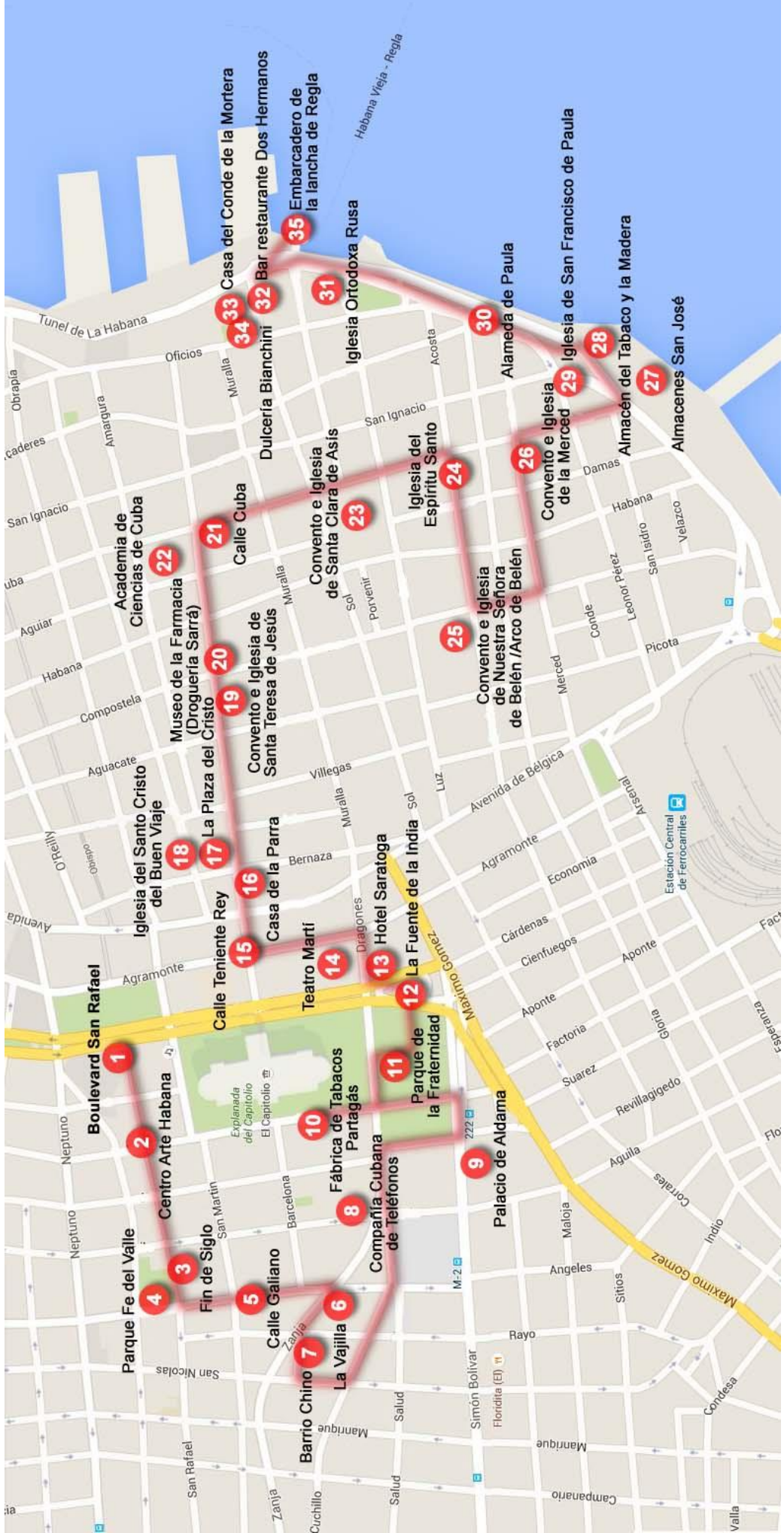


Recorridos por La Habana

Tour 3

Centro Habana and South of Old Havana



Tour No. 3: Centro Habana and south of Old Havana

Suggested start time: 9:30 am

Approximate travel end time: 5:30 pm

This tour starts in San Rafael Prado and flanked by the Hotel Inglaterra and the Grand Theatre. San Rafael street here, that penetrating in Centro Habana their first five blocks are known as **Boulevard de San Rafael (1)**, lively pedestrian section with various shops begins. In the 50s, like Galiano Street, here they were located many of the most important new department stores in the city.

Havana Art Center (2) - *San Rafael corner Industry*. In what was known store J. Vallés, for years this center works selling art, crafts, musical instruments and other assorted items. In the evenings, in a cafe inside music downloads and presentations of various kinds occur.

Fin de Siglo (3) - *With entrances in San Rafael, Eagle and Galiano*, it was next to the House, La Epoca and Flogar, one of the largest and most functional stores of Havana, which originated in the nineteenth century as "Bazar Fin de Siglo". With five floors and modern interior design and utility, fully functioning by the end of the decade of the 50. The building has undergone a gradual process of deterioration that makes it unrecognizable to those who ever visited decades ago. In its only plant in active, street level, there is a variegated and dysfunctional market of handicrafts, clothes, craft shoes and everything "divine and the human" you can imagine.

Fe del Valle Park (4) - *San Rafael, San Miguel and Galiano*. Here the store El Encanto, seven plants and 60 sales departments are located. In April 1961, a fire caused by a terrorist sabotage against the young revolutionary process destroyed El Encanto, losing faith life working del Valle Ramos.

We arrived at **the Galiano (5) Street**, *born on the Malecon and extends to Reina Street*. Although officially called Avenida de Italia, by force of habit still call him all Galiano, Galiano name derived from Martin, Minister of Interior and Fortifications under the rule of Captain General Miguel Tacón (XIX century).

By Galiano walk among buildings built mainly in the 20 to 60 of the last century, to *reach Zanja Street*. At the junction of both, we suggest stopping at a particular site, the old shop **La Vajilla (6)**, which called wide attention because it functions as "commission shop" to which anyone can carry exhibiting furniture or objects to sell. In that way, there are exposed or dining room sets, beds, cupboards, cabinets, bookcases, tables, rocking chairs, lamps and some decorative objects, all use of the most diverse periods and styles.

Old Chinatown (7) of Havana, which has its origins in the nineteenth century, began at the height of *the Dragones and Amistad streets* and stretched down the street Zanja beyond Galiano. It is necessary to note that today is a Chinatown "not Chinese", as it somehow. Hopefully we will find a few originating from that great nation or descendants with Asian facial features. The mixture and integration with the local population and emigration have changed the face of the neighborhood. Former **Cuban Telephone Company (8)**, 1927 – *Aguila 565 and Dragones corner*. Building of eclectic style inspired by the architecture of skyscrapers in cities like New York and Chicago. Lavishly decorated on their covers and staggered towers. It is the headquarters ETECSA, Cuba's telecommunications company.

In *Amistad No. 510 and Reina Street* (officially Avenue Simon Bolivar), we find the most important in the country residence built in the nineteenth century, **the Palacio de Aldama (9)**, 1844, owned by rancher Sunday Aldama and Aréchaga. In fact the building was set to function as two residences, the Aldama and his son Domingo del Monte who encouraged famous literary gatherings.

Cuban great exponent of neoclassicism, the palace, designed by the architect and engineer Manuel José Carrera, has two monumental covers, one to Friendship and another to Reina, as well as two inner courtyards, each with a fountain. In 1949 he was declared a National Monument. Today it is the headquarters of the Institute of History of Cuba.

In the *nearby Industry street No. 520 between Barcelona Dragones* and visited **the Partagás cigar factory (10)**, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the second half of the nineteenth century there was a significant increase in snuff plantations and factories, most of the latter were installed in central areas of Havana. This building was partially modified and expanded in the twentieth century.

The Fraternity Park (11) or Place of the American Brotherhood, former Champ de Mars - *Streets Monte, Dragones, Prado and Amistad*. Extramural area in colonial Havana, was field of military exercises since the late eighteenth century. Captain General Miguel Tacon (1834-1838) reformed this space exceptional location, installing a fence around the perimeter and remodeling the interior.

Acquires shaping park in 1892, to commemorate the fourth centenary of the discovery of America. Under the first American intervention it is used again as a military camp. In 1902, with the advent of the Republic it is embellished with fountains and flowerbeds and transit routes avenues way.

To the east edge of Fraternity Park is located **La Fuente de la India (12)** - *Paseo del Prado and Monte Street*. Also known as La Noble Habana, it was inaugurated on 15 February 1837 under the auspices of the Conde de Villanueva. Sculpted in white marble by Italian Giuseppe Gaggini, depicts an Indian girl whom his creator gave a Greek profile, acervas reason for criticism. In the corners, four dolphins pour spouts water like.

A few steps from the source, **the Hotel Saratoga (13)** - *Prado corner Dragones*, is one of the five star hotels available to the city. The original building (1880), neoclassical spirit, was aimed at homes and warehouses. It was converted into the Hotel Saratoga 1933. Its terrace became famous for her presentation of the best orchestras of the time, and interpreters of Cuban music known worldwide. The same was true in doorways and wide sidewalks to the Paseo del Prado, known as the free space Aires Hotel Saratoga.

Teatro Martí (14) 1884 - *Dragones 58 between Prado and Zulueta*. Opened in 1884 as Irijoa theater, it was a traditional space of popular Cuban bufo theater. Its splendid interior consists of cast iron columns, marble floors, carpets, curtains and large mirrors.

In late 1900, in this theater the US General Leonard Wood declared established the Constituent Assembly that gave the country its Constitution as a new independent republic, producing the

famous debates on acceptance or rejection of the call Platt Amendment eventually imposed on the body text constitutional by the United States, being provided broad powers of intervention.

We go in Old Havana across the street Brazil, known to all by its old name: Teniente Rey (15). Narrow and shaded, this street joins the Plaza Vieja and Plaza del Cristo. Felix owes its name to the King, who held the position of Lieutenant King in 1781.

Casa de la Parra (16), Century XVII - 202 *Bernaza* corner of *Teniente Rey*. In this small house hipped roof and inner courtyard of small, runs a moderately priced restaurant, a choice between more recently gastronomic centers are opening in Teniente Rey.

The Plaza del Cristo (17), 1640 - *Teniente Rey, Bernaza and Villegas*, owes its name to the nearby church of Santo Cristo del Buen Viaje. In 1836 there Market Christ established subsequently demolished.

Church of Santo Cristo del Buen Viaje (18), 1640/1755 - *Villegas between Lamparilla and Teniente Rey*. From the original building known as the Calvary Chapel, built by the Franciscan Order, only it remains standing the enclosure and the cover of the central nave. A mid-eighteenth century the temple was rebuilt with two octagonal towers being part of the facade. In 1899 the Augustinians parents built at the bottom of convents temple, residence of the friars, a free parochial school and private school in San Augustine.

Monastery and Church of St. Teresa of Jesus (19), XVIII century - *Compostela 502-510, corner of Teniente Rey*. Le distinguish two covers, one of major proportions that exceeds the height of the nave of the church. Today this is preserved by the name of Mary Help of Christians, but the section of the convent has undergone major changes as a result of its use as housing.

Museum of Pharmacy (Drugstore Sarrá) (20) - *Teniente Rey Compostela corner*. Founded in 1853 by the Catalan pharmaceutical and Pradell Valentin Catalá, José Sarrá and Catalá, José Sarrá and Valldejuli in association with fellow apothecary Antonio Gonzalez Lopez, pharmacy The Meeting came to be considered the most important of Cuba. Since 1877, already José Sarrá and Valldejuli sole shareholder, the establishment is embellished with large rooms, shelves and desks of precious woods, stained glass and decorative glass. It was remodeled and reopened in 1914 and completely restored between 1999 and 2004 by the Office of the Historian of Havana to make it Pharmacy Museum.

Crossing the **Cuba Street (21)** from *Teniente Rey to Avenida del Puerto*. It is a narrow road, serving as so many of Havana's royal ordinance that in hot weather the streets should be narrow to protect pedestrians from the burning sun. Street was called before Bell and the casting, but has not been definitively established why ended up denominating as the island itself.

While in Teniente Rey and Cuba, a short detour to the left he will lead to the **Academy of Sciences of Cuba (22)** - *Cuba No. 460, between Teniente Rey and Amargura*. The headquarters of the institution is a building linked by long years the Cuban scientific heritage. Former convent of the Augustinians in 1867 part of the building was handed over to the Royal Academy of Medical, Physical and Natural Sciences of Havana. They sat in her chair and scientific personalities like Felipe Poey, Carlos J. Finlay and Francisco de Albear, among others. In 1881, in the session hall, Finlay presented his momentous discovery of the transmission of yellow fever by *Aedes aegypti*

mosquito. In 1924 the agreement that gave rise to the Pan American Health Organization and in 1930 was received and feted by Albert Einstein, who made a brief visit to Havana was signed. The restoration work started in 2011 have enabled the opening in 2015 of important sections of the building, conceptuado National Monument, including the library, the lobby, the auditorium or Assembly Hall and the iconic Hall of Sessions of the Academy.

Convent and Church of St. Clare of Assisi (23), 1638 / XVIII century - *Cuba 602 between Sol and Luz*. Founded in 1644, it was the first female convent in Havana in 1921 until his transfer to another district of the city. The convent was initially ruled by Sister Catherine de Mendoza, who traveled from Cartagena de Indias with four other nuns to inaugurate it. Young entered Havana own or father's will. The building available bedroom, dining hall, kitchen, nursery, garden, church and everything necessary for the life of a community of up to a hundred more religious servitude.

After the transfer of religious and selling real estate, the government of President Alfredo Zayas upheld a fraudulent business with the convent, to which, on March 18, 1923 a group of young intellectuals staged the famous Protest of Thirteen. In the 1940s there the offices of the Department of Public Works were established. Since 1960 it was used successively as headquarters Recovery Ministries State Securities and Social Welfare, warehouse and workshops.

Church of the Holy Spirit (24), 1638 / XVIII century – *Cuba and Acosta corner*. It is regarded as the oldest standing church in Havana. However, although the original Chapel of the Holy Spirit was built around 1638, in time successive reconstruction and remodeling that endowed the tower in 1707 and the vault of the presbytery in 1720. By 1760 they were undertaken, alongside an extensive reconstruction, was added a side aisle.

It is suggested to temporarily leave Cuba and take Acosta street to reach the Convent and Church of Our Lady of Bethlehem / Arc Bethlehem (25), 1712-1720 - *Compostela between Luz and Acosta*. The construction of the convent and the church dates from the years 1712-1720, with later renovations. The "Arc Bethlehem" on the street Acosta is 1775. It is the most extensive religious complex in the historic area. He stresses in the church baroque façade of expression and the cloistered convent six yards. After years of occupation by the Segundo Cabo and an infantry battalion in 1854 opened the College of Bethlehem, by the Jesuit Order, until his transfer to the neighborhood of Marianao in 1925. The building was later used as state offices and currently belongs to the Office of Humanitarian Affairs of the Office of the Historian of Havana.

To return to the street Cuba we follow Compostela to Merced and there we left to **the Church and convent of La Merced (26)**, 1755 / XIX century - *Cuba between Merced and Paula*. The temple has survived to this day, after successive remodeling of the original building, was inaugurated on January 31, 1867. It has three separated by large semicircular arcades lavishly decorated naves and two chapels. Especially attractive for its interior decoration with mural paintings by renowned Cuban artists as Chartrand, Melero and Petit. A beautiful courtyard connects the church with the convent.

Already in the Avenida del Puerto, as habaneros summary referring to the road that runs along the western edge of the bay, we enter **the Almacenes San José (27)**, 1847-1887 - *Calle Desamparados*. Comfortable dock where ships could dock and thus save the costs of loading and unloading boats. In its construction three thousand tons of iron pieces, melted in Belgium, Cockerill workshops were used.

The spacious interior of the stores allowed the care and classification of products downloaded there. In these deposits boxes sugar, brandy in pipes, barrels and sacks rice, coffee, wax, bricks, steam engines for mills, bales of cotton, snuff branch and many other products were kept.

The warehouse of Tobacco and Wood (28) XX century neighbor - *Calle Desamparados*, metal structure has a double nave. It was restored and converted into a modern brewery where the public can observe the process of making beer before enjoy every bit accompanied by tapas.

Faced with these old warehouses, forcing the avenue to skirt it, **the Church of San Francisco de Paula (29)**, 1745 - *Paula 9* is now a cozy little concert hall. In 1664 there was here a hospital for women and a chapel, destroyed by a hurricane in 1730. Rebuilt later in Baroque-like expression, in 1946 the hospital and part of the church was demolished. The preserved portion has an octagonal dome and a facade of three sections topped by a steeple framed in baroque motif.

Alameda de Paula (30), 1772 - 1776 - *Avenida del Puerto from Paula to Acosta*. The oldest of the rides of Havana, whose construction was ordered by Captain General Felipe Fondesviela, Marquis de La Torre. In the second decade of the nineteenth century the ride was perhaps the busiest place in town where retreats were offered and young people could not find and woo. In the center column O'Donnell, adorned with symbols of the Spanish Crown stands.

Russian Orthodox Church (31) 2008 - *Port Avenue corner Santa Clara*. The Our Lady of Kazan Orthodox Cathedral was built between 2006 and 2008. The consecration of the Russian Orthodox church was led by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, later Patriarch of Moscow.

Its design has the signatures of Russian architect Rostislav Vorontsov and his Cuban counterpart Jaime Rodriguez. Byzantine-style church has six colorful domes, two laminated gold and four bronze, which are topped by four solid gold crosses. The iconostasis or the altar inside gold was built in the Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius in Russia by master painters and sculptors.

Restaurant Bar Dos Hermanos (32), *Avenida del Puerto corner to Sol*. From seafaring atmosphere, had illustrious clients as Federico Garcia Lorca, Marlon Brando and Errol Flynn. The Bar Dos Hermanos is open 24 hours.

Casa del Conde de la Mortera (33), 1780- *San Pedro 262 (Avenida del Puerto corner to Sol)*. XVIII century colonial mansion. It was purchased and transformed in 1892 by Ramon de Herrera, Spanish who held the title of Count of the Mortera Third, to install the offices of the shipping company.

Today is the Rum Museum. Its main attraction is the explanation receiving visitors about the historical trajectory of the Cuban rum Havana Club, which emerged in 1878 and considered one of the best in the world.

The tour of the Museo del Ron begins in the workshop where white oak barrels are assembled, includes an explanation that goes from planting sugar cane to the aging of the drink, the history of the mill, factories, train steam and fermentation processes, distillation and filtration.

On one side of the Museo del Ron, we do high in **Bianchini (34)** - *Sol No. 12 between Avenida del Puerto and Crafts*. Dulcería emerged after the opening of the Cuban economy to small and

medium private businesses. In a charming space, minimal but well used, you can enjoy European and Cuban sweet or merging them. They are stellar lemon biscuits and chocolate croissants. coffee, tea and some other drinks are also served. A second Bianchini was opened in the Callejón del Chorro, Cathedral Square.

In Bianchini this tour covering areas of Central Havana and the southern part of Old Havana is concluded. If you have advance and have some time and energy, I invite you to cross the bay and briefly tour the **ultramarine town of Regla** that although absorbed by the growth of the city maintains its image and personality of yesteryear. For this latest venture should reach the nearby **Regla Pier Boat (35)**.

The native name of the village was Guaicanamar, whose meaning would be "beachfront", according to some researchers. Later he was baptized as Our Lady of Regla and a chapel was built to the Virgin on land donated in 1687 by the Marquis of the Royal Proclamation, around which the population gradually settled. The present church was built between 1811 and 1818; its facade is an early example of neo-classical architecture in Cuba.

The image of the Virgin of Regla in the sanctuary is venerated Black Madonna, he was brought from Spain in 1696 by Don Pedro de Aranda. We are facing another example of religious syncretism in Cuba, the Virgin is identified with Yemaya, the owner Yoruba pantheon sea. On 14 December 1708 the Virgin was proclaimed patroness of the Bay of Havana.