



CERES Global

Cuba Trip Further Information

CERES Global Trips aim to engage Australian people with the issues of development both overseas and at home whilst enjoying the richness of their cultures and the wisdoms they can add to our understanding of sustainable wellbeing. CERES Global has been organising trips to India since 2005, and since then expanded to Arnhem Land, Indonesia, China, Cuba, Timor Leste, Samoa and South East Australia.

CERES Global in Cuba

The decision to focus on Cuba as a destination and a community with which CERES Global would like to build a relationship comes from the recognition of Cuba as a leader in sustainability resulting from years of trade embargos and living in a low oil economy. We first visited Cuba in November 2013 as part of the International Permaculture Convergence. Our aim now is to build deeper connections and gain deeper insights so that we can develop longer term relations, identifying avenues to support communities in their environmental and social challenges.



Trip information

Dates: 18 days from 26th November – 13th of December

A unique opportunity to see Cuba from beyond the tourist trail and through the eyes of our partner organisations all doing exceptional work in their field. Here we focus on Cuba's sustainability measures in a low oil economy. Starting in Havana connecting with our key partner organisation FANJ, a centre for cultural preservation and environmental sustainability, we will then travel to Matanzas on the Hershey train, and visit Sancti Spiritus which is renowned as being the centre for permaculture in Cuba. Along the way we'll be visiting environmental, social, and cultural places of significance including Bellamar Caves, waterfalls, beaches and nature reserves.

From Matanzas we'll head across to an amazing teatro community in regional Cienfuegos, living an idyllic sustainable lifestyle using theater to reconnect with the land. From there we'll head back to Havana and FANJ, spending time with our friend and partner Roberto Perez.

The trip will provide a mix of engagements, sight seeing and time to relax and absorb all that is wonderful in Cuba.

Cost: \$2520 for 18 days. This price includes all internal transport, meals, accommodation, the purchase of carbon credits to offset airline travel, facilitator support, administration and project running costs. This price does not include flights to and from Cuba, traveller's insurance and small items of a personal nature.



Itinerary: Please note plans can change at the last minute and the below itinerary is only a guide.

Day	Region	Activities
26 Nov	Havana	Arrive, settle in, and get your bearings.
27 Nov	Havana	Introduction to FANJ from Roberto Perez
28 Nov	Havana	Urban Gardens, Organoponicos and city tour
29 Nov	Havana	Cuba Solar discussion
30 Nov	Havana/Matanzas	Hershey Train, 100km from Havana to Matanzas.
1 Dec	Matanzas	Meet the FANJ Delegates of the Matanzas Permaculture site
2 Dec	Matanzas	Visit the Bellamar Caves
3 Dec	Matanzas / Sancti Spiritus	Meet Alejandro and the FANJ delegates in Sancti Spiritus
4 Dec	Sancti Spiritus	Engagements & site visits with FANJ Delegates
5 Dec	Sancti Spiritus	Engagements & site visits with FANJ Delegates.
6 Dec	Sancti Spiritus	Engagements & site visits with FANJ Delegates. Options to day trip to Trinidad
7 Dec	Sancti Spiritus / Cienfuegos	Travel day, meet community theatre group Teatro Los Elementos
8 Dec	Cienfuegos province	School/community engagement with theatre group
9 Dec	Cienfuegos province	Field work with theatre group on Community property
10 Dec	Cienfuegos/ Havana	Field work with the theatre group on community property with option to visit El Nicho waterfalls.
11 Dec	Havana	To be arranged
12 Dec	Havana	To be arranged
13 Dec	Travel home	

Engagements And Partner Organisations

HAVANA - Host Organisation FANJ

In Havana the group will meet with Roberto Perez and the staff at the headquarters of The Antonio Núñez Jiménez Foundation for Nature and Humanity (FANJ), our key partner organisation. FANJ is a cultural and scientific non-governmental institution, dedicated to research and promotion of programs and projects for the protection of the environment as it relates to culture and society. Roberto will discuss the activities of FANJ and the network of permaculture and sustainable agriculture organisations across Cuba with which FANJ is affiliated, and with which the CERES Global group will be engaging over the course of the trip.

HAVANA - Organoponico Vivero Alamar

Alamar, around 20 minutes to the east of Havana Vieja, is at first glimpse an unremarkable residential suburb, where Cubans go about their daily lives. However, nestled between the harsh lines of the Soviet style apartment blocks is the Vivero Organoponico Alamar, effectively a four hectare urban allotment of raised garden beds. We will take a 2 hour tour of the impressive gardens giving a great insight into everyday life in Cuba.

MATANZAS - Bellamar Gardens and Caves

The group will travel from Havana to Matanzas on the historical Hershey train (Yes, the chocolate brand). According to Roberto Perez, the Permaculture site in Matanzas has been one of the most active since the IPC11 in 2013.

There will also be an opportunity to visit the Bellamar Caves.

SANCTI SPIRITUS - Alternative Agricultural Sites

Through a well established partnership between FANJ, The Urban Farmer (Canada) and a Canadian University, Sancti Spiritus has become known as Cuba's hub for Sustainable Urban Agriculture. There are many varied and flourishing family based gardens to observe. The city itself is quaint with many beautifully preserved colonial buildings, and in 2014 celebrated its 500th year since Spanish Colonisation. Although Sancti Spiritus is regarded as a city it has a more rural feel with the high use of horse-drawn cart and bicitaxis for transport of people and goods.



CIENFUEGOS Province - Community Theatre Company

Cumanayagua, a municipality and town in the province of Cienfuegos, is home to a community theatre group called Teatro Los Elementos. With the support of FANJ in the initial stages, the group practice sustainable agriculture, animal husbandry and community-based social programs on their property all of which they see as compatible with their theatre work. Their objective in their theatre work is to rescue traditions and knowledge in the collective memory of the people.

CIENFUEGOS Province - El Nicho Waterfalls

Accessible by car on a windy road from Cumanayagua, El Nicho Waterfalls are nestled in the beautiful Escambray mountains. Swimming is possible in two natural pools and there is a 1.5km nature trail.

Import Information when travelling to Cuba



Flights

Book your flights to arrive in Havana on or before the 26th of November and depart on the 13th in order to fit into the program of the trip.

The process of booking flights to Cuba can be challenging and it is not a cheap destination to fly to from Australia so be prepared to pay around return \$2200+. Because of travel restrictions via the US, most Australians enter Cuba via Mexico or Canada. Often the simplest (and cheapest) option is to arrange return flights to Mexico via a website such as Flight Centre or skyscanner, then book a separate return flight to Havana from either Cancún or Mexico City. It pays to shop around a bit.

Visas

Australians can travel to Cuba with a standard travel card issued where you board your flight to Havana (most often Canada or Mexico). You cannot fly without this card - it will cost around US\$25 over the counter. The alternative is to send your passport to Canberra for processing, but it is an unnecessary and more expensive (over \$100).

From the Airport

One of the CERES Global facilitators will do their best to meet you at the Airport.

Accommodation

Is as far as possible in twin-bedded rooms (sharing with a participant of the same gender). It is in modest, comfortable hotels, guesthouses or guest rooms with our partner organisations. When in villages or small towns on project visits, accommodation can be basic but comfortable.



A note before travelling with CERES global

Remember, this is not a tour and our facilitators from CERES are not tour guides, but facilitators or enablers – working alongside you to achieve insight and understanding of the Cuban communities we visit, and to engage discussion within the group and with community members on social and environmental issues. It is expected that you will show some initiative and make a contribution to the journey, through sharing of your own knowledge and experience, and working within the group to ensure a cohesive and insightful experience is shared by all. Most of all, enjoy this trip and embrace Cuba, there is an incredible energy within the culture that is warm and welcoming, vibrant and alive! Step out of your comfort zone and into a world like no other, be prepared to walk through a journey you will never forget.

Spanish Courses in Melbourne

El Patio Spanish language School

<http://www.elpatiospanish.com.au/>

<http://www.elpatiospanish.com.au/courses/special-workshops-1-session/spanish-in-a-hurry>

The Spanish Cat

<http://www.thespanishcat.com/>

In Language Boutique

<http://www.inlanguageboutique.com.au/spanish-classes-melbourne/adult-courses/?gclid=CLuYmMHShc4CFYKWvAodM0cMjQ>

