

Cornell University



Cornell's Adult University (CAU)

Afro-Cuban Arts & Culture in Havana In Support of the Cuban People

Accompanied by Dr. Ambre Dromgoole, Assistant Professor of Africana Studies

March 30 – April 5, 2025



TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

TRAVEL with Cornell study leader **Dr. Ambre Dromgoole**, Assistant Professor of Africana Studies, for insightful perspectives on Afro-Cuban cultural expression through history

SUPPORT Cuba's **emerging private sector** during your stay, savoring meals at privately owned *paladares* (restaurants) and relaxing at a charming boutique hotel in the heart of Havana

HEAR stories from **Cuban entrepreneurs**, including the co-founder of a lifestyle brand and the proprietor of a workshop that refurbishes Cuba's vintage cars

JOIN a curator for a private tour of what *Time* magazine calls one of "the world's greatest places"—Havana's **Fábrica de Arte Cubano (FAC)**, a spellbinding, multilevel showcase of contemporary Cuban art

DELIGHT in a private, curator-led tour at the **Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes de La Habana**, with its impressive collection of modern and contemporary Afro-Cuban artworks

ENTER the home of a **Babalawo** (Santería high priest) for an exclusive look at the rituals and practices of this Afro-Cuban spiritual tradition

GO behind the scenes at the **Castillo de San Severino** in Matanzas, an 18th-century fortress built by enslaved people, now housing a museum illuminating their lives

CELEBRATE at **exclusive receptions**, including a private event with dinner in the company of the President of the Ludwig Foundation of Cuba and the young artists supported by the organization

MEET the thought leaders who are shaping Cuban society, including the **former Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs**, who will share profound insights on Cuban politics

GAIN behind-the-scenes access to **an exciting rehearsal of a leading dance company**, watching as some of Cuba's most skilled contemporary dancers perfect their craft

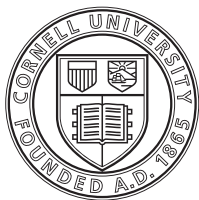
ATTEND **thrilling musical performances**, including an exclusive concert by the Choir of Matanzas inside a hilltop church

TRAVELING WITH YOU



Dr. Ambre Dromgoole, Assistant Professor of Africana Studies at Cornell University, is an experienced music scholar, artist, curator, and consultant who specializes in subjects relating to music, religion, gender, performance, and popular culture. She received her B.A. in Religion and Musical Studies from Oberlin College and Conservatory, her M.A. from Yale Divinity School and Institute of Sacred Music, and PhD from Yale University. In addition, she holds a certificate in Jazz Vocal Musicianship from Nashville Jazz Workshop. She has presented work for the Association of Black Women Historians, the Society for American Music, the Academy of American Religion, and the Christian Congregational Music Conference to name a few. Previous consultancies include: [The United Methodist Church](#), [Sound Diplomacy](#), [the National Museum of African American Music](#), and [the Nashville Symphony](#).





Cornell University

Dear Alumni, Family, and Friends,

Visiting Cuba can be a transformative and moving experience, with its colorful art, UNESCO-listed architecture, and warm, welcoming people. Throughout its history of colonialism and revolution, Cuba's African heritage has profoundly influenced its artistic expression and cultural identity. In March 2025, Cornell's Adult University invites you for an in-depth look at this multifaceted legacy in Havana and beyond.

On this exclusive journey, witness aspects of contemporary Cuban life that few visitors will ever see. Connect with diverse local personalities from former ambassadors to entrepreneurs driving Cuba's burgeoning private sector. Attend exclusive events, gallery tours, and musical performances, and step into the private studios of Cuban creators. We are proud to support Cuba's privately owned business on this program, staying at a quiet, historic boutique hotel in Havana and dining at *paladares*, family-run restaurants.

Discover how West African enslaved people forged a wealth of art, culture, and spiritual practices that continue to shape Cuban society. Accompany expert curators on private tours highlighting Afro-Cuban art in Havana's museums, including the surrealist works of Pablo Picasso's protégé, painter **Wifredo Lam**. Your exploration extends to sacred sites central to Santería and other Afro-Cuban spiritual traditions. In a rare opportunity, enter the home of a *Babalawo* (Santería high priest) to learn about the faith's roots in West African Yoruba religion.

Experience soul-stirring Afro-Cuban dance during a private rehearsal with one of Cuba's leading contemporary dance companies. On an excursion to the seaside city of Matanzas, birthplace of *rumba*, join an expert-led tour of an 18th-century fortress constructed by enslaved individuals, now transformed into a museum honoring their lives.

Your journey will be enriched by the expertise of Cornell study leader **Dr. Ambre Dromgoole**, Assistant Professor of Africana Studies and an accomplished scholar of music, religion, gender, and popular culture. Dr. Dromgoole's multidisciplinary perspectives will deepen your understanding of Cuba's cultural landscape and history.

To secure your place on this exceptional exploration of Cuba, please contact our tour operator Arrangements Abroad at 212-514-8921 or email trips@arrangementsabroad.com. Join CAU in March 2025 for an unforgettable journey celebrating the enduring creativity and diversity of the Cuban people.

Warmly,
CAU (Cornell's Adult University)
Alumni Affairs



Activity Level:



Pace Level:



Visit Arrangements Abroad's website for more information about Activity and Pace Levels at www.arrangementsabroad.com/faqs.

Afro-Cuban Arts & Culture in Havana In Support of the Cuban People

March 30 – April 5, 2025



Plaza Vieja, Havana

SUNDAY, MARCH 30: DEPARTURE / HAVANA, CUBA

Welcome to Havana! Upon your independent arrival at José Martí International Airport, you will be greeted and transferred to **Paseo 206**, your boutique hotel in the quiet, residential neighborhood of Vedado.

Gather this evening for a festive welcome dinner at a *paladar*, a privately owned restaurant usually located in the proprietor's home and largely staffed by family members. D

MONDAY, MARCH 31: HAVANA

Founded in 1519, Havana remains the Caribbean's most impressive historical urban center. Participate in a morning lecture and discussion with a local architectural historian, then depart on a walking tour of UNESCO-listed **Old Havana**. Discover the stories of Afro-Cuban people and their culture as you explore the four main squares: Plaza de Armas, Plaza de San Francisco de Asís, Plaza Vieja, and Plaza de la Catedral.

Following a delightful lunch at a *paladar*, discover the colorful murals of **Callejón de Hamel**, a two-block alleyway and an exciting center of Afro-Cuban art and culture in Havana. While here, enjoy a live performance of infectious rhythmic Afro-Cuban music and dance.

Later, visit the house of a **Babalawo** (Santería high priest). Gain an exclusive look at Santería's rituals, practices, and rich spiritual traditions that have been passed down through generations, tracing their origins to the Yoruba practices that West African enslaved people brought to the Americas. This evening, indulge in a delicious dinner at a local *paladar*. B,L,D

TUESDAY, APRIL 1: HAVANA / REGLA / JAIMANITAS / HAVANA

After a morning lecture by **Dr. Ambre Dromgoole**, delight in a behind-the-scenes morning rehearsal of the **Rosario Cárdenas Dance Company**, featuring some of Cuba's most gifted contemporary dancers. Afterwards, you will have an opportunity to chat with the performers.

Visit the nearby municipality of **Regla**, known for its deep-rooted traditions in Santería, Palo Monte, and other Afro-Cuban religions. Take a private look at the iconic **Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Regla**, a church with a storied history in the Santería tradition.



Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Regla



Wifredo Lam, *Tercer Mundo*, 1966, (detail),
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes de La Habana

Following lunch, venture just outside Havana to the picturesque fishing village of **Jaimanitas**, where you will have an exclusive visit to the house and studio of artist **José Rodríguez Fuster**, whose public art work here has been compared to Gaudí's creations in Barcelona.

Take a walking tour of the village to see how Fuster has ingeniously decorated more than 80 surrounding homes with ornate murals and domes, all tailored to the personalities of his neighbors. You will also behold his masterpiece, **The Artists' Wall**, a breathtaking quilt of dozens of tiles, each one signed and donated by other Cuban artists.

This evening, explore the renowned 1930 **Hotel Nacional de Cuba**, designed by the acclaimed New York architecture firm McKim, Mead & White. Stop in its Hall of Fame to see tributes to its many famous guests, including Buster Keaton, Rita Hayworth, Nat King Cole, Sir Winston Churchill, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, and Gabriel García Márquez.

Enjoy a *mojito* on a terrace overlooking Havana's harbor, followed by dinner at a local *paladar*. B,L,D

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2: HAVANA

Join a former Ambassador and Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs for an eye-opening morning discussion on Cuba's current reality. Then an independent curator will guide you on a private morning tour of Cuba's largest museum, the **Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes de La Habana** (National Museum of Fine Arts of Havana).

Encounter the complex, colorful works of the country's leading modern and contemporary artists, including the revered Afro-Cuban painter **Wifredo Lam** (1902–1982). During an 18-year exile in Europe, Lam became Pablo Picasso's protégé. See how Lam incorporated Cubism, Surrealism, and Afro-Cuban iconography in his abstract, geometrical imagery, honoring Cuba's mixed heritage and African roots.

After lunch, walk down **Calle Obispo**, Havana's main shopping street, and explore **Dador**, a privately owned fashion boutique. Speak to one of the owners about the challenges and advantages of operating a small private business in Cuba.

In the early evening, drive to **The Ludwig Foundation of Cuba**, one of only a few Cuban NGOs, for a presentation on the organization's work helping emerging Cuban artists. On the penthouse terrace, the Foundation's president will host a cocktail reception and buffet dinner. Enjoy your meal in the company of young artists supported by the Foundation, learning about their lives and careers in Cuba. Later, you may opt to attend a performance at one of Havana's famed music venues. B,L,R,D

THURSDAY, APRIL 3: HAVANA / MATANZAS / HAVANA

Journey to the seaside city of **Matanzas**, renowned as a birthplace of *rumba* and numerous Afro-Cuban folkloric traditions. Matanzas is also known as the "Venice of Cuba" for the 17 bridges and three rivers that traverse its environs. As you travel, pause at Cuba's highest bridge, the 360-foot-tall **Puente de Bacunayagua**, and revel in the panoramic views of the verdant valley below.





Upon arrival in Matanzas, delve into the rich cultural heritage of the city with a private visit to the **Castillo de San Severino**, an 18th-century castle built by African enslaved people. A poignant symbol of the city's past and now a museum, the castle houses objects and photos that offer meaningful insights into the reality of enslaved life in Cuba.

Continue your exploration of Matanzas with a visit to **Ediciones Vigía**, an artisanal publishing house where skilled craftspeople create handmade books, and meet an artist in his studio.

After lunch, ascend the Monserrate hills to **La Ermita de Monserrate**, a small late 19th-century neoclassical church, where you will witness **a special performance by the Choir of Matanzas**. Return to Havana for an evening at leisure. B,L

FRIDAY, APRIL 4: HAVANA

After a morning lecture by **Dr. Ambre Dromgoole**, join your expert local guide for an inside look at the 122-acre **Colón Cemetery**, a sprawling necropolis often referred to as "Cuba's largest sculpture park." Learn the stories of Cuba's past through the elaborate sculptures, monuments, mausoleums, chapels, and family vaults in varied architectural styles, from Classical Revival to Art Deco.

Following lunch on your own, visit **Nostalgicar**, a private, family-owned classic car workshop. At this garage where some of the city's finest vintage cars are repaired and refurbished, the proprietor will talk about how he started the business and the challenges of acquiring parts.

Before the day's end, join a curator for a private tour of what *Time* magazine calls one of "the world's greatest places," the **Fábrica de Arte Cubano (FAC)**, a spellbinding, multilevel cultural space that defies categorization. Is it a performance venue? An art gallery? It's both and so much more. You'll have an exclusive look at its spectacular exhibits and installations with an opportunity to purchase artwork.

Next door, gather for our rooftop farewell dinner at **El Cocinero**, a former cooking oil factory transformed into a chic *paladar* with delicious food and world-class daiquiris. B,D

SATURDAY, APRIL 5: HAVANA / RETURN

Transfer from the hotel this morning for the flight home. B

While Cornell is pleased to facilitate travel opportunities for its alumni and friends with tour operators that specialize in high-quality educational travel, please be aware that Cornell does not conduct, manage, or operate these travel experiences, or act as an agent for travelers interested in tours. Tour operators and travelers are responsible for making their own safety decisions concerning this travel, and, as a facilitator between travelers and the tour operators with whom travelers make arrangements for completing travel, Cornell's role and liability are strictly limited. Specific tour operator and national health and safety protocols will apply to each trip, and travelers should review all protocols and trip terms and conditions, including terms and conditions regarding cancellations, refunds, health and safety, and insurance prior to making a reservation. Cornell is not responsible for changes to trips or travel arrangements or for losses, expenses, damages, or injuries resulting from travel.

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ACCOMMODATIONS

Paseo 206, Havana



PASEO 206

A member of the Small Luxury Hotels of the World collection, this boutique hotel is a romantic jewel nestled among the tree-lined streets of Vedado, the economic and cultural heart of La Havana. This family home dating back to 1933 has undergone a careful restoration that has preserved the original architectural elements. The cozy and comfortable rooms and suites all offer free Wi-Fi, 24-hour room service, Hermès bathroom amenities, Marshall speakers, and hypoallergenic king-sized beds with luxurious Frette linens.

PROGRAM RATES

\$5,999 per person, double rate in Cozy Room
\$7,399 single rate in Cozy Room

\$6,999 per person, double rate in Junior Room
\$9,699 single rate in Junior Room

\$8,199 per person, double rate in Master Suite
\$11,199 single rate in Master Suite

\$8,899 per person, double rate in Rooftop Suite
\$11,899 single rate in Rooftop Suite

RATES INCLUDE

- Six nights hotel accommodations as per itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner). Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; house wine at welcome and farewell dinners
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Enrichment program of lectures and talks
- Airport / hotel / airport transfers for all travelers
- Taxes, service, and portorage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers

NOT INCLUDED IN RATES International airfare; Cuban visa; Cuban Departure tax; limited Cuban health insurance policy (required for all foreign travelers to Cuba under age 80); passport fees; alcoholic beverages other than what is noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; travel insurance; trip insurance; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.

Paseo 206, Havana



CORNELL'S ADULT UNIVERSITY AFRO-CUBAN ARTS & CULTURE IN HAVANA MARCH 30 – APRIL 5, 2025 RESERVATION FORM

To reserve a place, please call Arrangements Abroad at 212-514-8921 or 800-221-1944; email: trips@arrangementsabroad.com; fax: 212-344-7493; or complete and return this form with your deposit of \$1,000 per person (of which \$500 is non-refundable for administrative fees) payable to *Arrangements Abroad*. Mail to: Arrangements Abroad, 260 West 39th Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018-4424.

Name(s) in full as on passport(s). Please print.

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone (home)

(business)

Fax

E-mail

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel Room Preference Cozy Room Junior Room
 Master Suite Rooftop Suite

I wish to share a room with _____

FORM OF PAYMENT

Enclosed is my check (payable to *Arrangements Abroad*)
 Debit card Credit card Wire transfer

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Credit/debit card number

3- or 4-digit security code

Expiration date

I/We will be traveling to Cuba and agree to fully participate in this program under the general license category of travel "In Support of the Cuban People."

I/We confirm that I/we have carefully read and agree to the *Terms & Conditions* of this Program (see www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms to review or call for a copy). I/We agree to full payment 120 days prior to departure. Each participant must sign below.

Signature (required)

Date

Signature (required)

Date

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