Join us on this professional research trip to Cuba and be exposed to its literary qualities as they have developed from pre-independence to the life of writers today. Meet the people of Cuba and enjoy the music and culture of the island. This trip is open to all professional researchers with documented experience in the literary world. It is also open to others with a genuine interest in the literary arts who could benefit by exposure to their practice in Cuba.

José Martí
Dates, Activities, and Details for Seven Days and Nights in Havana

Sunday, Jan. 6, 2013
* Departure from Miami International Airport
* Arrival in Havana/transfer to Hotel Florida. * Light lunch.
* Visit to Callejón de Hamel.
* Welcome dinner in Habana Vieja at Santo Angel.

*Cuba is currently undergoing an unprecedented expansion of demand on its tourism facilities and we have experienced very last minute substitution of hotels by Havanatur, the State tour operator. Although we cannot categorically insure that every hotel previously confirmed will be available at check in time, we will work diligently to keep the hotel selections intact and/or insure that any substitutes will be in the same category.*
The fine print: You will be sent detailed departure information well in advance of our trip.

Callejón de Hamel is an alleyway in Centro Habana that, over the years, has been converted into an elaborate art and dance center focusing on Santería and other syncretic Afro-Cuban religions. On Sundays Callejón de Hamel is a crowded and lively affair where visitors watch and take part with neighborhood participants in the dancing and drumming. The Callejón with its extensive art space is open to the public daily. Transportation provided.

Santo Angel, located in an old colonial home at Plaza Vieja, is a comfortable walk from our hotel.

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* Hotel Florida breakfast

* Study Cuban literary practices related to Havana’s unique architectural environment by visiting the four plazas of Old Havana and their neighborhoods with Isabel Rigol. Included is a visit to the maqueta of Habana Vieja and a further discussion about how literature, writing, and journalism flourished in pre revolution Cuba.

* Lunch at a paladar, Doña Eutimia, located on an alleyway just off the Plaza de la Catedral next door to the Graphics Workshop (itself worth a visit).

* Afternoon – Further study of literary practices in Cuba and its relationship to religious freedoms by visiting Havana’s main Cathedral and the Jewish Community Center. This will be followed by a meeting with a representative from Cuba’s theater world.

* Dinner on your own at a paladar. For our first weekday dinner, we recommend the restaurant NAO.
The fine print: Your package cost includes the hotel’s daily breakfast buffet.

More fine print: The maqueta – a scale model of Havana’s Old City – gives a great look at how the original Havana grew. Isabel Rigol, an architectural historian, gives a lively account of the city’s expansion.

Paladars are private licensed restaurants in family homes. At least they used to be. They’ve since evolved into private restaurants competing with state-run dining locales. You will be provided with a list of recommended paladars. One of the attractions of Doña Eutimia is that it’s next door to the Graphics Workshop, a worthwhile visit in its own right. NAO ia a highly praised paladar next to the Plaza de Armas.

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Tuesday, Jan. 8
* Hotel Florida buffet breakfast

* Take a launch across Havana Bay to the village of Regla.

* Explore the town of Regla, the epicenter of Cuba’s Afro Cuban religion. Be exposed to the role of this religion in the literary life of this island nation. Travel by van to Guanabacoa.

* Visit the Guanabacoa Museum to learn about literary activities in Cuba by the Afro Cuban Community.

* Lunch at Doña Carmela. (voucher; your meal is covered)

* Visit to the estate of Ernest Hemingway, Finca Vigía, in the Havana suburb of San Francisco de Paula.

* Dinner at the paladar of your choice; we recommend Café Laurent.
**Finca Vigía**

The fine print: The cross-Bay launch to Regla is one of the few opportunities to use Cuban pesos. Otherwise, just about everything is done with convertible pesos, worth approx. $1.20 each, known by their official initials, CUC (kook).

The small, human-sized church at Regla has the famous black Madonna.

The Guanabacoa Museum is a terrific place to learn the history of Afro-Cuban spirituality and beliefs, and how they developed clandestinely from slavery to today.

Lunch takes place on a private outdoor backyard patio in a small housing complex on the east side of the Bay. (Included in package.)

The Hemingway estate includes a building that houses many of the author’s archives. In a rare bilateral accord, researchers from Harvard University’s JFK Library have been allowed to study and photocopy his papers here. It’s where Ernest Hemingway lived and wrote for most of the last two decades of his life.

Café Laurent, a paladar option in a penthouse, is walking distance from the Hotel Nacional in the Vedado section of town.

* * *
* Breakfast at the Florida.

* Visit the Museum devoted to author and poet José Lezama Lima.

* Transportation to the city of Matanzas.

* Lunch at the Hotel Velasco in Matanzas. (covered by voucher)

* Afternoon visit and reception with the staff of Ediciones Vigía, an independent publishing house.

* Return to Havana.

* Paladar dinner back in Havana. Two recommendations for your meal: Le Chansonnier and La Moneda.

* Salsa lessons (optional) with a member of Cuba’s Ballet Folklórico (first of two nights).

Yet more fine print. Lezama Lima (1910 – 1976) was a poet and author, whose internationally acclaimed controversial novel \textit{Paradiso} (available in English) forced
writer non grata status on the author. Lezama was considered a major writer of his generation, and is now well praised for the breadth of his output.

The drive to Matanzas will give us a chance to see Cuba outside Havana.

Ediciones Vigía produces lovely limited-run hand-made books.

The salsa lessons will take place in the living room of a Centro Habana residence not far from Barrio Chino.

Paladars: le Chansonnier, in Vedado, is French-oriented (menu, wine, etc.) and is located near the Bertolt Brecht Theater. La Moneda, likewise highly regarded, can be found near the Plaza de la Catedral.

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Thursday, January 10, 2013

* Breakfast at the Hotel Florida

* Meet with a playwright and director from Havana’s theater world. See rehearsal for a play.

* Visit the José Martí Casa Natal.

* A walk through the narrow streets of Barrio Chino, with running commentary by a life-long resident.

* Lunch at Tien Tan, on the pedestrian walkway in Barrio Chino (or restaurant of your choice).

* Afternoon: visit to a rooftop mixer with Cuban writers, poets, and others.

* Back to the hotel before dinner at La Barranca on the north patio at the Hotel Nacional

* Option: After nine pm, live jazz at the Rincón del Jazz at La Zorra y El Cuervo.
* Salsa dance lessons, night number two. (Optional)

Teatro Bertolt Brecht

Finer print: The morning theater visit will take place at the Teatro Bertolt Brecht in the Vedado Neighborhood.

The birthplace of José Martí (b. 1853 d. 1895, architect of Cuban independence and a writer of international stature) is located in Habana Vieja. The Casa Natal gives a good overview of his life and importance. Martí spent most of the last fifteen years of his life living and working in New York.

The fifth-floor walk-up rooftop mixer takes place at the home of internationally published poet Reina María Rodríguez who occasionally has colleagues over for drinks and invigorating chit-chat about literature and publishing. Spanish, while obviously advantageous, is not required for this or any of the week’s activities. Other passengers, our tour leader, and our guide will help out when needed, and of course many Cubans speak English.

The Hotel Nacional patio has the best view of the Malecón seaside drive and the Caribbean Sea beyond.

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Friday, January 11, 2013

* Hotel Florida breakfast.

* Museo de Bellas Artes.

* Lunch at El Templete.
* Afternoon option: Baseball game at the Estadio Latinoamericano.

* Dinner at a paladar – La Guarida is our nomination for this evening’s dinner.

* Theater evening – either a major production and a historic venue or an avant garde/small theater company at a neighborhood venue.

The Fine Arts Museum

Finest print. The Museo de Bellas Artes (Fine Arts Museum) exhibits an extraordinary collection of Cuban art from early colonial times to early this week. (Another museum houses international art.)

El Templete sits along the Malecón facing the Bay.

Baseball option: Three of Cuba’s sixteen teams are based in the Havana area, and there is almost always a game at the Estadio Latinoamericano. We hope to be joined by an expert on Cuban baseball to explain the qualities of the game here. The baseball schedule is not released until late fall, at which time we’ll know which teams will play this particular day. Transportation provided.

Theater evening. Our man in Havana is keeping his eyes out for announcements of productions in January. Once we have a choice we’ll let you know.
Saturday, January 12, 2013

* Hotel breakfast.

* Morning: Riverside Santería ceremony.

* Lunch at El Aljibe

* Final afternoon – Used and rare book dealers at the Plaza de Armas or on your own to visit corners of Havana thus far unexplored (or to revisit places of particular appeal).

* Farewell dinner at Kadir Lopez Home Studio with guests of our choice. (Cost covered.)

Fine print: The riverside ceremony at the Bosque de La Habana involves authentic Yoruba chanting and drumming with genuine equipment and local Santeros. Regla Albarrán Miller will be present to explain.

The venerable El Aljibe serves comida criolla – that is, very Cuban food. (And very good.)

Visitors gain a great deal of insight from browsing the second-hand and rare book stands at the Plaza de Armas and chatting up the booksellers for not only their knowledge of contemporary and bygone books and authors, but also the current literary scene.

Our farewell dinner takes place in the backyard of the Kadir López Home Studio, a casual affair.

Sunday, January 13, 2013

* Breakfast, then check out of hotel.

* Transfer to airport.
* Go through ticketing process that includes $25 CUC airport exit fee.

* Arrive Miami International Airport, clear immigration and customs, connect to your destination.

* The Literary Havana package includes:
  * Roundtrip, Miami↔Havana
  * Cuban visa
  * Accommodations, seven nights, Hotel Florida
  * Daily breakfast
  * five lunches
  * three dinners (15 meals in all)
  * admission to five museums
  * “luxury motor coach” transportation to all destinations including Matanzas
  * Professional fully bilingual guide from Havanatur
  * Medical insurance (obligatory)

The package does not include:
* Gratuities (guide, driver, restaurant servers)
* $25 CUC airport departure tax

Package price: $3020. (Single room, +$400) *

* Best bet: an early morning or evening stroll along the Malecón.*

Unknowns can pop up. For example, during a similar trip our guide learned of a performance by the Cuban National Ballet and arranged for terrific last-minute seats at the García Lorca Theater, a wonderfully restored art deco venue. There should be no shortage of places and people to visit and interview to fulfill your literary research.

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* ROOM OCCUPANCY: Cuba Tours and Travel will make every effort to accommodate your single or double room or suite request. However room occupancy is based on availability and you will be charged for the actual room arrangement you get during the actual trip to Cuba.
Recommended reading and links:
Harper’s Magazine October 2010: “Thirty Days as a Cuban”
The Economist Special Report on Cuba – March 24, 2012:
http://www.economist.com/node/21550418
“Nuestra América” by José Martí
http://www.historyofcuba.com/history/marti/America.htm
Fiction: Paradiso, by José Lezama Lima
Dirty Havana Trilogy by Pedro Juan Gutiérrez
Poetry: The Whole Island – Six Decades of Cuban Poetry (A Bilingual Anthology), ed.: Mark Weiss
Photography: Violet Isle, by Alex Webb & Rebecca Norris Webb
CD bonus track: Traveler’s Tales – Cuba
...and Tom Miller’s *Trading With the Enemy: A Yankee Travels through Castro’s Cuba*, which, if you don’t own, we’ll supply you with a copy.

Trip leader: Tom Miller has been a regular visitor to Cuba since 1987. He is the author of *Trading With the Enemy*, editor of *Traveler’s Tales Cuba*, co-founder of the (since suspended) U.S.-Cuba Writers Conference, and has served as tour leader for educational Cuba trips by the National Geographic Society and other organizations. He has written frequently about Cuba’s history and its social and cultural life for a wide range of publications, including Smithsonian, LIFE, the Washington Post, and Natural History. He lives in Arizona. Co-leader Regla Albarrán Miller lived the first forty years of her life in Havana, and visits the island annually. She is currently in the graduate program in Spanish Literature at the University of Arizona.

If you are a full time professional whose travel to Cuba is directly related to non-commercial research in your full time professional area and your trip will comprise a full work schedule in Cuba and has a substantial likelihood of public dissemination then this trip is for you.

* for questions about trip activities contact Tom Miller via e-mail: tlmolinero@msn.com or at (520) 325-3344 daily after 11 a.m. East coast time.

* to join the group, to inquire about qualifications, and to make payment arrangements, contact Yaíma and Peter Sanchez at Cuba Tours and Travel: 1 (888) 225-6439 or write to tours@cubatoursandtravel.com

  The absolute deadline for this Professional Researcher trip -- sign-up and $500 deposit -- is Monday, November 12.


* Please note that this trip is designed for Professional Research under the guidelines of the U.S. Treasury Department. For more information on Cuba travel restrictions please visit [www.treasury.org/ofac](http://www.treasury.org/ofac)
* One final note: we welcome Cuban-born participants. They must jump through additional hoops, so native Cubans should sign up early.

This invitation is for professionals in the field who qualify for full time professional research in the fields of literature, journalism, translation, and writing. This invitation is intended for you and a small group of other professionals, and therefore is limited in size. Thank you for understanding.

A write-up of the Jan. 2011 “Literary Havana” trip appeared in the Arizona Republic:

We have many references from similar previous trips if you are interested in chatting with someone who went. And of course, you can call Tom Miller (520-325-3344) with questions.

This trip is being offered by Cuba Tours and Travel LLC.
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