

# Cuba gears up for Habanos Festival



Last year's Habanos Festival brought together cigar aficionados from all over the world

Havana is hosting the XXII Habanos Festival, the largest international event for Habanos cigar aficionados, from February 24 to 28.

The event will be attended by enthusiasts from all over the world, with the Bolívar, Montecristo and Romeo y Julieta brands taking centre stage.

Attendees will enjoy a five-day activity program for finding out about the origin, production and culture of Habanos Cuban cigars. Visitors from more than 60 countries are expected to visit.

This year, there will be plantation tours to the area of Partido, San Antonio de los Baños, in Artemisa, and tours of the La Corona and Partagás factories to learn more about the Habanos production process.

Other highlights include three evenings of live music from renowned international artists, the finest gastronomy in Cuba and the opportunity to try Habanos cigars and drinks from different corners of the world.

The Welcome Evening and Trade Fair will open the XXII Habanos Festival on February 24. The Trade Fair is the meeting point for tobacco industry professionals worldwide, exhibitors from luxury goods makers as well as craftspeople, artists and manufacturers of smoking paraphernalia and gourmet products.

The Welcome Evening, which will be held at Club Habana, will pay homage to the Bolívar brand with the presentation of Bolívar Reserva Cosecha 2016.

The program will also feature practical sessions and keynote speeches led by renowned Habanos experts at the International Seminar, to be opened on February 26, with the illustrated speech “Habanos and their brands” by Ciro Bianchi.

The XXII Habanos Festival will organize the Habanos World Challenge for the third time. This contest will measure participants’ general knowledge of Habanos through a series of challenges that participants from different countries will have to overcome throughout all the stages of the competition.

The evening dedicated to the 30th anniversary of La Casa del Habano and the 85th anniversary of the Montecristo brand will be held at the El Laguito Reception Hall on February 26, with a dinner for 550 guests.

On February 28, the Gala Evening dedicated to the Romeo y Julieta brand will be the festival’s grand finale. This evening will conclude with the Habanos Awards and the traditional Humidors Auction, with all proceeds going to the Cuban Public Health System.