



Ritmacuba, since 1989.

## Dance and Music Program 2019

**Program: July 11-23, 10 days of classes including a presentation/concert day. 3 days dedicated to cultural program. (with Air Canada Toronto-Holguin, taxi to Santiago July 10-24)**

Participants are free to make their own travel arrangements and Ritmacuba will arrange accommodation in Santiago for the number of nights needed. The rooms will be in state-licensed B&Bs in the downtown neighbourhood around the Casa Dranguet where the classes take place. The program takes place during Santiago's famous Carnival in which Ritmacuba participates, our *comparsa* has received "special recognition" by the City of Santiago.

Ritmacuba has over 25 years of experience running dance and music programs in Cuba. We welcome students of all nationalities, disciplines and levels from amateurs with little experience to professionals. It has probably the most flexible, customizable program available and offers authentic cultural immersion. As well as individual dancers or musicians, groups of friends and families, Ritmacuba has accommodated dance companies and a brass band from Martinique. All ages are welcome, though minors will be admitted only if they are accompanied by one of the two parents, participating in courses or not.

How can we accommodate these various needs?

- by offering a choice of levels in some disciplines (i.e. salsa, percussion, etc.)
- by providing an opportunity for participants to practise their own specialty and explore a new one.

Participants may want to take classes solely within their own discipline or vary things up. It could be the opportunity for a musician to take dance, a dancer to take percussion. Classes are offered within a framework of four one-hour segments each day with 15 minutes between classes.

**Note:** Participants are expected to choose classes according to their level.

The Casa Dranguet also has a recording studio for those who may be interested.

Classes will prepare participants for participation in two public events:

- Formation of a *comparsa* for official participation in a parade as part of Santiago's famous Carnaval. The *comparsa* will consist of two parts, one centred around percussion but with dancers and the other a rueda de casino to be performed before the parade jury. Depending on enrolment a brass band or wind and brass instruments may be added.
- Participants in the band workshop will give a public concert. The arrangements will be customized to the participants according to instruments played and skill levels.
- For wind and brass instrumentalists there will be the possibility of playing at least one open air concert as part of the Banda de Concierto de Santiago (with recordings under the name of Banda Municipal)
- On the last day of the program the various classes will present what they have learned.

### **Cultural Program “Abanico Cubano”**

**In complement to the courses and workshops**, there is a program of activities focused on the music and dance of Oriente (eastern Cuba), outside the usual tourist circuit. Each year is unique and adapted to the situation of the moment, details will not be published in advance. These activities may include a rumba, a street party in the neighbourhood of Los Hoyos, home of the oldest conga group in Santiago, a visit to a rehearsal of one of the local comparsas, a presentation of tumba francesa, concerts with the Banda de Santiago and/or other groups such as the saxophone quartet Magic Sax and a “beach day” off-the-beaten-path with a barbecue. We bring along instruments and invite the teachers.

There is ample opportunity within this program for participants to explore Santiago independently. Recommended are the Casa de la Trova, Los Dos Abuelos, Artex, Casa de Las Tradiciones, Iris Jazz Club and more. The program takes place during Carnaval when the biggest popular Cuban groups (Sur Caribe, Oderquis Reve, etc.) give concerts. There are many places to go dancing.

### **The teachers**

The members of our experienced team are Cuban teachers and assistants who together represent the rich musical and dance heritage of Santiago province (Oriente). We freely choose our teachers and rehearsal leaders without relying on the internal (and limiting) choices of any one institution. They are chosen from such institutions as: Casa del Caribe, Ballet Folklorico de Oriente, Cutumba, Casa de la Trova, Casino All-Stars, Conservatorio Estaban Salas and others.

## Class Schedule

You may register for one class per time slot, changes allowed until 3<sup>rd</sup> class. Lunch is served on the patio, on site, from 12:30-2:00.

9:00 – 10 a.m.	10:15– 11:15 a.m.	11:30 – 12:30 p.m.	2:00 – 3 p.m.
<b>Dance - Afro-Cuban, rumba &amp; comparsa</b> mixed levels: accompanied by percussion & singer	<b>Dance – Casino/Salsa,</b> Level 2	<b>Dance – Casino Rueda,</b> intermediate and advanced (teacher Jorge Bridon - Casino All Stars)	<b>Dance – Popular Cuban (son, cha-cha-cha, etc.)</b> Level A Level B (teacher Jorge Bridon - Casino All Stars)
<b>Private lessons - Dance- salsa/bachata/ reggaeton</b> *supplemental fee	<b>Dance –Casino/Salsa, Level 3</b>	<b>Dance – Salsa Level 1</b> (teacher Ani Rodriguez – Casino All Stars)	<b>Dance - Afro-Cuban</b> intermediate & advanced: accompanied by percussion & singer, min. of 8 registrants
	<b>Percussion, popular Cuban rhythms</b> (congas) intermediate and advanced (teacher: Manolo Semanat Bell)		<b>Percussion, popular Cuban rhythms</b> (congas, small percussion) level 1 - (min. of 4 registrants) (teacher: Manolo Semanat Bell)
<b>Percussion, Afro- Cuban</b> (congas and/or bata and bells) different teacher & material from afternoon (teacher: Mililian Gali , assistant: Regla)	<b>Percussion, popular Cuban rhythms</b> (congas, small percussion) level 1 – (min. of 4 registrants)	<b>Percussion, Afro- Cuban</b> (congas and/or bata and bells, conga comparsa Santiaguera) (teacher: Vicente Portuondo)	<b>Percussion – rumba (congas, claves, cata)</b> intermediate and advanced (teacher: Silvio Ferrara, director of rumba group Folkloyuma)
<b>Wind instruments</b> (or brass band) - dependant on min. of 4 registrants. Led by Ernesto Burgos, director of the Banda Municipal de Santiago.	<b>Small ensemble</b> depending on participants, trad.son and/or orchestrated rumba with voice, percussion and instrumentation (piano, bass, tres, etc.)		<b>Son/Salsa Orchestra</b> for instrumentalists, percussionists, voice – soloists and chorus Playing arrangements of Cuban standards
<b>Private lessons Instruments/singing</b> *supplemental fee	<b>Singing soloists and chorus</b> includes preparation for the orchestra	<b>Private lessons – all instruments/singing/ steel pan</b> *supplemental fee this time slot is available but may be possible at 3 p.m. or 4 p.m. depending on availability of space	<b>Group singing class (Cuban repertory)</b> leading to integration with the orchestra as backup singers (coros)
<b>After 3:00 p.m.</b> certain days there will be rehearsal for carnaval			
<b>After 6:00 p.m.</b> (depending on proposed events): an activity organized by Ritmacuba (Abanico program) centred on traditional music and dance and social events and/or free time.			
<b>*Note:</b> supplemental cost of 45 euros per time slot (for the entire 10 days), payable on site.			

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **DANCE**

The teachers will determine appropriate levels on the first day of classes. In the event that the numbers of men and women registered are uneven Cuban partners will be provided for the classes.

#### **Afro-Cuban dance, all levels – accompanied by percussionists and singer**

Yoruba, Congo, Haitian-Cuban, rumba, comparsa

#### **Afro-Cuban dance, intermed. & advanced – accompanied by percussionists & singer**

Yoruba, Congo, Haitian-Cuban, rumba, comparsa, conditional on enrolment of 10 people, repertoire would be divided so that those taking this class could also take the mixed-level Afro-cuban dance class

#### **Salsa Level 1**

With and without partner, integrating popular Cuban styles such as son, rumba, pilon, cha-cha-cha, mambo, casino rueda....) This course is designed for those who have little or no experience and as a program option for musicians.

#### **Salsa Level 2**

In line, in couples and in a circle (rueda).

#### **Salsa Level 3**

In line, in couples and in a circle (rueda). Includes preparation for the rueda class.

#### **Popular Cuban Dance**

Son, rumba, pilon, cha-cha-cha, mambo, danzon; couples and rueda. This may be divided into two groups if there is too much difference in the levels of the people enrolled.

#### **Casino Rueda, intermediate and advanced**

Depending on students' motivation and recent trends in Santiago, elements of rumba, Afro-Cuban dance (regional and national) and popular Cuban dances may be incorporated. A choreographed rueda may be integrated into the comparsa group. Participation in one of the morning salsa classes, level 2 or 3 is recommended for those taking this class.

#### **Dance, private lessons – salsa/regueton/bachata**

Advanced level only. One person or one couple.

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### **PERCUSSION**

The 2 Afro-Cuban classes are taught by different teachers in different time slots so those specializing in percussion may take both. Course A offers written and oral instruction.

#### **Popular Cuban Percussion, Level 1 (beginners and those with little experience)**

Congas, small percussion. Depending on the participants, may be focused more on the congas or on small percussion with option of coordination with dance steps.

#### **Popular Cuban Percussion, Level 2 (intermediate and advanced)**

Putting several rhythms together, variations, breaks, etc. Shekere option possible (bembé de guiro) depending on students' wishes

**Afro-Cuban percussion, polyrhythm, A, intermediate and advanced**

Morning class, congas, bells, sticks, introduction to bata possible: orishas, bembé, congo, conga, afro-haitian, etc. Written reference. Different teacher from afternoon class. Different parts/instruments played simultaneously with different levels of difficulty.

**Afro-Cuban percussion, polyrhythm, B, intermediate and advanced**

Afternoon class, rumba and conga de carnaval, (congas, bells). Depending on students and what is being taught in the morning – batas, orishas, bembé, congo, afro-haitian, etc. Different parts/instruments played simultaneously with different levels of difficulty.

**Percussion – rumba and cajon, intermediate level on congas**

Cajon technique combined with congas or several congas simultaneously. Must have good left-hand technique (or right hand in the case of left-handers)

**SINGING/INSTRUMENTS/ORCHESTRA**

All of the singing and orchestra students will receive a Cuban songbook or “cancionero cubano”

**Singing, group class**

Afro-Cuban chants in Yoruba, Lucumi, Haitian Creole, etc. and Popular Cuban songs in Spanish. Percussionists may sing chorus while playing an instrument.

**Singing, soloists and chorus**

Preparation for the orchestra and son repertory (if only one singer is registered, there will be a supplement for this course as a private lesson)

**Private lessons, instrumentalists and singers**

Timbales/bongos/congas, piano, bass, violin, tres, guitar, flute, saxophone (corneta china for carnaval an option), trumpet, trombone, singing – offered in 2 different time slots These private lessons require a supplement of 55 CUC (Cuban convertible pesos) per series (per time slot) to be paid on location, unless two people share a lesson.

**Instruments, group class**

Preparation for the orchestra. Includes section work (winds), sorting out arrangements, preparation of repertory.

**Son/salsa Orchestra**

Instrumentalists, vocalists, percussionists. Styles could include: son, guaracha, pilon, danzon, cha-cha-cha, mambo.

**Wind instruments** (brass band, marching band)

Arrangements by the arranger for the Banda de Santiago of Cuban standards. This course was designed for the marching band from Martinique participating in 2012 but is open to all Ritmacuba participants.

## **DATES AND TRAVEL OPTIONS**

If you are travelling from Toronto or Montreal you may choose what we have found to be a compatible flight (+ taxi)/transportation arrangement or you may make your own arrangements. To participate in the program you must arrive in Santiago on July 11th at the latest and stay until the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup>.

The rooms that we book are in private houses (casas) in the neighbourhood where the courses will take place (at Casa Dranguet). You will have a private washroom and an air conditioner in your room. Price is based on double occupancy but you may pay a supplement and have a private room. If you are travelling alone but wish to share a room we will do our best to match you up with another participant. The payment for the casa must be paid directly to the homeowner and will include breakfast.

Lunches are served at Casa Dranguet as part of the program. Dinners are not included. There are many extremely reasonable restaurants in the neighbourhood (some more expensive ones too!) Some casa owners will make dinners for their guests upon request.

**You may request a registration form or ask any questions by emailing [jh-canada@ritmacuba.com](mailto:jh-canada@ritmacuba.com) or phone Joyce at 519-428-3315.**

## **DONATIONS**

Ritmacuba will be donating supplies to our partners at Casa Dranguet and Cultura Municipal de Santiago. If you want to make a donation we can give you some ideas - for example, school supplies.

## **COST AND PAYMENT DETAILS**

The Cuban convertible peso (CUC) can only be bought and used in Cuba. Online currency converters can be used to get an idea of costs in CDN or U.S. dollars. Keep in mind that you never get that ideal rate. Exchange rates are posted in any official exchange office in Cuba. Never have your money changed anywhere other than an official CADECA outlet or a bank.

The convertible peso (CUC) is approximately equivalent to the U.S. dollar. A 10% tax is charged by the Cuban government on top of transaction fees to exchange U.S. dollars into CUCs so Americans are advised to buy euros or Canadian dollars to exchange in Cuba for CUCs.

**Credit cards issued in the U.S. or from U.S. banks are not accepted in Cuba nor are travellers cheques.**

More details on currency and other practical matters (what clothing to bring, etc.) will be sent to you before departure.

## Cost breakdown 2019

\$ CDN (Jan.8, 2019 exchange rate)

### Without flight

A. 722 euros – classes/lunches, concerts/day trip\* 1100.00 CDN

B. 182 CUC 14 nights lodging w/breakfast +245.00

based on double occupancy

(private/single accommodation cost is 322 CUC (\$430), room costs are calculated at 20 CUC per room per night + 3 CUC per person for breakfast)

**Total without flight approx. \$1345.00 CDN (exchange rate may fluctuate.)**

### Flight options from Canada

**Toronto-Holguin**, departure July 10, return July 25/27 (leaves on July 24)

Air Canada Flight #1760/61 from Pearson \$657.00 (taxes in) baggage fee extra

+ shared taxi Holguin-Santiago approx. \$50 CDN

Not necessarily recommending Red Tag, this screen shot is simply for reference.

The screenshot shows the Red Tag website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the Red Tag logo and contact information: "Over 150 Travel Experts to serve you! 1-866-573-3824". Below the navigation bar is a search bar with the following details: "From: Lester B. Pearson Internat", "Going to: Frank Pais International Ai", "Departure Date: 2019-07-10", "Return Date: 2019-07-24", "Adults: 1", "Children: 0", "Preferred Class: Economy Class". A "Modify Search" button is visible. Below the search bar, there's a "Show Price Table" link. The main content area displays flight options for Air Canada. A prominent red banner at the top of the results says "NO BOOKING FEES ON ALL FLIGHTS! LIMITED TIME OFFER." The first flight option is Air Canada Flight #1760, departing YYZ at 4:10 PM on Wed Jul 10, 2019, and arriving HOG at 7:50 PM on Wed Jul 10, 2019. The flight time is 3h 40m. The second flight option is Air Canada Flight #1761, departing HOG at 8:50 PM on Wed Jul 24, 2019, and arriving YYZ at 12:35 AM (+1) on Thu Jul 25, 2019. The flight time is 3h 45m. On the right side of the flight options, there's a "Roundtrip \$657.00 CAD per person includes taxes & fees" and a "Select Flight" button. At the bottom, there's a partial view of another flight option from American Airlines.

### \* Dinners are not included.

(please note : above costs are to be paid as shown, in euros to Ritmacuba for the program and CUC to the casa owners. The equivalents shown will vary with the exchange rate.)

**For those taking private classes : 45 euros to pay on site as supplement.**

You do need a tourist visa for Cuba, most often these are provided by the airline.

### Payment dates:

- A. *Ritmacuba: a Paypal request for payment to Ritmacuba will be sent after you register. A deposit of 150 euros will be required to hold your spot. The balance will need to be paid by the end of May. Paypal charges a fee for each transaction fee so you may want to pay all at once and avoid paying two fees. You also have the option of bringing Euros and paying on site.*
  
- B. *Accommodation: Unless you prefer to book a hotel, we will reserve a B&B for you: The Cuban government requires that accommodations be paid in CUCs (on site) directly to the owner of the house where you will be staying.*

For any questions, please contact: [jh-canada@ritmacuba.com](mailto:jh-canada@ritmacuba.com) (Joyce)