Exploring Havana

March 24 to April 1, 2017

“I can truly say I have been to Cuba. Thanks to Stanford, I feel I know the country, its history, geography, and above all its people and culture. Perfectly thought through and executed!”

—Geeta Gopalan, Cuba Seminar, 2014
Since Cuba’s doors have opened slightly for Americans, it has become the latest “must visit” country. It is indeed a remarkable destination with friendly people, a fascinating history and a vibrant culture reflected in the food, music and art that make up daily life there, and nowhere can this be felt more than in the country’s charming capital, Havana. As part of the government arrangement for travel of U.S. citizens to Cuba, Stanford Travel/Study programs to Cuba are under the U.S. Treasury Department’s general license authorized by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), which promotes personal interaction between Americans and Cubans. You’ll meet and talk with local people, learning firsthand about their way of life, their challenges and successes, their hopes and dreams, and their desire to learn about us. It’s an extraordinary opportunity to discover a nearby neighbor that now, after half a century, is accessible once again. Join us!
Faculty Leader

Scott D. Sagan, the Caroline S.G. Munro Professor of Political Science and a senior fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, has been teaching in the political science department at Stanford since 1987, offering students courses that cover such topics as international security, nuclear weapons, and the ethics and strategies of war. His distinguished past includes serving as a consultant to the office of the Secretary of Defense and to the Sandia and Los Alamos national laboratories, and as a special assistant to the director of the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Sagan is also a frequent contributor to academic journals, including Daedalus, International Security and Foreign Affairs. He has authored, co-authored, and co-edited numerous books on issues dealing with nuclear weapons, the most recent being the forthcoming Insider Threats (Cornell University, 2016). He has won numerous awards for his teaching and his research into the risks of nuclear weapons and their proliferation. He met Fidel Castro in Havana at a 2002 workshop marking the 40th anniversary of the Cuban missile crisis and is looking forward to discussing with us what we have and haven't learned from that major Cold War event.

Positions:

- At Stanford University’s political science department: assistant professor, 1987–1995; associate professor, 1995–2001; professor, since 2001; vice chairman, 1996–1999; Caroline S.G. Munro Professor of Political Science
- Senior fellow, Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford’s Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies
- Mimi and Peter Haas University Fellow in Undergraduate Education, Stanford University
- Project chair, initiative on new dilemmas in ethics, technology, and war, since 2014, American Academy of Arts and Sciences
- Member, distinguished advisory panel for non-proliferation and arms control, Sandia National Laboratory, since 2012
- Consultant, strategic nuclear policy branch of the nuclear and chemical division, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1985–1986

Academic History:

- BA, government, 1977, Oberlin College
- PhD, political science, 1983, Harvard University

“I have longed to experience Cuba and its people. This trip provided an intimate and broad understanding of Cuba's past and present through personal encounters with leading artists and intellectuals.”

—Deborah McGregor, Havana Arts, 2015
Itinerary

Please note: This program falls under the general license requirements for educational travel as laid out by the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control on January 16, 2015. In addition, this itinerary includes mainly the tourist sites we will be visiting; guest speakers and special events are planned but will likely not be confirmed until shortly before we depart for Cuba and there may be other small changes. Our intent with this program is to give travelers a well-rounded introduction to Havana, ranging from tourist highlights to interactions with local people.

Friday, March 24
Home / Miami, FL
Arrive in Miami independently and check in to our hotel. Join fellow travelers for an orientation this evening. CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL MIAMI AIRPORT

Saturday, March 25
Miami, FL / Havana, Cuba
Transfer to the Miami Airport for our one-hour flight to Havana. After a late lunch at a paladar (private restaurant), we check in to our hotel, ideally located in central Havana. There is a little time to rest and relax before we visit the iconic Hotel Nacional de Cuba, a historic landmark located on the Malecón and overlooking the Straits of Florida, where we enjoy a traditional Cuban cocktail. Visit Cuba’s newest contemporary art gallery before gathering for a welcome dinner this evening at a local restaurant. HOTEL PARQUE CENTRAL (B,L,D)

Sunday, March 26
Havana
Today explore Havana’s strong artistic heritage at the tree-lined Plaza de Armas and learn about the Plaza’s colonial and pre-revolutionary architecture with a walk down Calle Obispo to marvel at the 16th-century Castillo de los Capitanes Generales, now the Museo de la Ciudad. Visit the Plaza de la Catedral and the Catedral de San Cristobal de La Habana, and also stop at the Plaza de San Francisco, a cobbled plaza ringed by buildings dating from the 18th century and dominated by the baroque Iglesia and Convento de San Francisco dating from 1719. We return to our hotel mid-afternoon for some time to relax. This evening, attend a cocktail reception and art exhibit curated by Milagros Borges showing the work of Sagols, Darwin Estacio, Karlos Pérez and Niels Reyes. Then visit the collective studio of Maria Cienfuegos, Dania González and Jose Manuel Fors, where the artists will receive us in their studio space and discuss their work. Dinner this evening is at a local restaurant. HOTEL PARQUE CENTRAL (B,L,D)

Monday, March 27
Havana
Art is the focus this morning, and we begin with a guided tour of the Cuban School of Art with architect Universo Garcia Lorenzo. Next stop is a visit to artist Kcho’s new studio and community center. Born Alexis Leiva Machado on the Isla de Pinos in 1970, Kcho is a contemporary Cuban artist who has had art showings around the world. This afternoon, we shift gears and visit the home of a babalao, or priest, and Parque Trillo, a park frequented by many Santeria followers where remnants of rituals can be seen. HOTEL PARQUE CENTRAL (B,L,D)

Tuesday, March 28
Havana
Our day begins at the Museum of Cuban Art with a guided tour given by a local art curator. Later this morning, embark on a morning walking tour led by a local architect that includes such architectural gems as the Bacardi Building, erected in 1930 and one of Cuba’s most impressive examples of art deco architecture. This afternoon, attend a private concert by a youth orchestra, followed by an interactive talk on the evolution of Cuban music by a local professor. Dinner this evening is at the home of artist Jose Fuster, in the fishing town of Jaimanitas. Fuster has decorated more than 80 of the town’s houses with colorful ornate murals and domes, transforming Jaimanitas into a vast work of public art. HOTEL PARQUE CENTRAL (B,L,D)

Wednesday, March 29
Havana / Viñales Valley / Havana
This morning we depart by coach to Viñales Valley. Considered by many to be the most beautiful place in Cuba, the Viñales Valley National Monument is home to a stunning karst landscape dotted with domed limestone outcroppings and is famous for being the premier tobacco growing area in the world. On the way, we stop at Proyecto Grabadown, a community arts and culture program in Pinar del Rio for youths with Downs Syndrome, and visit the home of Ramón Vázquez León, an artist born here who graduated from the National School of Fine Arts in Havana. Visit a despalillo, or workshop, where tobacco leaves are stripped and prepared for rolling into cigars. This afternoon, we tour a private farm in the valley that has been farmed by the same family for many generations and that is involved in the production of a multitude of fruits, vegetables, grains and tobacco. Members of the family will give us a tour of this beautiful 40-acre farm. We return to Havana early this evening where we enjoy dinner on our own. HOTEL PARQUE CENTRAL (B,L)

Thursday, March 30
Havana / La Finca Vigía
Learn about the history of Cuban-American relations during a lecture by a former Cuban ambassador to the European Union. Then attend a private flamenco performance and talk to the group’s director and members afterwards. Tour a local organic farm that produces more than 100 varieties of organic fruits, vegetables and medicinal plants and meet with the owners to learn about sustainable farming in Cuba. The farm also serves as a community center, providing social programs for local senior citizens, and we’ll have a chance to meet and talk with some of them. After a delicious lunch on the farm, we visit Ernest Hemingway’s former estate, La Finca Vigía (“Lookout Farm”). The house is exactly as Hemingway left it just prior to the Revolution and visitors are able to walk around the house and view the interior through the windows. We return to our hotel to rest prior to an al fresco dinner tonight at one of Havana’s local restaurants. HOTEL PARQUE CENTRAL (B,L,D)

Friday, March 31
Havana
Today begins with a lecture by a local economist after which we tour some of the best examples of modernist architecture in the city: the Coppelia Ice Cream Parlor, the former Havana Hilton hotel and the Riviera Hotel. We then visit some of the most impressive art nouveau residences in Havana on the Paseo del Prado and also the former home of Catalina Lasa and Pedro Baro. There is time at leisure this afternoon before we gather early this evening to visit the art studio, 331 Art Space, a joint effort of three local artists. Take in a final music concert prior to our farewell reception and dinner at a charming paladar. HOTEL PARQUE CENTRAL (B,L,D)

Saturday, April 1
Havana / Miami, FL / Home
Enjoy a leisurely morning at our hotel before transferring to the airport for our afternoon flight back to the U.S. (B)
What to Expect

The general license authorized by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) stipulates that visitors to Cuba must engage in a full-time schedule of educational exchange activities resulting in meaningful interaction between the visitors and individuals in Cuba. Therefore participation in all the scheduled activities is required per the terms of license.

In the last few years, Cuba has undergone many changes and general conditions have improved—particularly in the capital. There are better amenities for tourists, such as more taxicabs and restaurants. However, we ask that you keep in mind that traveling to Cuba is still an adventure. Because of Cuba’s inconsistent infrastructure, we consider this to be a moderately strenuous program that is at times physically demanding and busy. Typical challenges encountered in Cuba’s capital include elevators that are out of order, limited hot water, broken streets and sidewalks that require attention while walking, and slow service at meals. Cuba’s tourism industry is still developing, and patience with local service standards will greatly improve one’s enjoyment of the trip. We expect that participants will be a self-selecting group whose interest in the places we visit far outweighs the need for creature comforts. In many ways, the challenges of this program are part of the learning experience. We welcome travelers 15 years of age and older on this program.

Information

Dates
March 24 to April 1, 2017 (9 days)

Size
This program can accommodate 34 participants. Single accommodations are extremely limited; please call for availability.

Cost*
$8,695 per person, double occupancy
$10,695 per person, single occupancy
*Association nonmembers add $300 per person

Included
• One night of airport hotel accommodations in Miami and seven nights of accommodations at the Hotel Parque Central in Havana
• 8 breakfasts, 7 lunches and 6 dinners
• Welcome and farewell receptions
• Gratuities to porters, guides and drivers for all group activities
• All tours as described in the itinerary
• Cuban visa fees and departure taxes
• Round-trip flights between Miami and Havana
• Group transfers and baggage handling on program arrival and departure days in Havana
• Minimal medical, accident and evacuation insurance
• Educational program with lecture series and pre-departure materials, including recommended reading list, a selected book, map and travel information
• Services of our professional tour manager to assist you throughout the program

Not Included
• U.S. domestic airfare
• Passport fees
• Immunization costs
• Meals and beverages other than those specified as included
• Independent and private transfers
• Trip-cancellation/interruption and baggage insurance
• Excess-baggage charges
• Personal items such as internet access, telephone and fax calls, laundry and gratuities for nongroup services

Air Arrangements
U.S. domestic airfare to and from Miami is not included in the program cost; price and itinerary will depend on your point of departure and when you book your tickets.

Terms and Conditions

Deposit and Final Payment
A $1,000-per-person deposit is required to hold space on this program. Sign up online at alumni.stanford.edu/trip?havana2017 or call the Travel/Study office at (650) 725-1093. Final payment is due 120 days prior to departure. As a condition of participation, all confirmed participants are required to sign a Release of Liability.

Cancellations and Refunds
Deposits and any payments are refundable, less a $500-per-person cancellation fee, until 120 days prior to departure. After that date, refunds can be made only if the program is sold out and your place(s) can be resold, in which case a $1,000-per-person cancellation fee will apply.

Insurance
Stanford Travel/Study provides all travelers who are U.S. or Canadian citizens with minimal medical, accident and evacuation coverage under our group-travel insurance policy. Our group policy is intended to provide minimal levels of protection while you are traveling on this program. You may choose to subscribe to optional trip-cancellation and baggage insurance. Information offering such insurance will be provided to travelers with their welcome materials. The product offered includes special benefits if you purchase your policy within 14 days of written confirmation of your participation on the trip.

Eligibility
We encourage membership in the Alumni Association as the program cost for nonmembers is $300 more than the member’s price. A person traveling as a guest paid for by a current member will not be charged the nonmember fee. Call (650) 725-0692 or visit alumni.stanford.edu/goto/membership for more information or to purchase a membership.
Responsibility
The Stanford Alumni Association, Stanford University and our operators act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any automobile, motorcoach, launch or any other conveyance used in carrying out this program or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the program. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, force majeure or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger as tour rates provide arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to this published itinerary as may be deemed necessary. The right is reserved to cancel any program prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the program. No refund will be made for an unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. Baggage is carried at the owner’s risk entirely. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not onboard their plane or conveyance. Neither the Alumni Association, Stanford University nor our operators accept liability for any carrier’s cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a non-refundable ticket connected with the tour. Program price is based on rates in effect in August 2016 and is subject to change without notice to reflect fluctuations in exchange rates, tariffs or fuel charges.

California Seller of Travel Program Registration #2048 523-50

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Contact Information

Visit us online to reserve space:

Questions? Call us at (650) 725-1093 or email us at travelstudy@alumni.stanford.edu

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