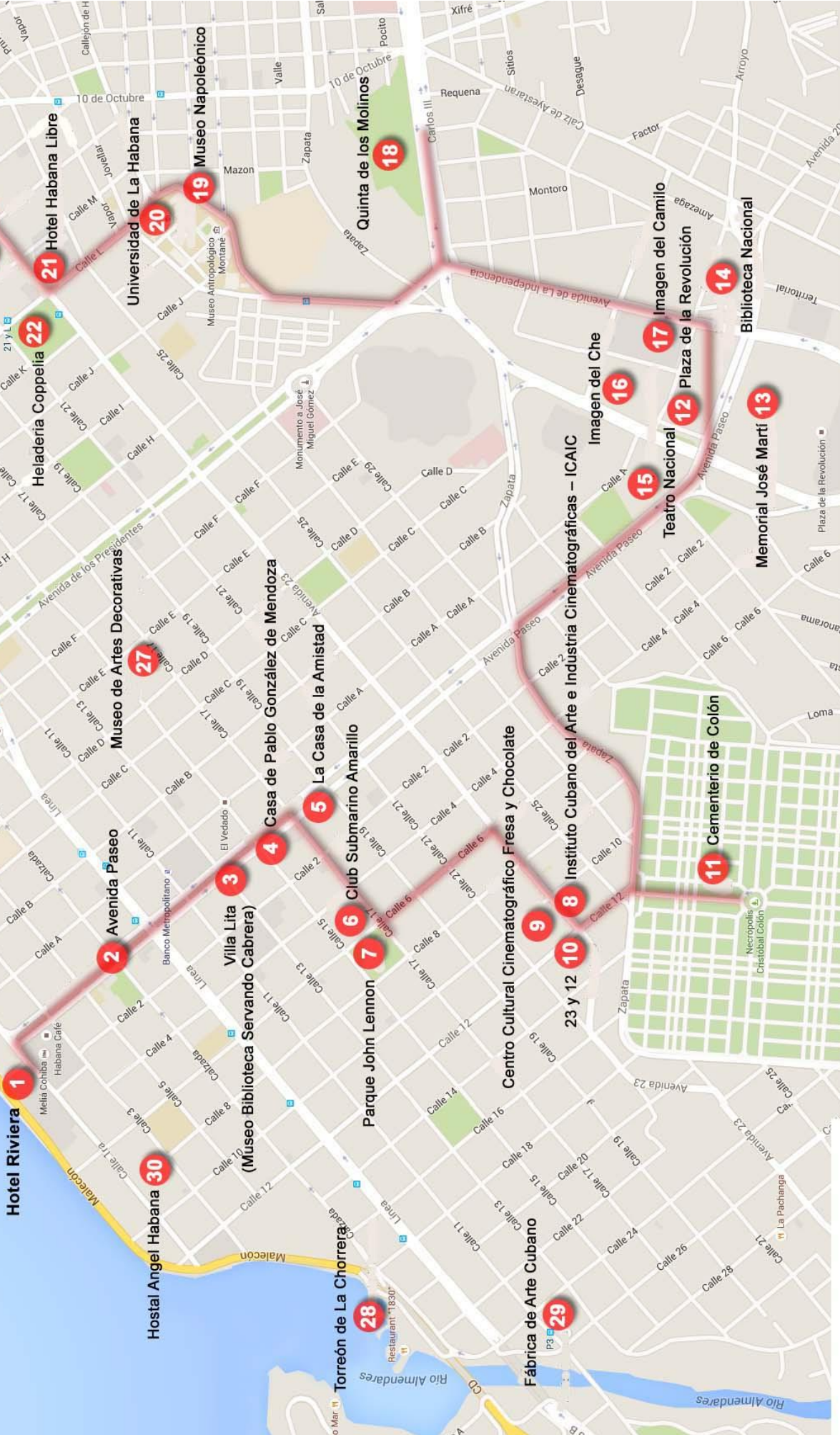


# Recorridos por La Habana

## Tour 2 El Vedado



## Tour No. 2: El Vedado

Suggested start time: 9:00 am

Approximate travel end time: 6:00 pm

Taking advantage of the cool of the morning, if that is possible under the Havana sun, we propose to start this journey through the beautiful neighborhood of El Vedado in the **Hotel Riviera (1)**, 1957 - *Avenida Paseo and Malecon*. Built with money from gangster Meyer Lansky, it has 20 floors and 352 rooms with sea view. Declared National Monument in 2012, the hotel is a notable example of rationalist architecture of the Modern Movement in Cuba. It was inaugurated on 10 December 1957 with a musical revue presented at the Cabaret Copa Room, which featured a special performance by Ginger Rogers.

Climb the stately **Avenida Paseo (2)** will be nice. Among buildings of the 50s of the last century, beautiful old houses flanking the Republican period. We suggest paying attention to some in particular.

**Villa Lita (Museum Library Servando Cabrera) (3)**, 1912 - *13th Street corner Paseo* This eclectic architecture mansion was acquired in 1922 by the Italian Emmanuela marriage and Pandini Ong, known as "Lita" and Joseph Pennino and Barbato. The museum that now houses perpetuates the memory of the renowned painter and draftsman Servando Cabrera Moreno (1923 - 1981), who cultivated both abstraction and figuration to form a work characterized by profound humanism, sensuality and aesthetic virtuosity.

One block up, at *352 Paseo street corner 15*, **the House of Pablo Gonzalez de Mendoza (4)**, 1916-1918 - is currently the residence of British Ambassador to Cuba. It has gardens to the streets 15 and Paseo, as well as the bottom, with several sculptures and a circular fountain. In 1918 it was added an elegant Roman indoor pool which gives special uniqueness.

**The House of Friendship (5)** 1926 - *Paseo between 17 and 19* now belongs to the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples. The mansion was ordered built by Juan Pedro Baró in honor of his wife Catalina Lasa. For terminations Italian and French marble and stucco made by firms in Paris were used. Plastering were made with sand brought from the Nile. The property, reminiscent of the Italian renaissance style facade was decorated by Dominique house of France, while the design of the gardens also was in charge of French Forestier.

We return to 17th Street and walked down 6th Street between houses in the first half of the twentieth century.

At *the corner of 17 and 6*, **the Yellow Submarine club (6)** perpetuates the music of the Beatles and welcomes Cuban musical groups that cultivate the "rock" and "pop". It is open from 6:30 pm.

**John Lennon Park (7)** - *Streets 17 - 15 - 6 - 4*. It is a quiet, wooded neighborhood park that characterize many Vedado, surrounded by family houses and buildings. In December 1990 it took place in this park a crowded concert in tribute to the musician from Liverpool. Years later, on December 8, 2000, in a ceremony attended by President Fidel Castro, it was unveiled the statue by the Cuban sculptor Jose Villa, who represents Lennon sitting on a park bench, with space for

someone else accompany and take a picture. It is a Lennon ring without his glasses, which have been stolen several times at night.

We walked up the street 6-23 in this important avenue and turn right. In 23 *between 10 and 12* is **Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Art and Industry - ICAIC (8)** and, opposite, film **Fresa y Chocolate Cultural Center (9)** with coffee - bar and selling posters of Cuban cinema.

One of the most popular corners of Vedado, known simply as **12 and 23 (10)** was the place where in 1961, in a speech before thousands of people, Fidel Castro proclaimed the socialist character of the Cuban Revolution. Again, the March 5, 1960, during the burial of victims by exploding ship La Coubre, Alberto Diaz (Korda) took the iconic photograph of Che Guevara is recognized as the photo most reproduced in history.

Our next destination is the **Colon Cemetery**, commonly known as the **Colon Cemetery (11)**, 1871-1886 - *street entrance Zapata and 12*. 57 hectares, its extraordinary architectural and sculptural wealth has allowed many specialists will be between the first global importances. It was declared a National Monument in 1987.

A monumental cover of Romanesque inspiration makes main entrance. The gate of Spanish architect Calixto work Loire, has reliefs and sculptures in Carrara marble, which are allegories of the theological virtues, charity, faith and hope, carved by Cuban Jose Vilalta Saavedra. Two broad avenues cross delimit the cemetery in four major areas.

In the access road, stunning marble mausoleums, granite or slate offer an idea of the wealth of the families that built them. Arches, domes, windows amazed by its magnificence in the context of a wide variety of architectural styles.

The most visited grave is that of Amelia Goire (1877 - 1901), known as "La Milagrosa" and around which is woven a legend that says that, years after he died just 24 years old and in a state of gestation, in 1904, when his body was exhumed, intact and the fetus in the arms, rather than at the foot body was found, as speculated it was placed at the time of burial. To this the ritual of devotion that for years practiced her husband, who daily brought flowers and parting, played the second knocker right without turning our backs to the tomb backed away respectfully adds.

Amelia today attributed many miracles and tradition is to say hello, jingling one of the rings of the dome, and touch the bottom of the image sculpted in Carrara marble, representing motherhood.

In the rest Colon Cemetery patriotic heroes, politicians from different eras, religious prelates, poets and writers and so many Cubans and foreigners who lived anonymously and made part of the city at some point in its history.

After the visit to the cemetery, right from the entrance gate, the street Zapata will lead us to the Avenida Paseo and for this we arrive at an emblematic area of the city: **the Plaza de la Revolucion (12)**. With 72 thousand square meters, it is considered one of the largest squares in the world. It was designed in the 1940s and 1950s, becoming part of the successive directors plans Havana. Known as Civic Square until 1959, it was conceived as part of a series of works that would house around important institutions of the State and Cuban society.

In the center, facing the square is **the Memorial José Martí (13)**, in perpetual tribute to Cuban national hero, behind which the Palace of the Revolution are located in the offices of the Councils of State and Ministers and Central committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.

The memorial consists of an obelisk and a sculpture of the Apostle, the work of Juan Jose Sicre. At its base the memorial has a museum; on top of the obelisk, 139 meters above sea level, you reach a lookout point.

Surrounding the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces Square, **the National Library (14)**, the ministries of Communications and Interior and **the National Theatre (15)**. On the facade of the Ministry of Interior stands out, as a large mural, a representation of the image of **Che Guevara captured by Alberto Korda (16)**, while the Ministry of Communications and more recently another mural was placed with **the image of rebel leader Camilo Cienfuegos (17)**.

We left the Plaza de la Revolution for Boyeros Avenue. A five-block route leads to **the Quinta de los Molinos (18)** - *Salvador Allende between Montoro and Luaces*. Declared National Monument, has an area of 4.8 hectares. It owes its name to the existence in the place of two snuff mills that operated between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, moved by the water of the Royal Zanja. Later these lands were transformed into the Botanical Garden of Havana and in them the summer residence of the commanders in chief of the island was built. At the end of the war of independence, the building was the residence of General Maximo Gomez, chief of the Liberation Army. Currently, the Office of the Historian of Havana forward an ambitious rehabilitation project of the Quinta de los Molinos.

Boyeros and locate back to University Avenue, which we will go into the street Ronda, staying to the right of the university stadium and left the University of Havana.

*At the San Miguel street No. 1159 Ronda corner*, **the Napoleonic Museum (19)** opened on December 1, 1961, it has an extraordinary collection of more than seven thousand works that were originally acquired by the Cuban billionaire Julio Lobo Olavarria, or come from donations and purchases made by the institution. It includes objects that belonged to the French emperor and, as a significant part, the death mask of Napoleon Bonaparte by Dr. Francesco Antommarchi, physician to the emperor's death remains.

This museum is in the "Dolce Dimora" as he called his residence politician Orestes Ferrara Italian origin. This is a story inspired by a Florentine Renaissance palace of the XVI century, built by the architects Govantes and Cabarrocas in the twenties of the last century mansion.

A short distance away, *in San Lazaro and L Street*, the steps of **the University of Havana (20)**, 1902-1928, invites us to enter this enclosure as deep imprint left on the socio-cultural and political life of the republican period.

The University of Havana was founded by Dominican monks in 1728. In this first stage was located at the headquarters of the Order Dominica, in Old Havana; transfer to the present site, in what was called the Hill of Aróstegui, it occurred in 1902. In these early years of the twentieth century gradually built neoclassical buildings that house the various faculties. It was completed in 1911 and inaugurated the Aula Magna, of sober beauty. In 1928, coinciding with the celebration in

Havana of the VI Pan American Conference, which was attended by leaders and representatives of the countries of the continent, it was inaugurated the steps 88 levels.

**Hotel Habana Libre (21)**, 1958 - *L Street between 23 and 25*. Old Havana Hilton hotel, was inaugurated in 1958. Design set Welton Becket & Associates, a US company, and the Arroyo-Menendez Cuban, is a 25-storey tower with 630 rooms and 42 suites. A large mural of 670 square meters, made in Mexico with glass tesserae from a sketch of Cuban sculptress Amelia Pelaez, was mounted on the front of the building, into the street L.

**Coppelia ice cream parlor (22)**. 1966 - *Streets 21, 23, K and L*. The spider-building, integrated lush gardens, occupies an entire block. It is a work of the architect Mario Girona with the collaboration of architects also Rita Maria Grau and Candelario Ajuria. Known as the Cathedral of Ice Cream, it has been repeatedly visited by virtually every habaneros.

**La Rampa (23)**, 1950 - *23th Avenue L from the street to the Malecon*. This stretch is known as La Rampa by the natural slope or slope having Avenue 23 to the Malecón. It was set up since the late 50s and its popularity is given for being a modern and cozy space that are cinemas, restaurants, cafes, bars and nightclubs, hotels, several shops, banks, airline offices and galleries .

In the La Rampa rises **Cuba Pavilion (24)**, 1963 - *Street corner 23th Avenue N*. Exhibition Center with two pavilions linked by a tunnel through a tall building pre-existing. The architect Juan Campos Almanza was responsible for the project of this interesting building marked slopes given by the rugged topography. It opened to host the VII International Congress of Architects held in 1963 in Havana.

Among the great exhibition events hosted by the Pavilion Cuba, is the Hall of May Museum of Modern Art in France, which in 1967 installed on it a valuable collection. For some years this space is used for the summer exhibition "Arte en la Rampa" or as an alternative headquarters of the International Book Fair of Havana.

Two blocks down, on the street O, we turned left up to 21. We find access to the gardens of **Hotel Nacional de Cuba (25)**, 1930 - *Street corner to 21*. O Hotel five star property located on a hill that provides insider location facing the sea. The construction was in charge of firms Mc Kim, Mead & White and Purdy and Henderson Co.

The building has been the scene of numerous events in Cuban history as a fight held in 1933 between army factions. IATA - in 1945, in its halls the International Air Transport Association was founded.

In its gardens to the Malecón, in what was a defensive bulwark of colonial Havana, two guns of Battery of Santa Clara, the "Krupp" and "Ordenez" remain, considered the world's largest at the time.

The cozy historic bar shown in its dozens of photographs of famous guests, including Edward VIII (Prince of Wales), Winston Churchill, Baron Thyssen Bornemisza, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Nelson Rockefeller, Leopoldo and Baudouin of Belgium walls; artists, writers and personalities like, Ava Gardner, Frank Sinatra, Marlon Brando, Errol Flynn, Rita Hayworth, Nat King Cole, Maria Felix, Jorge Negrete, Pedro Vargas, Mario Moreno (Cantinflas), Fred Astaire, Ernesto



Lecuona, Walt Disney, Sara Montiel, the lads of Spain, Libertad Lamarque, Lola Flores, Ernest Hemingway, Buster Keaton, Romulo Gallegos, Alejo Carpentier, Wilfredo Lam, Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Mario Benedetti, among many others.

Sitting in the gardens of the Hotel Nacional, towards the sea, taking us A Mojito, a Cuba Libre or Daiquiri, we conclude this tour of the Vedado, watching a spectacular view of Havana coastline and the **Malecon (26)**, coastal avenue that runs throughout the Vedado, Havana Center and is a few meters the northern edge of Old Havana.

Initially called Avenida del Golfo, the Malecon was built in sections between 1901 and 1958. In 1959 he was linked to the Fifth Avenue Miramar neighborhood through a tunnel under the Almendares River. It stretches for 7 km from the Castillo de la Punta, at the entrance of Havana Bay, and the tower of La Chorrera on the east bank of the Almendares.

### **Other Places of Interest in Vedado**

Apart from the proposed itinerary, if time permits and is of interest, we suggest you get:

**Museum of Decorative Arts (House of the Countess of Revilla Camargo) (27)** 1926 - *Street 17 # 502 between D and E*. The building was the residence of Maria Luisa Gomez-Mena, Countess of Revilla de Camargo. Designed by French architects, interior was decorated by Jansen house Paris: Carrara marble floors, use of bronze and gold fittings and a dining room Regency style with walls covered with marble.

The museum was opened in 1964. Its collection of over 30,000 works, most in stock, has extraordinary value. It is decorative pieces of varied origin, among them are the French (XVIII and XIX), of Eastern nations (XVI to XX centuries), or developed in the best known European manufactures.

**Tower of La Chorrera (28)**, 1645 - Malecón between 18 and 20. National Monument. This small fortress that was part of the defensive system of colonial Havana was designed by Juan Bautista Antonelli, son of the builder of the castles of El Morro and La Punta. Square, with a height of 40 feet and up to 50 men, defended the mouth of the river La Chorrera, named after Almendares, against possible pirates landings. It was besieged and partly destroyed during the fighting in the capture of the city by the British.

The tower is located at the end of the Malecon, leaving aside one of the tunnels linking the neighborhood of Vedado with Miramar and restaurant known 1830 and 1830 Gardens, where musical groups are presented. La Chorrera is now an inn with tables inside and outside on the forecourt, where large audience comes to listen to music, have a beer and talk right on the seashore.

**Cuban Art Factory - FAC (29)**, 2014 - *26th Street corner to 11*. Occupying an old oil factory in the period before 1959, converted with novel design, the FAC maintained since its inauguration in 2013 an interesting and varied cultural and recreational proposal Havana nights. Open Thursday through Sunday between 8 pm and 2 am (Saturdays until later), hundreds of young and not so much come to this striking space that combines visual arts, with theater, dance, fashion shows, film and with good and varied music.