. Most rooms have air-conditioning, although some have just a fan.

Similar to a bed and breakfast, the rooms are basic yet comfortable and clean. In some houses, the family members speak good English, while in others they are practiced at communicating with their non-Spanish speaking guests simply by gesturing and smiling. Overcoming these communication challenges is seen by most as part of the fun!

IVY travelers will split up into different homes, each within a few blocks of our HQ at Casa Alta, with between one and eight group members in each home. This trip is designed for shared accommodation, and single travelers who have opted to share their accommodations will be paired with people of the same gender.

## MEALS

To offer the most action-packed expedition, we've included all meals in the trip price, including breakfast at your casa daily, two lunches, three





dinners, and a beer tasting. Please budget for any additional meals, alcoholic beverages, and additional expenses while on your trip.

## GENERAL OPENING HOURS

Looking for something? Ask your guide, but here are some basics for stores:

### **CADECA Money Exchanges // 9am to 7pm**

Monday to Saturday, 9am to noon Sunday. Many top-end city hotels offer money exchange late into the evening.

### **Pharmacies // 8am to 8 pm**

**Post Offices // 8am to 5pm** Monday to Saturday

### **Restaurants // 10:30am to 11pm**

**Shops // 9am to 5pm** Monday to Saturday,  
**9am to noon** Sunday

## COMMUNICATION

### LANGUAGE

Cubans working in the tourist industry are usually proficient in English as well as other European languages. Elsewhere, Spanish predominates. Because we aim for as much local interaction as possible, a few phrases learned in advance will certainly come in handy when the guide isn't available to translate!

### CONNECTIVITY

To save yourself the headache, and to sink into your experience, plan to be luxuriously disconnected during your trip to Cuba. Generally, your U.S. cell phone, texting and smart phone-based Internet will not work in Cuba. Any phone calls may be placed from hotels, but international calls are expensive and typically must be paid in cash. Also, please note that satellite phones are not allowed in Cuba, and often don't work.

Calls on the Etecsa network, the Cuban state-owned telecommunications company, are expensive. Verizon Wireless recently announced that it would allow its users to make voice calls, send text messages and use data services through the company's pay-as-you-go International Travel option. At \$2.99 a minute, this service gets mixed reviews for how well it currently works.

There is a small hotel right across the street from Casa Alta, our central HQ, where you can make international calls as necessary and use relatively good wifi for 5 USD/hour, by buying a pre-paid card. However, there will be little time for this and the service is unreliable. Etecsa also has dozens of Wi-Fi spots around Havana and other cities, meaning you can, in theory, make a VOIP call from some urban parks, as long as half of Cuba isn't trying to do the same thing. We find VIBER works better than SKYPE, but they cannot be downloaded in Cuba and both often do not work.

In short – get ready to be off the grid and enjoy it! We highly recommend planning on disconnecting completely and enjoying all that Havana has to



offer. Communication with others not there with you in Cuba is expensive, time-consuming, and often frustrating.

For those who feel they must have a phone, CellularAbroad offers phone rentals with service in Cuba. For more information about their offer, visit their website (<http://www.cellularabroad.com/rentals-cuba.php>).

## ETIQUETTE

**Greetings** // Shake hands with strangers; a kiss or double-cheek kiss is appropriate between people (men-women, and women-women) who have already met.

**Conversation** // Although they can be surprisingly candid about almost anything, Cubans aren't always keen to discuss politics, especially with strangers and if it involves being openly critical of the government.

**Dancing** // Cubans don't harbor any self-consciousness about dancing. Throw your reservations out of the window and let loose.

## MONEY

### MONEY EXCHANGE

In Cuba, cash is king, and for spending money, you will need to bring cash to exchange, as your debit and credit cards will not work. There are 2 official currencies in Cuba:

★ **Cuban Peso Convertible (CUC).**

Value: CUC1 = US\$1.00

★ **Cuban Peso (CUP or Moneda Nacional M.N).**

Value: CUP24 = CUC1

The exchange rates of these currencies are fixed by the Cuban Government, and can change at any time. The 'local' Cuban Peso has very limited use, especially for travelers, and is mostly used for transactions between locals. What's confusing for travelers is that the Cubans call both currencies 'pesos', so make sure they are giving you the price in CUC ("cook"), also called "convertibles".

In every Cuban city and airport there are official government exchange houses called CADECA. At the CADECA exchange houses, commonly found in larger hotels as well as at the airport, you may exchange foreign cash to CUC, make cash advances on some credit cards (although U.S. cards almost never work), and exchange traveler's checks—all requiring a passport. To exchange traveler's checks you will also need the receipt of the bank where you bought them; these are becoming increasingly difficult to exchange so we don't recommend it.

While the CUC is equal to the U.S. Dollar at a 1:1



ratio, the exchange of cash or checks is subject to a 10% Cuban tax in addition to all exchange rates, so it is a good idea to take British pounds or euros if you can, which get a better exchange rate. Please also be advised that bills with tears or marks may be difficult to exchange, so bring nice-looking bills in denominations lower than US\$100 if possible.

**Bank Commissions //** The exchange rates used by the CADECA are the same in every CADECA around Cuba and represent about a 3% commission for the bank (included in the exchange rate). For cash advances and when using the ATMs (which almost never work with U.S. cards), there is a 3% fee charged. This means that value for money is approximately the same if you are making a cash advance or exchanging a travelers check or cash. We recommend keeping it simple and exchanging cash.

**ATMs //** At present, the only cities with ATMs are Havana, Camaguey, Trinidad and Santiago de Cuba. While U.S. financial institutions are now permitted to process credit card and debit card transactions in Cuba related to authorized travel expenses, currently most U.S. financial institutions and Cuban vendors are not set-up to process such transactions. ATMs can be quite temperamental in Cuba, so funds may not be accessible electronically.

## **SPENDING MONEY**

Every traveler is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Consider your own spending habits when it comes to libations and shopping for mementos.

Please note that you may bring \$400-worth of merchandise back to the U.S. in your accompanied baggage, provided that no more than \$100 of the merchandise consists of alcohol or tobacco products and the merchandise is imported for personal use only. There are no monetary limits on acquisitions in Cuba and imports into the U.S. of informational materials, such as books, paintings, posters, photographs, films and music CDs. Plan accordingly!

The export of Cuban convertible pesos (CUC) is strictly prohibited, regardless of the amount. Travelers may only export the equivalent of \$5000 in any currency other than the Cuban convertible peso (CUC). Anyone wishing to export more than this amount must demonstrate evidence that the currency was acquired legitimately from a Cuban bank.

In general, we suggest bringing at least \$400 USD (but ideally in Euros for a slightly better exchange rate), in small denominations, for spending money. This will allow for ample shopping, extra alcoholic beverages, tips, and plenty of Cuban coffee.

## **TIPPING**

Tips are included in the price of your IVY package, but they go a long way in saying thank you to a guide or musician and are extremely appreciated by locals. In Cuba, if you're happy with the service you receive, providing a tip—though not compulsory—is important. Since most Cubans earn their money in moneda nacional (MN\$), leaving a small tip of CUC\$1 (1 USD) or more can make a huge difference in their income. The following amounts are based





on local considerations and feedback from our past travelers:

- ★ **Restaurants** // At local markets, government and private (paladares) restaurants, we will round the bill up to the nearest 10%.
- ★ **Musicians** // Carry small notes for the ubiquitous musicians in restaurants. Tip when the basket comes around.
- ★ **Guides** // If you liked our guide, or a particular guide at a museum, leaving them with an additional 5 - 10 CUC or USD at the end of the trip will mean a lot for them.
- ★ **Drivers** // You may have a range of drivers on your trip. Some may be with you for a short journey while others may be with you for several days. An additional tip to them is always appreciated. In addition, you may seek your own private transportation for after hours exploration. For taxis, 10% if you are on the meter is a fair tip; generally, full fare with tip will be agreed upon beforehand.

## GIFTS

If you are so inclined, Cubans are delighted to receive gifts from foreigners, especially if it is something that represents your hometown or where you are coming from. Feel free to bring a small gift for your casa, or for people you may meet along the way.

## SECURITY

### CONTACTS

#### U.S. Embassy Havana

Calzada between L and M Streets,  
Vedado, Havana, Cuba

**Telephone // +53 78 394100**

**Emergency After-Hours Telephone // +53 78 394100** and dial 1 to speak with the emergency operator

**acshavana@state.gov**

The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line in Cuba is “106” for police and “105” for fire.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that you purchase a policy that covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. Please learn more about travel insurance options with World Nomads.

## HEALTH

Cuba requires all visitors to have non-U.S. medical insurance, and this is included in the price of your package.

This trip will raise your heartbeat. Moderate physical activities are included and a good level of fitness is required to fully participate. When



considering your itinerary, please make sure you have carefully assessed your ability to cope with the style of travel. Please note that if, in the opinion of our group leader or local guide, any traveler is unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group, IVY reserves the right to exclude them from all or part of a trip without refund.

The World Health Organization has countries in Latin America registered as zones affected by hepatitis A, hepatitis B, typhoid, cholera, rabies and malaria, although the U.S. Department of State does not suggest any vaccinations. You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information or for any suggested vaccinations and anti-malarial requirements before departure. We recommend that you carry a small first aid kit as well as any personal medical requirements (including a spare pair of glasses) as they may not easily be obtained in Havana. For legal reasons our leaders and guides are prohibited from administering any type of drugs including headache tablets and antibiotics. Please ensure that you are adequately prepared.

## **SAFETY**

The security environment in Cuba is relatively stable and characterized by a strong military and police presence throughout the country. Demonstrations against the United States are less frequent and smaller than in past years. They are always approved and monitored by the Cuban government and have been peaceful in nature. The same cannot be said about state-organized

demonstrations against domestic opposition groups, which can be violent. U.S. citizens should avoid all demonstrations.

Your leader will accompany you on all included activities, however during your trip you may have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your leader will assist you with the available options in a given location, please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your IVY itinerary, and IVY makes no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Please also note that your leader has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it's deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

While in Cuba, individuals with disabilities may find accessibility and accommodation very different from in the United States. There are laws recommending that buildings, communications facilities, air travel, and other transportation services accommodate persons with disabilities, but these facilities and services are rarely accessible to persons with disabilities in practice, and information for persons with disabilities is limited. Most roads and sidewalks throughout the country are poorly maintained.



## CRIME

Official crime statistics are not published by the Cuban government, but reporting by U.S. citizens and other foreign travelers indicates that the majority of incidents are non-violent and theft-related—e.g., pickpocketing, purse snatching, or the taking of unattended or valuable items. There is anecdotal evidence that violent crime has increased in Cuba and is generally associated with assaults committed during a burglary or robbery. The U.S. government cannot confirm this information but rates the threat of crime in Cuba as medium. In the event of a confrontation, travelers should not resist, as perpetrators may be armed. Thefts generally occur in crowded areas such as markets, beaches, and other gathering points, including Old Town Havana and the Prado neighborhood. Travelers should exercise basic situational awareness at all times and are advised not to leave belongings unattended, nor carry purses and bags loosely over one shoulder.

Visitors should avoid wearing flashy jewelry or displaying large amounts of cash. It is advised that visitors should carry a copy of their passport with them and leave the original at a secure location. U.S. visitors should also beware of Cuban “jineteros” (hustlers) who specialize in swindling tourists. While most jineteros speak English and go out of their way to appear friendly, e.g., by offering to serve as tour guides or to facilitate the purchase of cheap cigars, many are in fact professional criminals who may resort to violence in their efforts to acquire tourists’ money and other valuables. When exchanging currency, use state-run offices to convert dollars

and avoid independent/street vendors.

Past travelers have advised their luggage was broken into when flying on international and/or domestic flights in Cuba. It’s advisable that you use small padlocks to secure your luggage. This will also come in handy to lock your valuables at your casa.

All travelers should ensure that valuables remain under their personal control at all times. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while traveling, for the safe-keeping of your passport, air tickets, cash and other valuable items.

## VICTIMS OF CRIME

The loss or theft in Cuba of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to the local police and to the U.S. Embassy in Havana. If you are the victim of a crime while in Cuba, in addition to reporting to local police, please contact the U.S. Embassy for assistance. Embassy staff can, for example, help you find appropriate medical care, contact family members or friends, and explain how funds may be transferred. Although the investigation and prosecution of the crime is solely the responsibility of local authorities, consular officers can help you understand the local criminal justice process and to find an attorney if needed.

## FIRE PRECAUTIONS

Please be aware that local laws governing tourism facilities in this region differ from those in your home country and not all the accommodation that





we use has a fire exit, fire extinguishers or smoke alarms.

## SEAT BELTS

Please be aware that local laws governing transportation safety differ from those in the U.S. and not all the transport that we use is able to provide seat belts.

## MORE DETAILS

### ISSUES ON YOUR TRIP

While we endeavor to provide the best possible experience, due to the nature of travel in Cuba in particular, sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local representative immediately so that this person can do his or her best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognize that there may be times when your group leader or local guide may not be able to resolve a situation to your complete satisfaction—if this is the case, please be patient and we will do everything that is possible and within reason.

While you may choose to provide details in your online feedback, it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete, so we hope we can resolve any situations on the ground during your trip.

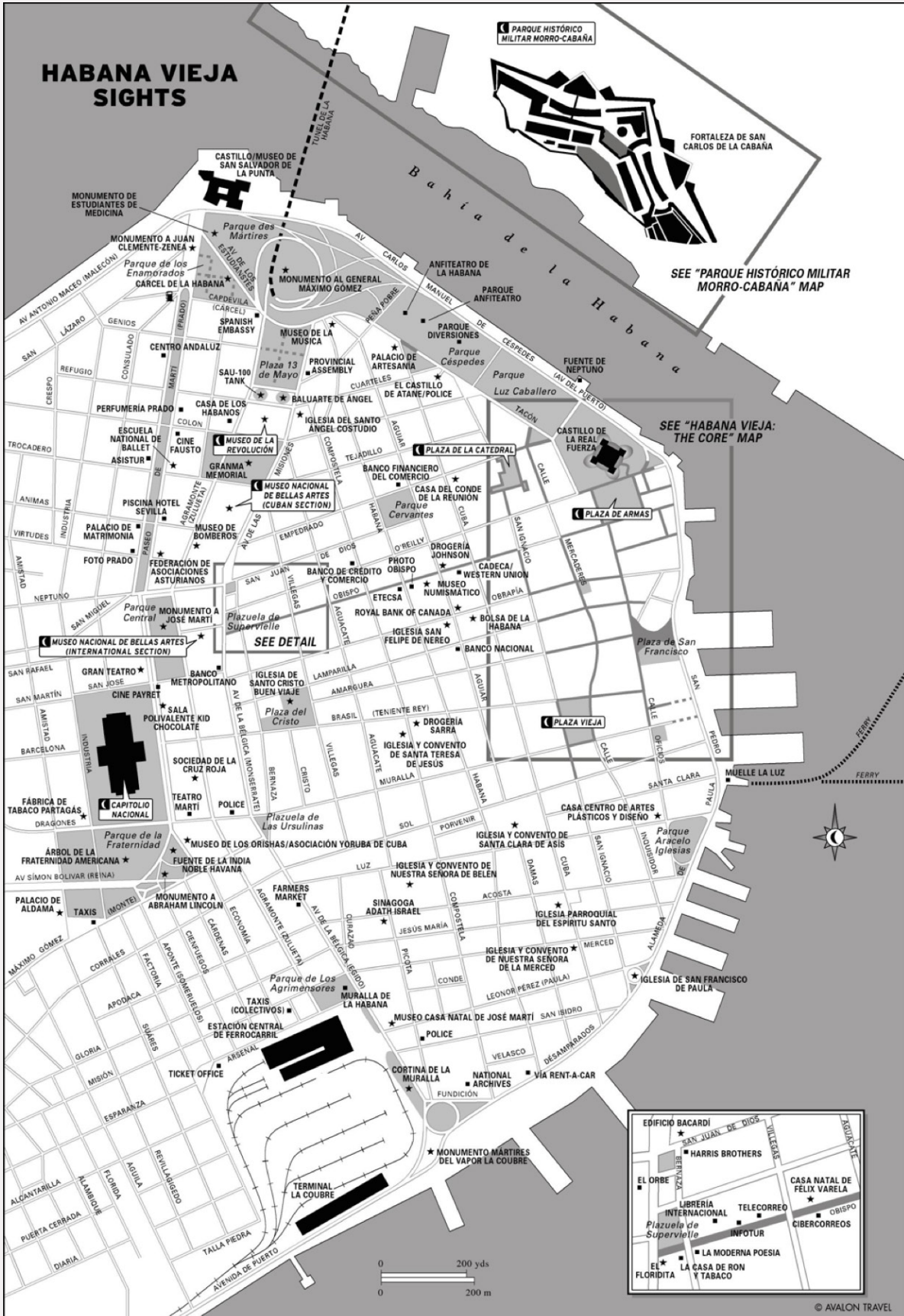
### UPDATED TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Upon check-in at the airport, you will be required to sign (in writing) the terms and conditions that you reviewed as part of your online questionnaire.

### POST-TRIP SURVEY

After your travels, we really want to hear from you! This is the FIRST trip that IVY is leading to Havana, and we hope to do many more both to Cuba and many places beyond. Feedback helps us understand what we are doing well and what we could be doing better, allowing us to make improvements for future IVY Cultural Expeditions. We will reach out to you with a short survey, and will be grateful for your honest feedback of your entire experience.

# MAPS





# MAPS

