



## Panama Adventure - 8 Days & 7 Nights

One amazing quality that makes Panama so unique is that from one location in Panama City travelers can enjoy so much of this beautiful country and its culture and nature without having to change hotels. If you are the type of traveler that likes to check into to one hotel, unpack your bags, and venture out, then this is the tour for you.

- Day 1 - Arrival to Panama
- Day 2 - Ancient & Modern Panama City
- Day 3 - Chagres River and the Embera Indigenous
- Day 4 - Panama Canal Railroad & Agua Clara Locks
- Day 5 - Free Day
- Day 6 - Wild Side of Panama Canal  
& Miraflores Visitors Center
- Day 7 - Panama Canal Transit
- Day 8 - Departure



**Day 1 - Arrival to Panama** -Upon arrival to Panama you will be met in the Tocumen International airport by a bilingual interpretive and naturalist guide and escorted to your hotel in Panama City, Country Inn and Suites Amador at the Panama Canal, where you can unpack your bags for the next seven nights. Once you arrive to the hotel or first thing the following morning, depending on your arrival time, your guide will conduct a short tour briefing with all the details for the coming days such as departure times, and recommended items to bring each day.

**Day 2 - Ancient & Modern Panama City** - This full-day tour visits the highlights of Panama City. First thing, we head to the Mercado de Mariscos. The earlier we go, the more action there is to see. The waters off the Pacific coast of Panama are rich in marine life. The fishermen who work in these waters use this marketplace to sell their catches to restaurants, resellers, and the general public. Each kiosk is typically owned and operated by one family. A visit to this market is a slice of life that almost every Panamanian knows, but not too many tourists.



**Panama Viejo** - Founded in 1519 by the conquistador Pedrarias Dávila, Panamá Viejo is the oldest non-native settlement on the Pacific coast of the Americas. The city was laid out on a rectilinear grid, marking the first transference the European of idea of urban planning. In 1671 the city was sacked and burned by the Welsh privateer, Henry Morgan. Today, the remaining ruins are a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



**Panama Canal Zone** - The afternoon will be dedicated to the history and administration of engineering marvel that is the Panama Canal. We will visit the former US Canal Zone, exploring the area which housed the U.S. Army and Naval bases, Albrook and Clayton. Our exploration of the Canal Zone will be accompanied by a "Zonian" who will fill us in on all the details of daily life within this territory. At the Panama Canal Administration Building we will see the magnificent 360-degree murals depicting the monumental effort to build the canal.



**Day 3 - Chagres River and the Emberá Indigenous** - This is a perfect opportunity to visit an indigenous village in the midst of a wonderful natural setting that supports the harmony of their lifestyle and traditions. This morning guests are picked up at their hotel and transferred to the mouth of the Chagres river and the Panama Canal. Here, we board a motorized boats and travel up the Chagres River to an Emberá indigenous community. The boat journey takes us through the rainforest of the 320,000-acre Chagres National Park, which is the largest of the National Parks protecting the Panama Canal Watershed.



At the Emberá village we will be greeted with dancing and music. We will learn about Emberá customs and their relationship with nature. There will be handcrafts available for sale and we will have a chance to be painted with the traditional jagua, a natural dye the Emberá use to adorn their bodies. After a lunch of fish, plantain, and fresh fruit served in traditional style by the Emberá, we have the opportunity to explore their village and culture and perhaps purchase an item of their colorful artworks before heading back to Panama City.



**Day 4 - The Panama Canal Railroad, Gatun Locks, and the Panama Canal Expansion Visitors Center** -This morning we board the Panama Canal Railroad, the first transcontinental railway in the Americas. Built in the 1850's this railway provided safe passage for those wishing to travel from the East Coast of the Americas to the West Coast and vice versa. At the time there was no contiguous railroad across North America so travelers would venture by ship to Panama, cross the Isthmus by train, and embark on another ship, sailing the Pacific to destinations North and South. During the gold rush this route was heavily used by the 49'ers who would pay \$5.00 to WALK the route. Ironically, today our passage is the SAME cost as it was so many years ago!

Integral to the construction of the Panama Canal, the train tracks were shifted from place to place until it landed in its current location. Today, the railroad is used primarily to transport cargo and commuters living in Panama City who work in Colon's, Duty Free Zone.



In 2007 after a nationwide vote, the expansion of the Panama Canal was approved and work began on widening and straightening the channel and constructing new locks to accommodate the MUCH larger vessels sailing the world these days, the Post Panamax. The canal's century old locks, functioning almost exactly as they did upon the inauguration will still be used for smaller vessels while the new locks will fit ships approximately four times in size!



**Day 5 - On Your Own** - Today is yours to spend however you like, whether lounging poolside, relaxing on your balcony watching the ships enter the canal, or exploring Panama City on your own. B

**Day 6 - The Wild Side of the Panama Canal & Miraflores Visitors Center - The Complete Panama Canal Experience** - This day tour combines the thrill of encountering wildlife in their natural habitats while passing in the shadows of the mammoth cargo ships transiting the Panama Canal.

Gatun Lake, with a surface area of 423 square-kilometers, was created in 1914 as the main waterway for the Panama Canal and contains many small islands (former hilltops). Today this protected watershed land provides a healthy rainforest habitat teeming with wildlife. From the comfort of our boat which allows shoreline access we are likely to spot monkeys, sloth, and green iguana resting on tree branches, crocodile napping on beaches, osprey hunting for peacock bass, and a variety of tropical birds including colorful toucans. With a Certified Naturalist as your guide, you will not only see these amazing creatures but also learn about their role in maintaining a healthy forest and ultimately the continued functioning of the Panama Canal. At mid-day, we will make our way to the Miraflores Visitors Center where we will dine terrace side, overlooking the massive ships as they are tendered through the locks.



For the afternoon we will visit the Miraflores Visitors Center. The Miraflores Visitors Center (MVC) is an expression of the permanent commitment of the Panama Canal Authority to strengthen the public's knowledge of the Canal. Located on the east side of the Miraflores Locks, the MVC allows the visitor to observe transiting vessels from a distance of only a few meters and learn firsthand about the various operations of the Panama Canal, the history of its construction, its participation in the world markets, and the importance of its watershed. From the observation platform, you'll watch in awe as ocean-going ships are tendered through huge locks with only inches to spare.



**Day 7 - Panama Canal Transit** - For many people the word Panama is synonymous with the Panama Canal. Built in the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the Panama Canal is one of the largest and most difficult engineering projects ever undertaken and has an enormous impact on worldwide shipping. Today over 300 million tons of cargo transits the canal annually, moving through the three sets of locks which raise and lower the ships from sea level to lake level for the approximately 50 mile journey across the isthmus. Ever dreamed of transiting the canal and following the same route of those massive cargo carriers? Our Panama Canal Transit Tour aboard a ship designed precisely for this adventure is the way to go.



Your adventure through the canal will take you through the three lock steps required to raise or lower ships from sea level to the level of Gatun Lake (85 feet above sea level). Your transit also moves through the infamous Gaillard Cut (Culebra Cut), the only gap in the continental divide, and passes under the Bridge of Americas. For the Full Transit you will continue beyond Gamboa, entering Lake Gatun to make the entire distance of one ocean to the other. Accompanied by expert live narrative and full buffet lunch, this is an experience not to be missed.



**Day 8 - Departure** - Today we say “Hasta Luego” to Panama and your new Panamanian friends and return home to share your incredible Panama Adventure experience with family and friends. This morning, three hours before your international flight, you will be collected at your hotel and transported to Tocumen International Airport for you trip home.

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