

The Meditation & Cleansing Experience

ITINERARY

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2019

Arrive at Jose Marti International Airport & Check-In

You will be greeted at the airport by your guides and transfer to your accommodations for check-in. If time permits, enjoy a leisurely tour of the neighborhood to help acquaint you with your surroundings.

Welcome Dinner & Orientation

Enjoy a relaxing dinner with a welcome cocktail, as we review a few important topics, such as Cuba's dual monetary system, the economic crisis of the 1990s and early 2000s known as "The Special Period", and recent political and economic changes on the island.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 2019

Morning Meditation with Sacred Cleansing

Begin the morning with an introspective reflection and light stretch, followed by an energy cleansing ceremony led by Kat Okedeyi. Sage will be used to clear any negative energy from ourselves and our surroundings, while palo santo is invoked to preserve our good energy and ward off negative forces. The combining effect of these two plants make for a grounding experience that promotes emotional stability and a connection to the spiritual world, and ultimately ourselves.

Dance Encounter

Music, rhythm, and dance are expressions of life in Cuba. Get warmed up for Cuba's live music scene with your personal dance instructor from one of Havana's premier dance schools, as you get an introduction to Cuban-style salsa, known as "casino".

Walking Tour of Old Havana

Walk across the original city of Havana, a time machine of architectural treasures dating back over five centuries. A **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, Old Havana is a living museum with 144 buildings from the 16th and 17th centuries preserved. Among the many sites, we'll visit the **Africa House Museum**. Housed inside a 17th-century mansion, it depicts Cuba's Transatlantic Slave Trade Era, houses a collection illustrating the 3 major Afro-Cuban religious traditions, and showcases gifts to Cuba from various African nations.

Excursion to Town of Regla

Walk across Old Havana to the port and ferry over the Bay of Havana to the Town of Regla. Visit the local cathedral which is the center of worship in Cuba of the Virgin Mary figure known as "La Virgen de Regla". This Catholic virgin figure is syncretized with the Yoruba diety, Yemaya, who reigns over the open seas. Every day, her followers pay tribute to her with offerings at this church.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 2019

Morning Meditation with Sacred Cleansing

Experience Oshun

This morning, you will be introduced to the musical and dance expressions of Oshun, one of the most powerful Orishas in the Afro-Cuban religious pantheon. Oshun embodies the sacred female energy, sexuality, seduction, and fertility. Reflecting her rank in the Afro Cuban pantheon, she is syncretized with the Virgen of Charity, the patron saint of all of Cuba. Bring your yellow (or any color) saya and prepare to channel Oshun.

La Muñeca Negra (The Black Doll) Project

Named after a well-known story written by Cuban patriarch José Martí, the project is a cooperative of female artisans that make dolls with *papier maché*, plastics, and other materials. The group will visit this workshop in the town of La Lisa to learn about the lives of these ladies organized around an interesting spiritual sisterhood, as they operate under a collective business model.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 2019

Morning Meditation with Sacred Cleansing

Day Trip to Matanzas: Route of the Rebel Slave (Lunch Included)

Matanzas, the capital of the Province of Matanzas, is known for its poets, culture, and Afro-Cuban heritage. Known as the City of Bridges due to the 17 bridges that cross its three rivers, Matanzas is the birthplace of the music and dance traditions of danzón and rumba. During the 18th and 19th centuries, it was known as the “Athens of Cuba” because of the wealth from its sugar industry.

Among the many sites, you will visit the Triumvirato Sugar Plantation to see how Cubans honor the regions proud history of resistance and the impact of the African woman in resistance movements, including one of the largest uprisings of enslaved Africans in the Americas. Led by a young woman named Carlota, the revolt consisted of 329 enslaved persons.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6, 2019

Morning Meditation with Sacred Cleansing

Friends of Yoruba

In Cuba, many practice African religions, regardless of color or ethnic background. Some estimates are as high as 8 practitioners for every 1 non-practitioner. Despite the many challenges, these religions are thriving and experiencing an amazing popular resurgence. The most widely practiced religions are Yoruba (known as Santería in U.S.), Palo Monte, and Abakuá.

We will visit the home of a santera (priestess) in the Yoruba religion to learn about her faith and practices. She is passionate about nature and the curative and medicinal properties of certain aromatic and medicinal plants, which she cultivates around her home. After a ceremony to bless the herbs and magnify their spiritual properties, we will use them to create handmade soaps. These soaps are filled with ashé (good energy) and used to improve health and well-being and promote good luck.

Farewell Lunch

Prior to boarding our afternoon flight, we’ll come together for a celebratory lunch to reflect on the unforgettable week and the memorable experiences we have shared.

*Note: Depending on departure flight time, this activity may be moved to a different day.

Depart for Airport: All good things must come to an end. Transfer to airport for departing flight.

Space Limited to 10 Registrants
Register at: www.DiasporaTravelExperiences.com/meditation