Monday, November 27
4:30 am Meet at Delta Check-in Area, Mitchell Airport
6:00 am Delta Flight 2823 to Atlanta
9:55 am Delta Flight 639 to Havana
1:35 pm Arrive in Havana. Meet your guide and transfer to lodging.
3:30 pm Check-in at the Hotel Nacional, the home to many important dignitaries during their visits to Cuba and the site of annual Mafia meetings throughout the 1950s. The beautiful grounds are unbeatable and take you back in time.
5:00 pm Socio-economic discussion with urban planner Miguel Coyula, whose presentation will touch on housing, infrastructure, investment and restoration programs. It’s bound to leave you with a better understanding of why Havana looks the way it does today and possibilities moving forward. At the hotel.
6:30 pm Enjoy a traditional Cuban dinner overlooking the Straits of Florida at the Hotel Nacional with a great view of the Havana sea wall and the old Spanish fortress. Served family style, the rice, beans and roasted chicken are delicious and a perfect match with live music and a beautiful ambiance.

Tuesday, November 28
9:30 am Walking tour of the Old City. Wander through the Plaza Vieja, the oldest plaza in Havana, dating from the 16th century. See the Plaza de San Francisco, a cobbled plaza surrounded by buildings dating from the 18th century, dominated by the baroque Iglesia and Convento de San Francisco dating from 1719. Visit Plaza de la Catedral and the Catedral de San Cristóbal de La Habana. Visit the Plaza de Armas, a scenic tree-lined plaza formerly at the center of influence in Cuba. It is surrounded by many of the most historic structures in Havana as well as important monuments.
11:30 am Explore the Taller de Gráfica Experimental. The Taller is Havana’s printmaking and lithographic workshop. It is a studio, a school and most important of all, an art institution that preserves and develops the sophisticated art of print making with relative freedom of spirit and form.
12:00 noon Lunch at Doña Eutimia paladar. Famous for its ropa vieja and frozen mojitos, this paladar made Newsweek Magazine’s top 100 restaurants in the world in 2012.
Afternoon free – stop by the arts and crafts market in Old Havana, or wander down side streets.
8:00 pm Dinner at Le Chansonnier, set in an old house in the Vedado area, this paladar has an interesting menu, a good-looking bar and a very friendly service.

Wednesday, November 29
9:00 am Morning discussion with Carlos Alzugaray, former Cuban diplomat and expert on U.S.-Cuba relations, to learn about the bilateral relationship and Cuban foreign policy. At the hotel.
11:00 am Tour of Callejón de Hamel, a vibrant community project, featuring a discussion of Santeria and dance performance.
12:30 pm  Enjoy an Italian meal at Bar Asturias, housed in a beautiful building along Havana’s famous Prado Avenue.

2:30 pm  Visit to the Museum of Cuban Art. We will be accompanied by Nelson Herrera, an art historian, who will provide an overview of Cuban art and artists over the last four centuries.

4:00 pm  Visit to the Lízt Alfonso Academy, a women-led dance company and school for local youth, specializing in flamenco dance. We will watch a rehearsal of the adolescent dance group, and sit with the dancers afterward to discuss how they came to join the school and the impact it has had on them.

7:00 pm  Spend the evening at Café Madrigal with Frank Delgado, renowned singer and songwriter, for a discussion about the nueva trova movement in Cuba, followed by a musical performance. Café Madrigal, owned and run by film director Rafael Rosales, is housed in a beautiful colonial mansion with the walls lined with captivating artwork. Enjoy tasty tapas and cocktails.

Thursday, November 30

8:30 am  Depart for Viñales. Considered by many to be the most beautiful place in Cuba, the Viñales Valley National Monument holds stunning landscapes. The area is also famous for being the premier tobacco growing area in the world. We will stop at the lookout at Los Jazmines hotel, before descending into the valley.

9:30 am  Visit to the home and studio of plastic artist Fuster, who has converted his neighborhood into an art project featuring murals, plastic art and other designs.

12:00 noon  Our first stop will be at the home of a local tobacco farmer, who will teach us about the cultivation and production process, followed by a rolling demo. He might even light up a cigar or two for the group.

1:00 pm  Enjoy lunch on the grounds of a local farm, Finca Paraiso Argoecologica (the agro-ecological Paradise Farm), where we will learn about Cuban agriculture and tobacco production while indulging in an organic meal.

3:30 pm  Depart for Havana. We will stop at the lookout at Los Jazmines hotel, which oversees the beautiful valley.

7:00 pm  Dinner at Café Laurent, a paladar located in the beautiful Vedado District. Blocks from the Hotel Nacional, this penthouse apartment was converted into a lovely rooftop restaurant.

Friday, December 1

9:00 am  Discussion with Giulio Ricci, Cuban economist, about the current process of economic reform. He will share his views on the Cuban governments “updating” of the economic model. At the hotel.

10:30 am  Visit to the Nostalgic Cars restoration garage. Owners Nidialys Acosta and Julio Alvarez have taken advantage of the recent economic opening to put together a fleet of 20 plus pristine “clasicos” to provide professional service to their clientele. We will visit the garage to see how they restore these beauties from the 1950s.

12:00 noon  Lunch at Paladar Atelier. This restaurant is equally known for its atmosphere and exquisite cuisine. The lighting and textures of the house, which was home to a pre-revolutionary senator, coupled with walls adorned in modern art, create a cozy, but modern setting.

2:00 pm  Visit to Christopher Colon Cemetery, one of the oldest and most prestigious cemeteries in Latin America, where we will receive a guided tour.

Afternoon free
7:00 pm  Dinner at El Cocinero. This lovely restaurant is housed in a former factory. Home to Havana’s hip, you might think you are in Soho or Madrid. Following dinner walk next door for live music, art and dancing at La Fabrica de Arte Cubano. Rock star X Alfonso has turned this into meeting spot for a young, eclectic crowd of Cubans and foreigners.

Saturday, December 2
9:30 am  Check out of the hotel.
10:00 am  Wander the grounds of La Finca Vigía. Formerly the home of Ernest Hemingway, today it still houses his expansive collection of books. It was here where he wrote two of his most celebrated novels: For Whom the Bell Tolls and The Old Man and the Sea.
11:30 am  Depart for Cienfuegos, one of the country’s oldest and most beautiful cities, which is located approximately three and a half hours from Havana. Cienfuegos, referred to as the “Pearl of the South,” is one of Cuba’s only cities to display French and Spanish architecture. Housed on one of the country’s largest Bays, the city offers beautiful ocean front landscapes, and is deeply rich in culture.
2:30 pm  Music and discussion with the local chapter of UNEAC, the National Union of Artists and Writers of Cuba, featuring an opportunity to meet local artists.
3:30 pm  Depart for Trinidad, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, known for its cobble stoned streets, pastel colored homes and small-town feel. Check-in at casas particulares.
7:30 pm  Enjoy dinner at Paladar Sol y Son near the historic colonial center in an old beautiful house. It offers great meals with a romantic atmosphere and good Cuban music.

Sunday, December 3
9:00 am  City tour with Nancy Benítez, a local architect, historian and restoration specialist. Ms. Benítez will provide an overview of the city’s history from an architectural, economic and infrastructural point of view.
Lunch and afternoon free – enjoy the market, explore the city center or head to the nearby beach.
7:00 pm  Farewell dinner at Los Conspiradores paladar, located at the foot of the main plaza and the lively Casa de la Musica, featuring live music all night.

Monday, December 4
9:00 am  Say farewell to Cuba today. Check-out and depart for the airport in Havana.
2:35 pm  Delta Flight 648 to Atlanta
7:10 pm  Delta Flight 766 to Milwaukee
8:24 pm  Arrive in Milwaukee