

Salsa dancing in Cuba draws in foreign tourists

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Recently many Cubans have bought licences from the government, which now allow them to offer private lessons, charging about US\$5 per hour. According to Marisuri Garcia, who is a Cuban dance instructor: "Dancing helps you live better. It helps you look inside and open up, to be free in mind and body." Cuba's Culture Ministry now offers salsa packages with state-run dance studios like SprachCaffe, where tourists are paired with individual instructors. A two-week tour including dance classes, hotel and some meals costs about €900 (US\$1,300). Salsa groups come on a two week package that includes beach time – Cuba has some fabulous beaches – and some city tours. However, most tourists main goal is to go home dancing better than when they arrived. The origins of salsa are disputed. It has had roots in Cuba's son and mambo. But it was heavily influenced by American music and Latin Americans living in New York. Because of US travel restrictions, very few American tourists make it to Cuba.

Marisuri Garcia: Salsa dancing could be a bridge as more cultural exchanges are allowed by President Obama's administration. She hopes to help people overcome political differences on the dance floor. "We've got Swiss and Germans dancing salsa like Cubans. It's time to see more Americans." One person summed up Salsa: "In Cuba, it's joy. It's joy of life."

Category: Cuba / Salsa / holidays

Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate

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EXERCISES

1. **Salsa dancing:** Think of three things you know about salsa dancing? Go round the room swapping details with others.

2. **Geography: Cuba:** Where is Cuba? What sea surrounds it? What is its capital? Draw a map on the board then **look on Google maps** to help you.

3. **Dictation:** The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

4. **Reading:** The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

5. **Vocabulary:** Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

6. **The article:** Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) Can any of you salsa?

7. **Salsa:** In pairs think of five things you might see in a salsa dance studio in Luxembourg. Then add five things you might see in a salsa nightclub in Havana. Write them below. Compare and discuss together. What are your conclusions?

Salsa dance studio in Luxembourg	Inside a salsa nightclub in Havana
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

8. **Let's roleplay 1: Dance FM:** In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Dance FM* radio studio in London. Today's interview is about: *Salsa in Cuba*.

1	A journalist back from Cuba	3	A Cuban dance instructor on tour
2	A salsa student	4	A salsa dance instructor in Europe

The teacher will choose some pairs to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

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9. Salsa and dance: In pairs think of five countries where salsa is popular. Then add five other popular dances. Write them below. Discuss together.

Countries where salsa is popular	Other popular dances
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

10. Let's think! In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with **Salsa**. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

11. Let's roleplay 2: In pairs. You are in bar in Cuba. One of you is the barman/maid. The other is a tourist. Between you - you get talking. Discuss the salsa scene in Havana. (Make it up!) *5-minutes*.

12. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Name the dance.
- 2) What is the capital of Cuba?
- 3) Name the nightclub.
- 4) Name the countries.
- 5) What costs €900?

Student B

- 1) Explain why few Americans travel to Cuba.
- 2) Salsa is influenced by what?
- 3) Name the dance studio.
- 4) What is Cuba famous for?
- 5) What is most tourists' goal?

13. Let's think! Think of three famous TV/films featuring *dance music* like salsa etc... Write them below. Discuss together with your partner. Which is the most famous? Which is your favourite?

	TV/film	Song
1	_____	_____
2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

14. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: *Salsa in Cuba*. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

15. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

a) I love salsa _____

b) Salsa is _____

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Have you ever attended any salsa dance lessons? Explain.
- 2) What do you think of going on holiday to Cuba to learn salsa?
- 3) Where in your town/city can you learn salsa?
- 4) What do you think of the Cuban government now offering licences to people to set up small businesses to open for example dance studios?
- 5) Where else in the world can you go to learn how to salsa?
- 6) Why do so few Americans go to Cuba?
- 7) Should the American government abolish its embargo and allow Americans to go to Cuba on holiday and to do business there?
- 8) Why is Cuba so popular?
- 9) What else can you do on holiday in Cuba?
- 10) How is the salsa scene in your country?

Student B questions

- 1) What did you think of what you read?
- 2) Is €900 expensive for a two week holiday to Cuba?
- 3) Where would you like to go on holiday this year? Why?
- 4) Would you like to go to Cuba on holiday and learn salsa?
- 5) Why is salsa so popular in Europe?
- 6) How do you think Cuba will change in the near future?
- 7) Have you ever tried a Cuban cigar?
- 8) Can you do these hip-swivelling moves on the dance floor?
- 9) Are you the new John Travolta / Patrick Swayze or Jennifer Grey (Baby)?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING

Let's discuss! Cuba

Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

20 things about Cuba

The teacher can moderate the session.

GAP FILL: READING:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Salsa dancing in Cuba draws in foreign tourists

It's the weekend and in Cuba at Havana's Las Canitas (1)_____ young and old burn up their energy on the (2)_____ floor. Salsa is hot in Havana. Dancers (3)_____ to the latest salsa hits. In fact, Cubans pride themselves on their intricate, hip-(4)_____ moves. They can usually tell the difference between locals and foreigners simply by the way they move on the dance floor. A Cuban woman shouts: "See, look at him. He needs to move his (5)_____ more." Another she sees: "Wow, he's got tremendous feeling." Adding, "He could definitely be Cuban." Cuba might be famous for its (6)_____, late 1950s American cars and Fidel Castro but it's its (7)_____ that tourists are keen to experience when they visit the island today. The (8)_____ music has over the last 15 years taken Europe by storm, with salsa clubs and dance studios in high demand, especially in Luxembourg, the UK, Germany and Japan. When it comes to travel many of these salsa students have still got salsa on their mind. Where better to head than Cuba in order to try it?

Recently many Cubans have bought (1)_____ from the government, which now allow them to offer private lessons, charging about US\$5 per hour. According to Marisuri Garcia, who is a Cuban dance instructor: "Dancing helps you live better. It helps you look inside and open up, to be free in mind and body." Cuba's Culture Ministry now offers salsa packages with state-run dance studios like SprachCaffe, where tourists are paired with individual (2)_____. A two-week tour including dance classes, hotel and some meals costs about €900 (US\$1,300). Salsa groups come on a two week (3)_____ that includes beach time – Cuba has some fabulous (4)_____ – and some city (5)_____. However, most tourists main goal is to go home dancing better than when they arrived. The origins of salsa are disputed. It has had (6)_____ in Cuba's son and mambo. But it was (7)_____ influenced by American music and Latin Americans living in New York. Because of US travel restrictions, very few American (8)_____ make it to Cuba.

nightclub

swivelling

tropical

twirl

salsa

cigars

dance

hips

instructors

licences

tourists

heavily

roots

beaches

tours

package

GAP FILL: LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Salsa dancing in Cuba draws in foreign tourists

It's the weekend and in Cuba at Havana's Las Canitas nightclub young and old _____ on the dance floor. Salsa is hot in Havana. Dancers twirl to the latest salsa hits. In fact, Cubans pride themselves on their intricate, _____. They can usually tell the difference between _____ simply by the way they move on the dance floor. A Cuban woman shouts: "See, look at him. He needs to move his hips more." Another she sees: "Wow, he's got tremendous feeling." Adding, "He could definitely be Cuban." Cuba might be famous for its cigars, late 1950s American cars and _____ it's its salsa that tourists are keen to experience when they visit the island today. The tropical music has over the last 15 years taken Europe by storm, with salsa clubs and dance studios in high demand, _____, the UK, Germany and Japan. When it comes to travel many of these salsa students have still got salsa on their mind. Where better to head than Cuba _____?

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GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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Recently many Cubans have bought licences from (1)___ government, which now allow them to offer private lessons, charging about US\$5 per hour. According to Marisuri Garcia, (2)___ is a Cuban dance instructor: "Dancing helps you live better. It helps (3)___ look inside and open up, to be free in mind and body." Cuba's Culture Ministry now offers salsa packages with state-run dance studios like SprachCaffe, where tourists are paired with individual instructors. (4)___ two-week tour including dance classes, hotel and some meals costs about €900 (US\$1,300). Salsa groups come on a two week package that includes beach time – Cuba has some fabulous beaches – and some city tours. However, most tourists main goal is to go home dancing better than when they arrived. The origins of salsa are disputed. It has had roots in Cuba's son (5)___ mambo. (6)___ it was heavily influenced (7)___ American music and Latin Americans living in New York. Because (8)___ US travel restrictions, very few American tourists make it to Cuba.

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

1	tremendous	11	restrictions
2	cultural	12	influenced
3	themselves	13	salsa
4	cigars	14	overcome
5	fabulous	15	administration
6	tropical	16	differences
7	twirl	17	individual
8	however	18	swivelling
9	especially	19	experience
10	heavily	20	definitely

LINKS

http://www.salsa-merengue.co.uk/VidTutor/rhythm/son_phrasing_part_one.html

http://articles.cnn.com/2011-05-09/travel/cuba.salsa.dancing.tourism_1_salsa-dance-classes-cuban-dance-instructor?s=PM:TRAVEL

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/thorntree/thread.jspa?threadID=1495768&messageID=13237522>

<http://salsanews.lu/Cours.php>

ANSWERS

GAP FILL: Salsa dancing in Cuba draws in foreign tourists: It's the weekend and in Cuba at Havana's Las Canitas **nightclub** young and old burn up their energy on the **dance** floor. Salsa is hot in Havana. Dancers **twirl** to the latest salsa hits. In fact, Cubans pride themselves on their intricate, hip-**swivelling** moves. They can usually tell the difference between locals and foreigners simply by the way they move on the dance floor. A Cuban woman shouts: "See, look at him. He needs to move his **hips** more." Another she sees: "Wow, he's got tremendous feeling." Adding, "He could definitely be Cuban." Cuba might be famous for its **cigars**, late 1950s American cars and Fidel Castro but it's its **salsa** that tourists are keen to experience when they visit the island today. The **tropical** music has over the last 15 years taken Europe by storm, with salsa clubs and dance studios in high demand, especially in Luxembourg, the UK, Germany and Japan. When it comes to travel many of these salsa students have still got salsa on their mind. Where better to head than Cuba in order to try it?

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