



Photo by Rachel Smith



## CUBA

SEA TURTLE EXPEDITION WITH SEA TURTLE CONSERVANCY

July 6-13, 2019



*The Sea Turtle Conservancy is the world's oldest sea turtle research and conservation group. Founded in 1959 by Dr. Archie Carr — the world's leading authority on sea turtles — the Florida-based STC continues to study and protect sea turtles in the United States and around the world.*

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel with experts from the Sea Turtle Conservancy to observe the nesting process of green sea turtles and collect data with biologists.
- Snorkel the clear waters of the coral reef at Las Tumbas Beach in Parque Nacional Península de Guanahacabibes (optional scuba diving may also be available at an additional charge).
- Meet with local conservationists and marine researchers.
- Visit the picturesque Viñales Valley, known for its unusual limestone formations.
- Stop at Ernest Hemingway's home, Finca La Vigía.

## ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

### JULY 06 - HAVANA

Upon arrival at the José Martí International Airport in Havana, transfer to the Hotel Nacional. Check-in is at 4 pm; however, early arrivals can store luggage while exploring the area on own. In the evening enjoy a group welcome dinner and orientation at Cafe Laurent. *Overnight at Hotel Nacional. (D)*

### JULY 07 - HAVANA

Today, venture on a guided walking tour of Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Discover the four “plazas” in Old Havana: Plaza de la Catedral, Plaza Vieja, Plaza de San Francisco de Asís, and Plaza de Armas. While there, tour the Museum of Fine Arts and the Museum of the Revolution. Enjoy lunch during your tour at El Figaro. You will also learn about the restoration projects going on throughout Havana, and see the giant model of the city. This evening have dinner at Mediterraneo Habana with Dr. Julia Azanza Ricardo from the Guanahacabibes Marine Turtle Conservation Program. *Overnight at Hotel Nacional. (BLD)*

### JULY 08 - GUANAHACABIBES PENINSULA

This morning depart for the westernmost point in Cuba, Parque Nacional Península de Guanahacabibes. En route visit Las Terrazas. In 1971, with its residents encouraged to play an active role in the preservation and care of the local environment, they formed the backbone of the workforce; their first task was a massive government-funded reforestation project. As well as building the village itself, this project entailed planting trees along terraces dug into the hillside, thus guarding against erosion and giving the place its name. This was all part of a grander initiative started by the government to promote self-sufficiency and education in rural areas. Today a large proportion of the community works in tourism, some as employees at the hotel and others as owners of the small businesses that have been set up in response to the growing numbers of visitors. After exploring the area have lunch at Cafetal Buenavista, a restaurant built on the ruins of a French coffee plantation. After checking in at Villa Cabo de San Antonio, you will have some time to freshen up. After dinner meet local researchers and park rangers and learn about this diverse park, which is home to the second largest breeding population of green turtles in the country, with an average of more than 300 nests per season. Later in the evening head over to the beach to look for turtles coming ashore and observe the nesting process as the researchers collect data. 2013 was a record year, with nearly 900 nests recorded. Through the efforts of University of Havana's Center for Marine Investigations and Cuba Marine Research and Conservation, an estimated 14,000 hatchlings were saved. *Overnight at Villa Cabo de San Antonio. (BLD)*

### JULY 09 - GUANAHACABIBES PENINSULA

After breakfast, visit a turtle nesting beach in the park to document any tracks from the previous night. Next, experience the park's impressive coral reefs via a guided snorkeling excursion by boat (snorkel equipment is not included; the option for scuba diving is available with an added charge). Experts consider the seabed at María la Gorda to be among the best for marine photography because of the water clarity and the abundant marine life, such as sharks, stingrays, barracudas, groupers, lobsters, eels, angelfish, crabs, and more. After dinner enjoy a presentation from Julia Azanza or the STC staff. Before dusk, head to the turtle beach, where you will have opportunities to observe researchers measure the turtles, record data, and complete other tasks. Spend the night with biologists looking for nesting turtles or return to your room. *Overnight at Villa Cabo de San Antonio. (BLD)*

### JULY 10 - GUANAHACABIBES PENINSULA

This morning take a bird walk in the area. The area is inhabited by 172 species of birds belonging to 42 families, 11 of which are endemic and 84 are migratory. This afternoon you will have time to relax and explore on your own or you can participate in a sunset snorkel excursion. Tonight, return to the beach to continue to observe biologists conducting sea turtle research. *Overnight at Villa Cabo de San Antonio. (BLD)*

### JULY 11 - VIÑALES

Today, travel to the picturesque town of Viñales. This small town is located amid a verdant valley where farmers cultivate tobacco, fruits, and vegetables. This area is the rural heartland of Cuba and is home to the best tobacco growing farms in the world. After lunch at Finca San Vicente, visit a local cigar and guarabita rum factory. This evening have dinner at Finca Agroecology where you will enjoy a delicious farm-to-table organic meal. *Overnight at Los Jazmines. (BLD)*

### JULY 12 - HAVANA

This morning visit Cueva del Indio, a limestone cave set adjacent to hills covered in lush vegetation. Here, you will board a boat and enjoy an underground world of stalagmites, stalactites, and folklore as you venture on a short cruise through this cavernous wonderland. Return to Havana with a visit to Ernest Hemingway's former home, Finca La Vigía, in the modest town of San Francisco de Paula. The remainder of the day is free for independent exploration. In the evening gather for a farewell dinner at Atelier. *Overnight at Hotel Capri. (BLD)*

### JULY 13 - FAREWELL!

This morning you will be transferred to the airport for your flight back to the US. (B)

## ABOUT YOUR LEADERS



### David Godfrey

Mr. Godfrey is CEO of the nonprofit Sea Turtle Conservancy (STC). David has been involved professionally in environmental conservation for over 25 years. Since 1993, he has been focused on sea turtle and

coastal habitat issues. David has authored numerous articles and papers on environmental matters, with an emphasis on coastal protection and sea turtles. He has participated in numerous sea turtle research projects, and he has written and/or narrated numerous documentaries and videos pertaining to sea turtle and coastal conservation issues. During his tenure with STC, he led the effort to establish Florida's sea turtle specialty license plate, which is now the main funding source for sea turtle protection in Florida. He is Chairman of the Florida Sea Turtle Grants Program, which awards annual financial support for sea turtle research and education projects benefiting Florida sea turtles. He is also a member of the World Conservation Union's Marine Turtle Specialist Group.



### Dr. Daniel Evans

Dr. Daniel Evans is a technology and research specialist at the Sea Turtle Conservancy. He oversees several critical aspects of STC's sea turtle research, conservation and educational programs. He is a world leader in the use of satellite telemetry to track sea

turtle migration and habitat usage, and he oversees the highly popular Tour de Turtles education program, which uses satellite tracking as the foundation for an Internet-based education program used by millions of people around the world. Dan also manages STC's extensive educational programming, including the popular Distance Learning Program, which provides remote field trips for schools around the United States. He is an accomplished field biologist and has published numerous papers on his satellite-tracking research. Dan received his B.S. in Wildlife Biology and Management at the University of Massachusetts, his M.S. in Ecology and Conservation Biology at the University of Maryland, and his Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology & Conservation at the University of Florida. Dan has given numerous presentations on issues affecting sea turtles in the state of Florida, organized and conducted guided sea turtle walks for the general public and for educators, written popular journal articles on conservation issues and appeared in numerous documentaries about sea turtles. He also provides administrative oversight of the Florida Sea Turtle Grants Program; funded by the Florida Sea Turtle Specialty License Plate, the grants program has awarded millions of dollars in funding to support sea turtle research, conservation, and education in Florida.



## LAND COST

**\$3,645 - \$4,065**

Includes all meals, accommodations, and activities as mentioned in the itinerary, in-country transportation, full-time guide, carbon offset, donation to the Sea Turtle Conservancy, departure tax, Cuban visa, and all tips and gratuities. Trip is based on a minimum of 8 participants. \*Price will be reduced once the group size reaches 12 participants.

Does not include international airfare, snorkel equipment, or items of a personal nature.

## AIR COST

Estimated cost out of Orlando is \$425 per person. Please contact Holbrook for an airfare quote.

## TRAVEL PROTECTION

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants traveling in 2018 or beyond. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more.

Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

## THE FINE PRINT

*Cost is based on double occupancy; single rooms may be available at an additional cost of \$325 per person. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to hold your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable minus a \$100 cancellation fee until April 02, 2019 when non-refundable final payment is due.*



**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL**

*Visit [holbrook.travel/stc-cu19](http://holbrook.travel/stc-cu19) or contact Lisa Palmese-Graubard at 352-377-7111 x339 or [lisa@holbrooktravel.com](mailto:lisa@holbrooktravel.com)*

**PHOTOS BY**

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