



¡CON EL PACHECO ME VOY!

**HAVANA JAZZ FESTIVAL MUSICIAN LED TOUR WITH
AWARD WINNING CUBAN PIANIST JORGE LUIS PACHECO**

JANUARY 28th – FEBRUARY 3rd, 2025



On this intimate tour you'll get to experience Cuba through the eyes of one of the most celebrated and renowned pianists of Cuba today: Jorge Luis Pacheco!

With Pacheco at your side, get a behind-the-scenes look at musical life in Cuba. You'll visit some of Cuba's most prestigious musical conservatories where he honed his craft and enjoy live performances at Havana's most exclusive venues, including an authentic Afro-Cuban musical ritual and Rumba. With Pacheco, you'll get to know and enjoy performances by some of Cuba's most important musicians of popular Cuban music, classical music, and even opera. You'll also enjoy a walking tour of Old Havana, ride in classic cars, visit the Hemingway home, dine at the best paladares in Havana, shop Cuban art, and more!

****Blue Note Travel tours to Cuba are legally compliant with current OFAC regulations****



"This trip to Cuba for the Havana Jazz Festival with the Blue Note is one of our all-time favorite trips. I cannot say enough about it. The music was otherworldly. And Jorge Pacheco is the best pianist I have ever had the privilege to see and hear play. I grew up around pianists in my family and truly appreciate what it takes to play at his level. This is a trip of a lifetime, don't miss it!"

Larry, Jazz Fest 2024

"Our Blue Note trip to Havana for the 2024 Jazz Festival was unforgettable. The quality and variety of the music, dance, and other cultural activities was so impressive. Pacheco, besides being an incredible musician, was a very gracious host. He was friendly and open and more than willing to answer our questions and share details of his family life and career. It was obvious through his interactions with other musicians that he is highly regarded by his fellow Cubans and internationally."

Peter, Jazz Fest 2024



Day 1: USA-Havana / Tuesday, January 28th, 2025

- Arrive at José Martí International Airport (HAV); airport transfer included
- Head to lodging for check in and orientation
- Enjoy a welcome rooftop dinner Havana's most emblematic *paladar*, La Guarida
- Nighttime suggestion: Enjoy the various shows of the Jazz Festival at the main theater or other indoor and outdoor venues throughout Havana



Day 2: Havana / Wednesday, January 29th, 2025

- Begin your day with a classic convertible car ride around Havana City (1 hour)

Havana is beloved by American visitors with its collection of thousands of vintage American cars, manufactured before the Revolution and subsequent US embargo in 1960. In the absence of automobile imports, these living relics are preserved by Cuban mechanics or improvised fixes by the owners themselves. Experience an hour in a classic convertible Chevy, Ford or Oldsmobile.



- Visit Old Havana and learn about Havana's world-renowned UNESCO heritage designated architecture on an expertly guided walking tour (2 hrs)

There is no better introduction to Havana than a walk through Old Havana. On this walk you will explore Old Havana's five major plazas and see the interiors of cathedrals and other important buildings. UNESCO designated Old Havana as a world heritage site in 1982. Although today Havana is a sprawling metropolis of more than two million people, the old center retains an interesting mix of Baroque and neoclassical monuments, beautiful balconies, and courtyards.

- Lunch at El del Frente (a staff and client favorite – try the daiquiris!)
- Experience a private concert with Coro Leo, directed by Corina Campos, one of the most important choir directors in Havana—and Pacheco's beloved mom.



- Nighttime suggestion: Enjoy the various shows of the Jazz Festival at the main theater or other indoor and outdoor venues throughout Havana

Day 3: Havana / Thursday, January 30th, 2025

- Visit the famed Abdala recording studios, where many famous Cuban records were recorded including Buena Vista Social Club members.



- Visit two prestigious music conservatories where Pacheco studied, Guanabacoa and Amadeo Roldan and enjoy a brief concert by current students
- Lunch at 5 Sentidos *paladar*
- Visit the National Lyrical Theater, one of the oldest buildings in Havana, for a private recital

On this exclusive visit, Pacheco will introduce you to his late father's students. Maestro Pacheco was the director of the Cuban National Opera for six years. He was also the only Cuban opera singer to graduate from the prestigious Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow. You will enjoy a concert by his top students singing classic Cuban and Italian works as well as Cuban opera.

- Nighttime suggestion: Enjoy the various shows of the Jazz Festival at the main theater or other indoor and outdoor venues throughout Havana



Day 4: Havana / Friday, January 31st, 2025

- Experience an authentic Afro Cuban tambor ceremony, usually not shared with tourists
- Enjoy a traditional Afro Cuban percussion and dance performance
- Lunch at Café Ajiaco *paladar* and enjoy a cigar and rum tasting
- Nighttime suggestion: Enjoy the various shows of the Jazz Festival at the main theater or other indoor and outdoor venues throughout Havana

Day 5 Havana – Matanzas OR Las Terrazas / Saturday, February 1st, 2025

Option A: Visit Mantanzas (1.5 hours each way)

- Enjoy live drumming and dancing performance by members of two of Cuba's most renowned groups, Los Muñequitos de Matanzas and Afro-Cuba.

These masterful musicians and dancers bring to life the powerful sounds of traditional Afro-Cuban music, blending Yoruba rhythms with the essence of Cuban folklore.



- Participants are invited to join an optional Afro-Cuban dance lesson, learning the dynamic movements directly from these skilled performers. The lesson provides insight into the symbolic gestures, rhythms, and spirituality



- Enjoy a home-cooked authentic Cuban lunch

Option B: Head to Las Terrazas (1 hour each way)

- Enjoy a tour of this UNESCO site and biosphere reserve with an extraordinary guide
- Farm to table lunch in the countryside
- Visit the home of Polo Montañez, one of Cuba's most prolific and beloved singer songwriters
- Nighttime suggestion: Enjoy the various shows of the Jazz Festival at the main theater or other indoor and outdoor venues throughout Havana

Day 6: Havana / Sunday, February 2nd, 2025

- Visit the house and grounds of Ernest Hemingway, Finca Vigía

In 1940 Hemingway, with his new wife Martha, purchased a home outside Havana, where the couple lived for the next twenty years. The Hemingway's named the site Finca Vigía, or "lookout farm," and shared their home with dozens of Hemingway's beloved cats, as well as trophies from many successful hunts and fishing expeditions. During their time at the Finca, Hemingway became a fixture of Havana, and stayed in the country longer than many Americans chose to after relations between Cuba and the United States began to deteriorate. He fished extensively aboard his boat, Pilar, and enjoyed the island lifestyle, hanging out in Havana, penning some of his signature works, and entertaining guests. His home, with many original furnishings and personal artifacts can be viewed today.

- Lunch at El Cocinero *paladar*
- Enjoy a private concert at Havana's most popular spot for live music and nightlife: the Cuban Art Factory with Pacheco's hand-picked Cuban All Stars band.

Day 7: Havana – USA / Monday, February 3rd, 2025

- Final shopping at San Jose Craft market (time permitting)
- Head to Jose Martí Airport and say farewell to Cuba!

Blue Note

CULTURE
MUSIC
EXPERIENCE

TRAVEL



This itinerary is subject to change. In-country programming is customized for each group to maximize your cultural experience. To maintain authenticity, many of the places we visit are not tourist destinations and are not always available. Our programs are intended to provide meaningful interaction with the Cuban people under the “Support for the Cuban people” category. These programs require mandatory participation.