



## **Airbnb and Cuba:**

Two years of connecting people and generating economic opportunity for individuals and families



# Introduction

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Airbnb was launched in 2008 with the vision to create a world where anyone can belong anywhere. Fundamentally, Airbnb isn't about the digital experience -- it's about the human one. We believe that people to people contact is the best way to break down barriers and that the best ambassadors for any culture are the people themselves, which is why we enable people to open up their homes and share their communities with one another. That is why we help people feel like they belong anywhere -- even in a place that has seemed beyond reach, and between people who for decades haven't had the opportunity to get to know each other face to face.

That's why, in April 2015, we were excited to welcome the Cuban people to our global community. For the first time in decades, licensed American travelers were able to break bread with Cuban hosts around kitchen tables throughout the island. And since then, thousands of Cuban individuals and families have directly benefitted from their newfound access to Airbnb's global network of travelers: in just over two years, hosts in Cuba have earned nearly \$40 million.

Havana has also been home to some of Airbnb's most popular Trips and Experiences. Experiences are handcrafted activities designed and led by local people, offering unprecedented access and deep insights into communities and places travelers wouldn't otherwise come across. We've also found that isn't just the travelers to Cuba who benefit from the experience: indeed, for many Cubans who have never known foreign visitors and especially Americans, we have discovered that dialogue and mutual understanding thrives, and that American guests are the very best Ambassadors for the values of entrepreneurship and freedom.

This report summarizes the growth of the Airbnb community in Cuba and offers insights regarding the individual Cubans and their families who have been empowered by the chance to earn money, experience entrepreneurship, sometimes for the first time, and share their space, culture and community with travelers from around the world.

# Airbnb in Cuba: By the numbers

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**560,000**

Guest arrivals in Cuban homes since April 2, 2015

**70,000**

Average guest arrivals per month in 2017

**22,000**

Airbnb listings spread across 70 different cities and towns in Cuba

Since Airbnb launched in Cuba on April 2, 2015, there have been more than 560,000 guest arrivals in Cuban homes, averaging over 70,000 per month in 2017. More guests have stayed in Cuba in the last year than in the entire US in the first year of Airbnb.

This unprecedented growth shows no signs of slowing down. Cuba is Airbnb's fastest-growing country in the world based on listing growth with over 22,000 Airbnb listings are spread across 70 different cities and towns. On the island, Havana is home to the largest number of Airbnb listings with more than 13,000 (more than Austin, Houston, San Francisco, Boston, San Diego, Chicago). Other popular cities include Trinidad (over 2,000 listings) and Vinales (over 1,000 listings).

Demand for travel to Cuba continues to grow. In 2017 so far, Cuba has been the 9th most popular destination country on Airbnb for US travelers, more than Australia, Germany, the Netherlands or Thailand.

# Money for individual Cubans and families

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Cubans have been welcoming visitors into their homes long before Airbnb. For decades, *casas particulares* -- a network of private homestays -- have been a popular and cost-effective choice for visitors, as well as an important source of income for Cuban families.

Today, Airbnb can be a vehicle for the independent entrepreneurs in Cuba, who run these *casas particulares*. When a Cuban host shares their space on Airbnb, he or she receives 97 percent of the price they charge for their listing -- the money goes directly to the Cuban host. Additionally, the chance to advertise their space with Airbnb's global network of travelers has been an economic boon for individual Cubans and their families:

**\$40 million**

Paid to Cuban individuals from sharing their home, since April 2015

**\$164**

The average amount paid per booking to a Cuban host

**\$2,700**

The average annual payout for a Cuban host

**33 nights**

The average number of nights Cuban hosts share their space per year

**43 years old**

The average age of Cuban hosts

**58%**

Of Cuban Airbnb hosts are women

In a country where average workers earn \$30 per month, the additional income generated via Airbnb offers substantial economic benefits to individual Cuban people and their families. And because spending by Airbnb guests happens in local neighborhoods and businesses, Airbnb also supports a wide range of small businesses such as the independent entrepreneurs who run *paladares* -- restaurants -- or artists who are running their own businesses.

# Connecting people

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In addition to creating economic opportunities, Airbnb has helped bring people together, allowing hosts and guests to enjoy meaningful interaction. These connections give individual Cubans and their families the opportunity to meet and share stories with travelers from a wide range of cultures, countries and communities and to hear about a world very different from life on the island.

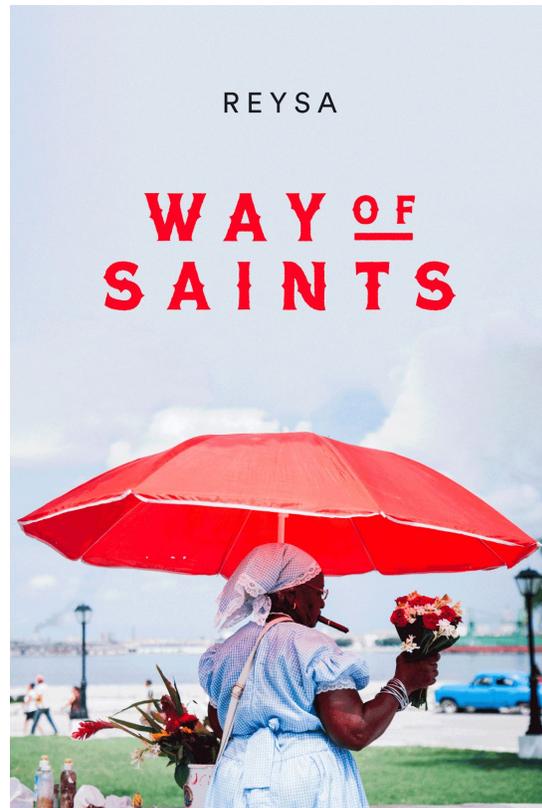
In 2016, over 12 percent of all US travelers to Cuba -- including travelers from all 50 states -- stayed in an Airbnb. Top states of origin are: California (21 percent), New York (20 percent), Florida (11 percent), Texas (4.3 percent), Illinois (3.9 percent) and Massachusetts (3.1 percent).

Airbnb's Experiences -- curated trips that allow travelers to connect with the Cuban people and see parts of the island they might otherwise miss -- are in high demand. In recent weeks we've seen close to 80 percent occupancy for Trips, including:

## La Salsera



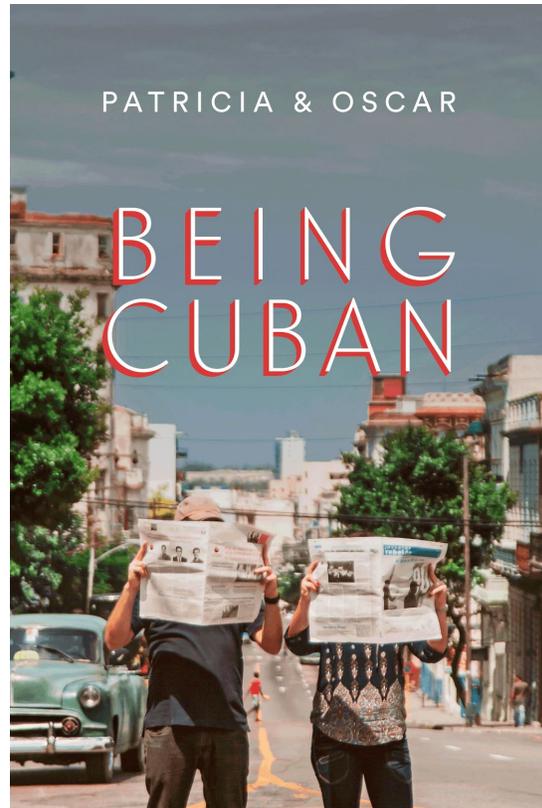
## Way of Saints



## By Night In Havana



## Being Cuban



Experiences like By Night in Havana, [Afro-Cuban Culture Guide](#), and Being Cuban will be among the most in-demand Experiences in the world over the coming months.

# Moving forward

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With demand for travel to Cuba accelerating, we look forward to serving more travelers and continuing to be a vital source of income for individual Cubans and their families. Today, more and more Cubans are entrepreneurs who are eager to start their own businesses and connect with the world. We are eager to help these hosts achieve their dreams in a world growing smaller and more connected than ever before .