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| CC_LOGO | **CANADA-CUBA** **SPORTS & CULTURAL** **FESTIVALS** |

*Revised March 2024*  ***Okanagan Mission Secondary School***

***ARTS IN CUBA: April 23 – 30, 2024*** *(Subject to flight schedule changes)*

### CULTURAL EXCHANGE and PERFORMANCE PROGRAM IN CUBA

This program is specifically designed for music students to experience a comprehensive overview of Cuban culture and history from Columbus to beyond Castro, with a focus on the study of the Afro-Cuban contribution to Music, Dance, and Visual Art in Cuba. Beginning in Havana, founded in 1519, participants will meet and perform with Cuban students and teachers at local arts schools. Additional performances will take place at public venues arranged by the Cuban Ministry of Culture. We will then travel by bus and explore the climates and topography of tropical rain forests and mountain terrain, while observing the life ways of rural communities in the Cuban countryside.

**ITINERARY**

**APRIL 23**: **Flight** **to Cuba**. Sunwing flight # 6276 departs Vancouver at 9:00 a.m. and arrives in Varadero at 5:55 p.m. Onarrival in Cuba, we will be met by our hosts at the airport and transferred to our hotel in Havana (approximately 140 kms) for check-in. Late dinner at the hotel. Optional rehearsal time available at the hotel.

**APRIL 24**: Breakfast. 9:00 departure. This morning we will take an orientation tour by bus, followed by a walking tour to Old Town Havana, Spain's gateway to the conquest of Latin America. Havana, founded in 1519 became the capital of Cuba in 1553 and in 1982 UNESCO declared Old Havana a World Heritage Site, where 144 buildings from the 16th and 17th centuries are preserved. Our guide will lead a walking tour of the Old City. We then travel by air-conditioned coach to the harbour entrance to visit the *Parque Historico del Morro* (entrance to park included) and see fortifications built in the 17th century to guard the city from attack by pirates. 12:30 p.m. Lunch at the hotel. The afternoon will be spent at Santa Maria beach to enjoy the sun, white sand and swim in the Caribbean Sea. 7:00 p.m. Dinner at the hotel. This evening you will perform for international and Cuban guests at the hotel.

**APRIL 25**: Breakfast. 9:00 a.m. departure. After breakfast we will attend a performance by Novel Voz, an excellent a cappella vocal jazz ensemble. An interactive Percussion and Latin Rhythms workshop with members of Novel Voz will follow. 12:00 p.m. Lunch ($20 CAD=$15 USD not included) at a local restaurant together with Novel Voz. 2:00 p.m. departure. This afternoon all students will attend the Amadeo Roldan Arts High School. We will learn about the school and Canadian and Cuban students will perform for each other. 7:00 p.m. Dinner at the hotel. This evening dance to popular Cuban music at the hotel and receive informal Salsa dance classes.

**APRIL 26**: Breakfast. 9:00 a.m. departure. This morning we have been invited to attend a presentation by an Afro-Cuban musical/dance group. Members of the group will endeavour to share Afro-Cuban song and dance with the students. 12:30 p.m. Lunch at the hotel. The afternoon will be spent enjoying the beach and pool at the hotel. 7:00 p.m. Dinner at the hotel. 8:00 p.m. departure. This evening you have the option of visiting a jazz club to enjoy performances by top Cuban musicians ($15 entrance fee not included).Your jazz band can be the opening act tonight!

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**APRIL 27**: Breakfast. 9:00 a.m. departure. This morning we will visit the Garcia Caturla Arts High School. We will attend a performance presented by music and dance students at the school. A performance by the Canadian students will follow. 12:30 p.m. Lunch at the hotel. 2:00 p.m. departure. This afternoon we will visit shopping areas in the city including the artisan’s market and a collection of boutiques housed in a restored 18th century colonial palace. 4:00 p.m. Later in the afternoon Canadian students perform a joint program with other Cuban performing artists at the Casa de la Cultura. 7:00 p.m. Dinner at the hotel. Attend evening show at the hotel.

**APRIL 28**: Breakfast. 8:00 a.m. departure. This morning we will visit Las Terrazas, a beautiful biosphere reserve. This is a protected area with a mandate to maintain a balanced relationship between people and nature and encourage sustainable development. Here we will take a guided walk through one of the many hiking trails. A typical Cuban lunch ($20 CAD=$15 USD not included) will be served at a local restaurant while musicians perform Cuban music for us. In the afternoon, we will tour the ruins of the old Buena Vista coffee plantation including the slave quarters and massive grindstone for processing coffee beans. After you may stop at the coffee shop to taste the best coffee in the area and then visit the local souvenir shops, or you may enjoy a refreshing dip in the San Juan River. Return to Havana. 7:00 p.m. Dinner at the hotel. Attend evening performance(s) by Cuban musicians at the hotel.

**APRIL 29**:Breakfast.The morning will be spent enjoying the beach and pool. 12:30 p.m. Lunch at the hotel. 2:00 p.m. departure. This afternoon you will visit a local community centre that provides assistance to low-income families and do some humanitarian work. You will attend a performance by the community centre kids and learn about this outreach program and their mission from the volunteers that run it. If you wish, your group can present a donation to the community centre kids (goods, not money). Return to the hotel. At 7:00 this evening we will have a farewell dinner party with our Cuban friends.

**APRIL 30**: **Cuba to Canada**. Breakfast. Morning free to pack. 12:00 p.m. Check-out and then lunch (included) at the hotel. 2:25 p.m. departure to Varadero airport to check-in for the return flight home at 4:25 p.m. Sunwing flight # 6277 departs Varadero at 7:25 p.m. and arrives in Vancouver at 11:20 p.m.

**Program Includes**: Round trip airfare from selected departure city to Cuba, 7 night hotel accommodation based on double occupancy in air-conditioned rooms with private bathroom, breakfast, lunch and dinner daily (all-inclusive at the hotel), coordination and entrance/participation fees for visits - performances - workshops - tours, translator/guide services, local facilitators, ground transportation via modern air-conditioned bus as per itinerary, Cuban visa, and the Cuban airport tax. **Not Included**: 2 lunches outside of the hotel, optional activities, personal expenses, and tips.

**Please Note**: Hotels, restaurant and recreational facilities are quite expensive by local standards. You may choose to invite Cuban students and teachers to participate in social activities with your group. This is always warmly received, however, you as host, are expected to assume the cost of the invitation as it is beyond the means of most Cubans. We recommend you check with your guide for suggestions before extending any invitations to activities not included in the itinerary.

Depending on local conditions the order of activities may not be as indicated, we reserve the right to adjust the itinerary if required for the safe and proper management of the tour. Due to COVID-19, portions of your tour to be provided by third-party suppliers may be different than advertised, including being reduced or unavailable. By booking with us, you understand and accept the foregoing and you agree that we cannot be held liable for changes beyond our control.

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