



Panama, the Canal & Beyond

Casco Viejo District, Panama

Departs: **April 5, 2013**

Duration: 8 Days

Twin Share: \$1,875

Single Room Supplement: \$675

INSIDER EXPERIENCES

- **Be My Guest** Enjoy a typical local lunch as you are invited by the prominent Eleta Almaran family to visit their equestrian estate and learn about their thoroughbred champion horse breeding and training program.
- **Hidden Treasure** Enjoy at least one surprise Hidden Treasure experience, unique to your itinerary, courtesy of your expert Travel Director.
- **Local Specialty** Discover how Panamanian coffee is entering the world scene of premium coffee and learn about the production process at a local coffee farm with tastings.
- **Local Specialty** Try Patacones – the Emberas' native diet – patties made of fried tilapia or chicken and plantain.
- **Local Specialty** Meet a member of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute and learn about the local projects and their commitment to sustainable tourism.

SIGHTSEEING HIGHLIGHTS

- **Panama Canal** Cruise this marvel of the modern world from the Chagres River all the way to the Pacific.
- **Panama City** Explore the city including the Archaeological Site of Panamá Viejo and Historic District of Panama; wander the quaint streets of the Casco Antiguo; visit the Miraflores Locks Visitor Center and Canal Museum.
- **Gamboa Rainforest** Explore the rainforest at canopy level aboard an aerial tram ride; cruise the Chagres River to an Embera village aboard dugout canoes; meet local Embera villagers and learn about their lifestyles, culture and customs.
- **Cerro Punta** Stop at this mountain township and enjoy the best views of Baru Volcano; visit a

local horse race stud farm. • **Boquete** Relax with two nights in the idyllic mountain resort of Valle Escondido. • **Playa Bonita** Enjoy one of Panama's most popular beach resorts ideally situated on the Pacific.

TRAVEL HIGHLIGHTS

- First class hotel accommodations featuring twin rooms and private facilities
- All hotel service charges and tips, baggage handling fees and local taxes included
- Travel by luxury air-conditioned coach with reclining seats and onboard restroom
- The services of an expert Travel Director throughout your journey
- Airport transfers are provided on Day 1 and Day 8
- A Trafalgar bonus – Intra-Air Flights: Panama City to David including porter service at airport
- Complimentary keepsake photo and My Journey book
- Audio Headsets for all guided visits and included sightseeing
- No flights before 1 p.m. on last day

DINING

- 7 full breakfasts
- 2 lunches
 - Lunch aboard a Panama Canal cruise
 - Be My Guest Lunch with drinks in Cerro Punta
- 5 evening meals including
 - Welcome Reception with light appetizers and drinks with your Travel Director in Panama City
 - Highlight Dinner with wine and a folklore show at a local restaurant in Panama City
 - 2 three-course dinners
 - Farewell Dinner with drinks at Playa Bonita

DAY 1 ARRIVE PANAMA CITY (2 NIGHTS) ✈️ 🍷

Bienvenidos a Panama! Welcome to Central America's most beautiful gem and home to the eponymous Canal. You are greeted at the airport by your local host and transferred to your hotel, superbly located on Panama's bay, the bustling Cinta Costera, just steps away from Calle Uruguay with its many popular restaurants and shops. At 6 p.m., join your fellow travel companions and your Travel Director for a Welcome Reception.

Meal: Welcome Reception

Hotel: InterContinental Miramar



DAY 2 PANAMA CANAL CRUISE & FREE TIME

Board your vessel and cruise the Canal, Panama's premier attraction and the highlight of your vacation. As you enter the most important waterway in the world, cruise down from the north end of the Galliard Cut, where the Chagres River flows into the Canal, and witness first-hand the engineering wonder of the Pedro Miguel Locks and Miraflores Locks, the final set of locks before reaching the Pacific Ocean. Cruise over the Continental Divide and under the Centennial Bridge and Bridge of the Americas while enjoying a relaxed morning snack and lunch. Once in the beautiful Bay of Panama, be ready for the best views of Panama City's modern skyline. Enjoy an orientation tour of Panama City as you make your way back to the hotel, where there is free time before dinner. This evening, experience the traditional flavors and folklore of Panama during a Highlight Dinner at a local restaurant. Classic Panamanian fare is sure to delight you along with a performance of traditional Panamanian folklore songs and dances.

Meals: Full Breakfast, Lunch and Highlight Dinner

DAY 3 PANAMA CITY SIGHTSEEING - GAMBOA RAINFOREST (2 NIGHTS) 🏠 🌳

Discover Panama City's role long before the Canal put it on the map. Drive by Panama Viejo, site of the ruins of the original Panama City before it was sacked by the Pirate Henry Morgan. Wander the vibrant streets of Casco Antiguo—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—Panama's Historical District. Visit a local fish market and artisan market on the way to the Miraflores Locks Visitor Center and Canal Museum. Then head for the lush vegetation and tropical climate of the rainforest. Once at your luxurious resort, join a Local Guide on an exciting nature walk and aerial tram ride. Glide smoothly through the treetops and come face to face with the birds and animals that inhabit this mountainous rainforest canopy. Visit the Observation Tower and admire the panoramic views of the Chagres River, Panama Canal and the township of Gamboa. After a superb buffet dinner at the hotel, meet a Local Expert from the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, and learn about the projects the Smithsonian is undertaking in the area and their commitment to sustainable tourism.

Meals: Full Breakfast and Dinner

Hotel: Gamboa Rainforest Resort

DAY 4 GAMBOA RAINFOREST SIGHTSEEING & FREE TIME 🌳

Embark on a different kind of water adventure and meet your boteros at the edge of the Chagres National Park to board dugout canoes. Enjoy a ride up river through the jungle, possibly sighting toucans, sloths or monkeys. Arriving at Embera' Puru, you are met with a traditional greeting and will learn about the Embera Indians' fascinating culture, lifestyle and crafts. Take a short walk through the jungle with a village elder to learn about the medicinal plants they use. Back at the village, enjoy a delicious traditional Local Specialty—Patacones (fried plantains) with fried fish or chicken. Then listen to local music and watch traditional shamanic dances. Back at the resort, the afternoon is free; relax or venture back on the Canal on Lake Gatun for an optional excursion to Monkey Island, where you can often spot white-face Capuchin and Howler Monkeys.

Meal: Full Breakfast

DAY 5 GAMBOA RAINFOREST - DAVID - CERRO PUNTA - BOQUETE (2 NIGHTS) 🏠

Fly to David and travel up the mountain slopes of the Chiriqui Province near the Costa Rican border. At Cerro Punta, take in the superb views of Volcan Baru, a dormant but prominent volcano and the tallest mountain in Panama. An exclusive Be My Guest lunch awaits at a thoroughbred breeding farm situated in Cerro Punta Valley, one of the most beautiful scenic jewels in the country. As guests of the owners—one of Panama's most prominent families—explore the farm and learn how they breed these magnificent horses in a chemical free environment. Later, arrive at the mountain resort of Boquete in beautiful Valle Escondido. Relax and take a stroll through the beautiful grounds before dinner.

Meals: Full Breakfast, Be My Guest Lunch and Dinner

Hotel: Valle Escondido Golf & Spa Resort

DAY 6 BOQUETE SIGHTSEEING & FREE TIME 🌳

Visit a coffee plantation and learn how coffee—a new Local Specialty in Panama—is making a grand entrance on the world stage of gourmet coffee with several award-winning estate grown varieties. Learn about the coffee-making process and meet the Ngobe-Bugle, the indigenous who hand pick the red coffee berries when they are perfectly ripe. Back at the resort, the rest of the day is on your own. Explore the quaint township of Boquete to feel like a local or join one of the optional activities including bird-watching, white water rafting, ziplining, hiking up a volcano, or horseback riding—the choice is yours.

Meal: Full Breakfast

DAY 7 BOQUETE - SANTIAGO - PLAYA BONITA 🏠 🌊

Descend from the Chiriqui Highlands to the Inter-American Highway, the Central American section of the Pan-America Highway. Stop in Santiago for lunch on your own and browse for local arts and crafts. On to Aguadulce and Nata in the Coclé Province, the heart of Panama's sugar cane industry. Stop in Nata to view the beautiful basilica, said to be the oldest church in colonial America. Arrive at your resort, nestled alongside the aquamarine waters of the Pacific Ocean. This evening, recount cherished memories of your Panama insider experience with newfound friends at a festive Farewell Dinner.

Meals: Full Breakfast and Farewell Dinner

Hotel: The Westin Playa Bonita

DAY 8 PLAYA BONITA - PANAMA CITY DEPARTURE ✈️

Transfer to Panama City International Airport or the hotel in Panama City for those wishing to extend their stay. If you like, extend your stay on the beach at Playa Bonita. Please do not schedule any flights before 1 p.m.

Meals: (Depending on your departure time, coffee and light food service, or a full breakfast will be available)

🏠 Be My Guest | 🍷 Welcome Reception | 🏠 Hidden Treasure | 👤 Local Guide
👤 Local Expert | 🌳 Local Specialty | 🍽️ Highlight Meal/Farewell Dinner

