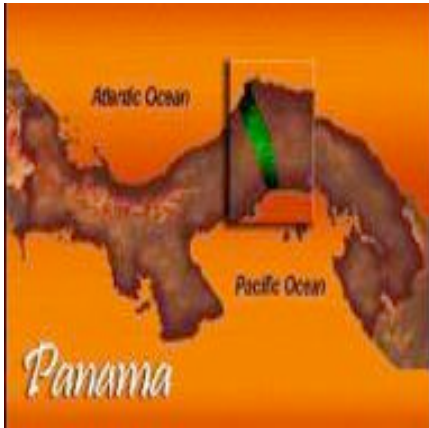




AltruVistas and Ethical Traveler Present:



## **World Heritage and Sustainable Development in Panama** *Celebrating the Centennial of the Panama Canal* **October 28 – November 5, 2014 | 9 Days**



Ethical Traveler and AltruVistas present *World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism in Panama: Celebrating the Centennial of the Panama Canal*, a journey to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the completion of the Panama Canal and to celebrate the country's Independence Day. Along the way, we meet and speak with locals, NGOs and government organizations to gain a broad understanding of contemporary Panama's economic and sustainable development policies that make this country one of Central America's most stable and prosperous nations.

Renowned as one of the most complex engineering feats in the world, the completion of the Panama Canal in 1904 served as a passage between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and greatly reduced passenger and cargo vessel sailing time while significantly increasing trade between the two hemispheres. A highlight of our journey is a full-day cruise on the Panama Canal, traveling from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean on the same day. Additionally, we meet with representatives of the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) to learn the complex political history of the Canal's construction and its current and future development plans.

Leading up to the country's Independence Day celebrations, we speak with local historians and groups to gain a first hand understanding of the city's Spanish colonial history, independence from Columbia, and its emergence as a financial hub for the region. Some of the groups we're scheduled to meet include, Arco Properties and San Felipe Inmobiliaria to learn about the master plan to restore and preserve Casco Viejo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site; Fundacion Calicanto's CAPTA (Capacitacion para el Trabajo) project, a vocational program training local women for the hotel and tourism industry; and Aprojusan (Asociacion Pro Juventud de San Felipe), an organization focused on social services for youth. Also on our agenda is a meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Tourism to discuss the impact of the tourism industry in Panama.

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Our tour completes with a guided hike through Soberania National Park, a tropical rainforest bordering the Panama Canal watershed and visiting Fundacion Avifauna Eugene Eisenman Panama, home to almost 1,000 species of birds.

Co-sponsored\* by Ethical Traveler and AltruVistas, *World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism in Panama, Celebrating the Centennial of the Panama Canal*, adheres to the highest responsible tourism practices and aims to support and economically benefit local communities we visit while concurrently promoting cross-cultural understanding between visitors and locals.

\**World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism in Panama, Celebrating the Centennial of the Panama Canal's* itinerary was developed in collaboration by Ethical Traveler and AltruVistas. Tour registration and all trip logistics and facilitation are handled by AltruVistas.

Note: This itinerary is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control such as weather; road conditions; and flight, train and boat schedules.

## ITINERARY DETAILS

### Day 1 | Tue, Oct 28

### Arrive in Panama City

Meals:

Overnight: 3 or 4 star hotel

On arrival at Tocumen International Airport in Panama City, transfer to the group hotel to rest before meeting your local guide and group for welcome cocktails at 5:00 pm. Welcome dinner follows at 7:00pm.

### Day 2 | Wed, Oct 29

### In Panama City

Meals: B, L

Overnight: 3 or 4 star hotel



After breakfast, a group orientation meeting led by your local guide to discuss program logistics and travel in Panama. Your Ethical Traveler representative provides an overview of the organization's mission and the 13 Tips for the Accidental Ambassador.

Following the orientation, we enjoy a walking tour to Independence Plaza and a short visit to the History Museum of Panama for an introduction to the pre-colonial and colonial history of Panama by a

Panamanian historian. Today we will understand why UNESCO declared both the Archaeological Site of Panamá Viejo and Historic District of Panamá World Heritage Sites.

After lunch, a guided walking tour of old Panama in the afternoon. Founded in 1519 by the conquistador Pedrarias Dávila, Panamá Viejo is the oldest European settlement on the Pacific coast of the Americas. It was laid out on a rectilinear grid and marks the transference from Europe of the idea of a planned town. It was the starting point of most of the conquest and discovery routes of the Spaniards to South America. It became Spain's most important gateway for all of the wealth, in silver and gold, coming from the southern continent. More than 60% of the wealth from South America going to Europe passed through Panama. In 1671 the city was attacked by Henry Morgan and

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destroyed by fire when the governor ordered the city burned: Most citizens had already left, and the military action was taken so that the pirates would not have a stronghold from which to send raids to South America.

We walk the colonial ruins, preserved and managed by the Panamanians and hark back to a time when the Spaniards shipped gold from South America via a Pacific route, transported it overland across Panama to the Caribbean and reloaded it on ships bound for Spain. Old Panama is found just to the east of the modern city center and consists of a large, wooded park with the stately, stone ruins of once-elegant buildings.

You're free to explore dinner options on your own tonight. Following dinner, we've invited a guest speaker to discuss the centennial celebration of Panama.

### **Day 3 | Thu, Oct 30**

Meals: B, D

### **In Panama City**

Overnight: 3 or 4 star hotel

This morning we meet with specialists or representatives of the Arco Properties and San Felipe Inmobiliaria to learn about the Master Plan for Restoration of the Casco Viejo through salvaging of neglected buildings, tourism for restoration investment, and the accompanying social plans. We will also learn about the history of Panama's UNESCO World Heritage Status.



In the afternoon, we enjoy an in-depth walking tour of Casco Viejo, a World Heritage Site defined by its massive historic sea wall built in the 1670s to defend the city from attack by the pirates. For hundreds of years Panamanians and visitors alike have enjoyed strolling atop this wall and gazing out into the Pacific Ocean. Today it is one of the most important historical monuments in the Americas and also one of the last places we have to enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of the ocean free from Panama City's sprawl and traffic. Here we will visit all the major plazas, the Santo Domingo Cathedral and French Park. Located at the tip of Casco Viejo, French Park was created as a monument to more than 200,000 French laborers who lost their lives during the construction of the Panama Canal. French Park reveals beautiful panoramic and picturesque views of the Amador Causeway and the Bridge of the Americas, in addition to Panama City's skyline.

Following our walking tour, we visit The Fundacion Calicanto ("Calicanto") to learn about its mission to preserve both the architectural and human heritage of Casco Antiguo ("Casco") and its principal role in obtaining UNESCO World Heritage Site status for Casco in 1998. While maintaining its focus on keeping Casco's historic heritage safe from over-ambitious and shortsighted developers, Calicanto has also worked to empower neighborhood residents so that they too can shape and share in the revitalization of Casco Antiguo. Through experimentation, thoughtfulness, and an understanding that problems are not solved overnight, Calicanto has developed a "Foundation Cycle" for personal development that prepares participants for vocational training programs.

After dinner, you're free to explore and enjoy the city's contemporary music scene on your own.

**Day 4 | Fri, Oct 31**

Meals: B, L

**In Panama City**

Overnight: 3 or 4 star hotel

In the morning, we visit Fundacion Calicanto's vocational training program: CAPTA (Capacitacion para el Trabajo), to learn about how local women enter the hotel and tourism industry with their support.



Afterwards, we visit the Panama Canal History Museum (<http://www.canalmuseum.com/>) to learn about the history of the Panama Canal. Here we discover that the Panama Canal officially opened by the passing of the SS Ancon on August 15, 1914. At the time, no single effort in American history had exacted such a price in dollars or in human life. The American expenditures from 1904 to 1914 totaled \$352,000,000; far more than the cost of anything built

by the United States government up to that time. Together the French and American expenditures totaled \$639,000,000. It took 34 years from the initial effort in 1880 to actually open the Canal in 1914. It's estimated that over 80,000 persons took part in the construction and that over 30,000 lives were lost in both French and American efforts.

After lunch, we have a briefing by the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) to learn about how the government of Panama runs and operates the Panama Canal today. The ACP is a "world leader in services to the maritime industry and in sustainable development for the conservation of the Panama Canal watershed; cornerstone of the global transportation system and driving force for the progress, development and growth of Panama; and a model of excellence, integrity and transparency in our conduct; and committed to the integral development of our human resource team" (<http://www.pancanal.com>). Here we will be briefed on the economic impact of the Canal historically and the ACP's social and environmental stewardship policies.

In the afternoon, we visit the Exchange with Aprojusan (Asociacion Pro Juventud de San Felipe), an organization built around helping the Casco's most vulnerable residents: it's youth. Aprojusan's mission is the social, cultural and educational development of children and adolescents, and the strengthening of a safe home-life where children's rights are respected and celebrated.

We end our daytime activities by exploring local artist studios before going to dinner. Following dinner, you're free to explore Casco Viejo on your own.

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**Day 5 | Sat, Nov 1**

Meals: B, L

**Panama Canal Tour**

Overnight: 3 or 4 star hotel



Today we enjoy an all day Canal Tour Excursion. Commencing in the early morning, we travel from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean on the same day. Once in the Pacific Ocean, you will be able to admire the Bay of Panama and Panama City's splendid skyline before passing under the Bridge of the Americas.

The vessel will then transit through the first set of locks, the Miraflores Locks, where it will ascend 18 meters in two distinct steps. Next, the cruise will enter Miraflores Lake, which is a small artificial body of fresh water that separates Pedro Miguel Locks from Miraflores Locks. The vessel will transit through Pedro Miguel Locks, which is one of the two sets of locks on the Pacific side, and here the vessel ascends 9 meters in one step. After exiting Pedro Miguel locks, the cruise will travel through the Gaillard Cut, where the Chagres River flows into the canal. The Gaillard Cut (also known as Culebra Cut because its curves resemble a snake) is one of the main points of interest for visitors because it was carved through the Continental Divide and this section of the Canal is full of history and geological value. As you transit the Cut you will be able to appreciate the continuous maintenance that this area requires, because it is very susceptible to landslides. In this area you will also be able to observe the work in process for the Panama Canal expansion project.

Next we enjoy a trip through Gatun Lake, which was formed by erecting the Gatun Dam across the Chagres River. During your transit through Gatun Lake you will pass the Smithsonian Research Station at Barro Colorado. You will also experience the Gatun Locks, which are the only set of locks in the Atlantic sector. In Gatun Locks, the vessel will be lowered a total of 26 meters in three distinct chambers. Upon arriving at Colon, you will disembark at Pier 6, where transportation back to Panama City will be provided.

**Day 6 | Sun, Nov 2**

Meals: B, D

**In Panama City**

Overnight: 3 or 4 star hotel

This morning we tour the City of Knowledge, an example of space transformation. What was once designed to lodge a military base is now a center of knowledge, entrepreneurship and innovation. Weapons were exchanged for technological development, battalion flags for banners of international organizations working for peace, and troop barracks for classrooms. This transformation took place as a result of Panama's recovery of its sovereignty over the Canal area. For 80 years before that, Clayton Fort housed American troops whose function was to protect the Canal.

Fort Clayton was established by an executive order signed by American President Woodrow Wilson on December 30, 1919, following recommendations by a team led by Major-General Adelbert Cronkhite. The facilities were named Fort Clayton as a tribute to the memory of

Colonel Bertram T. Clayton, who led the troops in the Canal Area between 1914 and 1917 and died in French territory during World War II, on May 30, 1918.

Panama became fully sovereign thanks to the Torrijos-Carter Treaties (1977), which gave sovereignty back to Panama over the interoceanic canal and the adjacent areas that were under US control, i.e. a total of 1,432 square kilometers (552.9 square miles). This historic moment was also a time of dreams and innovating projects for the country, in search of the final way for development.

After lunch, we learn about the expansion of the Panama Canal Locks. The expansion of the Panama Canal (Third Set of Locks Project) is a project to double the capacity of the Panama Canal by 2015 by allowing more and larger ships to transit. Then Panamanian President Martin Torrijos presented the plan on April 24, 2006, and the citizens approved it in a national referendum by 76.8% of the vote on October 22, 2006. We visit this new area and receive a briefing on when this new area will be inaugurated.

Following dinner, we have an invited speaker to join us to discuss “Labor and Panama Canal”.

### **Day 7 | Mon, Nov 3**

Meals: B, D

### **Independence Day Celebrations**

Overnight: 3 or 4 star hotel



Today is Panama’s Independence Day, celebrating the country’s independence from Colombia on November 3, 1902. In the afternoon, you’re free to enjoy the Independence Day parade and celebrations. You’ll be able to see traditional folklore dancing in the streets, where both children and adults dress in traditional costumes, wearing a pollera and montuno, and dance El Tamborito or El Atravesao, traditional dances. Optional evening festivities are to be arranged.

In the morning, we meet with a representative of the Superintendency of Banks of Panama to learn about how this country is well on its way to becoming the region’s chief financial

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hub. In 2010, the country was chosen as the permanent headquarters for the Central American Council of Superintendents of Banks. The agency's objectives are to maintain and promote close cooperation between the banking superintendents of its member countries. The country's financial hub grew an estimated 11.4% percent in 2010, with consolidated assets totaling \$71.3 billion. Net revenue for the year totaled \$1.67 billion, 16.1% or \$148 million more than in 2009. Revenue came from dividends, foreign exchange transactions and commissions.

Before lunch, we will meet a representative of Panama's Ministry of Tourism to discuss the impact of the tourism industry in Panama. Afterwards, we enjoy Independence Day festivities.

**Day 8 | Tue, Nov 4**

Meals: B, L

**In Panama City**

Overnight: 3 or 4 star hotel



In the morning, we visit the Tupper Center, the main building of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI). Morning lecture on sustainability and conservation follows after our short morning tour of the Institute.

Following lunch, we enjoy a guided hike through the tropical rainforest of Soberania National Park, bordering the Panama Canal watershed. The park includes some 19,500 hectares of protected lowland tropical forest with a superb diversity of plants, birds and mammals. Our instructor will lead the group on trails explaining the ecology of Panama's rainforest. We will learn about how the Canal fostered the conservation of these biodiverse green corridors and how the park has become a basis of local ecotourism.

In the afternoon, we complete our excursion out of the city by visiting the Fundacion Avifauna Eugene Eisenman Panama, home to almost 1,000 species of birds. This incredible abundance in bird diversity for such a small country (smaller than South Carolina), together with a rather small population (around 3 million people), a variety of natural habitats, and a good national park system, make Panama a land bridge for the bird migration that ravel annually from North America to South America <http://www.avifauna.org.pa/>

We celebrate the last evening of our tour at Las Tinajas Restaurant. Located in the city center, it offers a wide range of delicious Panamanian style dishes with an oasis of flavor and folklore that's typical of the countryside. Following our feast, we enjoy a folkloric show of diverse national dancers in elegant costumes.

**Day 9 | Wed, Nov 5**

**Transfer to airport for flight home**

Meals: B

Wrap up meeting after breakfast, followed by room checkout then transfer to the airport for your return flight home.

## PRICE & INCLUSIONS

**Tour Prices:**

10-12 participants | \$2810 per person

13-16 participants | \$2700 per person

\*Single rooms are available for an additional \$500. If you are a single traveler, we will try to match you with another solo traveler of the same sex for twin share accommodations.

**Tour price is inclusive of the following:**

- Accommodations at 4-star hotels
- Accommodations on a double occupancy basis
- Meals as indicated in itinerary
- Local English speaking guide accompanying the group throughout the tour
- Program activities as specified in itinerary
- All entrance fees to sites as specified in itinerary
- Honoraria for guest speakers and donations to community groups and organizations in itinerary
- Vehicle transport as specified in itinerary
- Donations to organizations visited in itinerary
- Bottled water
- A year subscription to the Earth Island Journal, published by the Earth Island Institute (EII). Ethical Traveler is a project of the EII.

**Tour price does NOT include of the following:**

- Alcoholic, soft drinks and imported mineral water
- Domestic nor international flights to Panama and airport taxes
- Services not mentioned in the program.
- Meals not mentioned in the program
- Expenses of a purely personal nature.
- Room service charges.
- Transportation of luggage in excess of weight allowance.
- Conveyance fees used for private purposes.
- Travel Insurance (We strongly advise that each participant arrange for their own travel insurance).
- Optional activities specified in the itinerary

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## REGISTER FOR TOUR OR FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## ABOUT

### **About Ethical Traveler**

Ethical Traveler (ET), a project of the Earth Island Institute, is the first grass-roots alliance uniting adventurers, tourists, travel agencies, and outfitters — everyone who loves to travel, and sees travel as a positive force in the world. ET feels that all travelers are, in effect, freelance ambassadors. Ethical Traveler also believes that we have the ability to join our voices, and to use our economic power to strengthen human rights and protect the environment. For more information on Ethical Traveler, please visit [www.ethicaltraveler.org](http://www.ethicaltraveler.org).

### **About AltruVistas**

Altruvistas builds dynamic philanthropic relationships through socially responsible customized journeys, intentional meso-financing programs & professional fellowships. Our mission is to provide you with ethical, comprehensive, educational and philanthropic travel planning services so that you can have the adventure of a lifetime that is culturally insightful, engaging, comfortable, and worry-free while also synergistically benefiting the local economy, our hosts, important causes and even highlights the good work you are doing in the world! For more information on AltruVistas, please visit [www.altruvistas.com](http://www.altruvistas.com).