

## CheapAir.com Invites Travelers to Cuba's Underground Art Spaces

*ARTempoCuba and Havana VIP, CheapAir.com's local partners, bring travelers into the independent studios where artists thread the needle between self-expression and Cuban law*

CALABASAS, CA (November 29, 2018) – [CheapAir.com](https://www.cheapair.com) invites travelers to join [ARTempoCuba](#) for an insider trip to tour Havana's new "underground" art spaces during the 13th Havana Biennial. The five-day, four-night tours take place April 12 to 16, 2019, during the Biennial's opening. The concierge-style trips, available at multiple price levels, will bring guests into the heart of Havana's cutting-edge art scene.

Founded in 1984 to showcase Third World art, the Havana Biennial of Fine Arts is one of the most prestigious exhibitions in the Latin American and Caribbean arts community. Resisting the global commoditization of artwork, the event seeks out art and artists that question the imposing cultural, environmental, and sociopolitical conflicts of our time.

At the 2015 Biennial, many Cuban artists who were not selected for the official programming instead showed their work in alternative spaces rented or bought for that purpose. Some of these studios endured as so-called "underground galleries," though Cuba forbids private art galleries. Today, artists continue to work, collaborate, and exhibit in these spaces. They have helped to launch emergent artists who otherwise might wait years to exhibit their work in official galleries.

After a four-year hiatus, the Havana Biennial returns in April 2019 amidst the rise of "underground galleries" and turmoil in the Cuban arts scene. Decree 349, a bill to be enacted in December, may place new restrictions on who can create art, what they may depict, and where they can show work. Decree 349 threatens the growth of the independent alternative art spaces that emerged in 2015. Ranging from alleyway garages to elegant historical buildings, many of these venues will host collateral exhibitions during the 13th Havana Biennial.

A key player in the alternative spaces is ARTempoCuba, the independent non-profit for Cuban arts and culture and the organizer of the Biennial trips. ARTempoCuba was founded in 2013 in Havana when three out-of-work women curators decided to stop waiting for government work and start supporting projects themselves. ARTempoCuba is now a 501(c)(3) based in Philadelphia. The 13th Biennial trips raise funds for ARTempoCuba, which does not accept funding from government agencies in Cuba or the U.S.

In collaboration with CheapAir.com, which was the first online travel company in the United States booking flights to Cuba, [Havana VIP](#) is the travel planner for ARTempoCuba's official trips to the Biennial. For seven years, Havana VIP has planned concierge-style travel to Cuba, handcrafting trips for movie stars and families alike. To visit "underground" spaces such as Arsenal Havana, Aveses Art Space, El Apartamento, El Local, and Studio 8, guests with Havana VIP will travel to neighborhoods that travelers rarely see.

World-renowned Cuban artists such as Esterio Segura, Juan Carlos Alom, and Carlos Garaicoa will open their studios as alternative exhibition spaces during the Biennial. Their works are in major international

art institutions like Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), Centre George Pompidou, Art Institute of Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

“The state of U.S.-Cuban relations, the end of the Castro era, and the tensions in the Cuban arts scene put this Havana Biennial at the confluence of truly historical events,” said Tony Rubenstein, owner of Havana VIP. “The so-called ‘underground galleries’ are the only places where independent artists can fully engage with this cultural transformation. The spaces have energized local artists and enticed art-lovers who are eager to experience something genuinely avant-garde.”

“Artists thread the needle between self-expression and Cuban law in Havana’s independent alternative art spaces,” says Mayret Gonzalez, Executive Director of ARTempoCuba. “Our trips will be the most authentic and thrilling way to experience the Havana Biennial.”

“CheapAir.com became the first online travel agency to book U.S.-Cuba flights because we believe that culture exchange, especially between estranged countries, has the power to create social change, mutual understanding, and epic travel memories,” said Jeff Klee, CEO of CheapAir.com. “We’re thankful to have partners like ARTempoCuba and Havana VIP who embody everything we love about travel.”

To book a Biennial trip with ARTempoCuba and Havana VIP, visit [artempocuba.org/biennial/](http://artempocuba.org/biennial/)

To book your flight to Havana, visit <https://www.cheapair.com/destination/havana-biennial/>

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*CEO Jeff Klee started CheapAir.com in 1989 from his college dorm room after getting a crash course in the airline industry while planning a backpacking trip through Europe on a student’s budget.*

*CheapAir.com still takes a creative approach to helping travelers to find the best trips. Along with its sister company, Amtrav for Business Travelers, CheapAir has helped over five million people buy plane tickets with confidence.*