

CAMINO DE CRUCES



This road was used during the Colonial period of Panama to transport gold and other treasures, therefore it became the favorite target of pirates. It is located on the Chagres River in the Atlantic Ocean. The ships docked in Chagres Port, then they continued their trip by canoe along the river. Once getting this road, the journey went through on horses and mules, during six days, until arriving at Panama City.

INTEROCEANIC RAILWAY

Railway construction began in 1850 after the sign of the **Stephens-Paredes Treaty**. In 1855, the first train crossed the 75 Km.-rails along the Isthmus and became the seventh railroad in the world. The main users were the gold hunters from California. This historic railroad has been reconstructed by Canal Railway Company. The railway flanks the Panama Canal route, crossing the locks through Gaillard Cut, between rainforests and the path that crosses the beautiful Gatun Lake. The passengers' freight cars are original and now elegantly restored, they recall the golden years of the railway transportation.



PANAMA CANAL



After the French failure to built the Panama Canal, USA continued with the construction project in 1903, inaugurated it finally in August 15, 1914. It is important to mention that **Akira Aoyama**, a Japanese Engineer, participated during Panama Canal construction (1904-1911). Later on, due to the enlargement of the Gaillard Cut, 33-meter-beam ships called **Panamax** became able to navigate in two ways simultaneously. Currently, another enlargement project is being examined, and it includes a new design of locks **Post Panamax**, so 55-meter-beam ships can transit through Panama Canal. Japan is the third more important user of the Panama Canal.

At Miraflores locks, there is a Visitors Center that exhibits a topographical model of the Panama Canal, and has an observatory, so you can appreciate ships transits. Also, an international kitchen gourmet restaurant is available. Moreover, visitors can make a total or partial transit through the Panama Canal.



LITTLE VILLAGES

In the center of the capital, at the foot of Ancon Hill, tourists can appreciate replicas of a Colonial, Afro-Antillean and Indigenous Villages.

Colonial Village. It is the replica of a countryside town that reflects our cultural inheritance through colonial designs as shown at edifications such as a church, post office, plaza, stores, a house with its living-room, studio, and kitchen. Also, traditional costume and folk objects are exhibited, while music and dances are performed, so foreigners become familiar to Panamanian traditions and customs.



Indigenous Village: It was built in honor of the contribution made by the first settlers of Panama. Here you can find replicas of indigenous housing as well as samples of Ngobe Bugle, Emberá, Wounan and Kuna' customs. In order to keep its authenticity, natural material was used to build this village.

Afro-Antillean Village: It shows the most outstanding aspects of the Afro-Antillean culture. Here you can appreciate the rich culture of this ethnic group that joined other groups such as Panamanians, Chinese, Europeans and Americans in the construction of the Panama Canal. Afro-Antilleans are native of Barbados, Antigua, Trinidad and Tobago, Dominican Republic, so forth. It was built according to typical Afro-Antillean building structures during the Panama Canal construction period.



PANAMA

HISTORICAL SITES AND WORLD HERITAGE



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Come and see around the historic witnesses that formed our identity of sovereign and free nation. Enjoy the present of warm people that builds its future on the foundations of the past.

Dr. Alfredo Martiz
 Ambassador of Panama to Japan



PANAMA LA VIEJA



Panama La Vieja is the architectural ruins that form the Historic Monumental Complex of the Spanish city founded by the Governor Pedro Arias Davila in 1519. In 1671, the English corsair Sir Henry Morgan plundered and set on fire the city, leaving the city in ruins that today are Historic World Heritage. (UNESCO 1997 and extended in 2003).

It has extraordinary meaning, not only for Panamanians, but for all Central and South America and Caribbean region.



It has 28-Ha-area that includes the following structures: King Bridge, Matadero Bridge, Royal Houses, Convents such as San Francisco, San José, Santo Domingo, Conception Nuns, and colonial-house structures as well as stone-made-streets. There is a Visitors Center with a museum, where a model of the city in the 17th century, as well as colonial and pre-Hispanic objects are exhibited.



Why this Monumental Complex is so important?

- It was the first city founded by Spaniards on the Pacific side.
- During the conquest of American continent, it was the Spaniards expeditions crossroad to transport a lot of gold and silver to Spain. From this place, Spaniards organized the conquest of Inca Empire in Peru.
- It was one of the most important commercial routes of American continent history with its famous Portobelo Fairs. Also, it was an early example of the Latin-American Urban planning.



Del Carmen Church



National Theatre



Casco Antiguo



Ruins of Compañía de Jesús



Restored Houses



Las Americas Bridge



Vasco Nuñez de Balboa Statue



National Institute of Culture

CASCO ANTIGUO

Here, the new Panama City was established, after a fire of the first city Panama La Vieja. The Monumental Complex of Casco Antiguo was recognized as Historic World Heritage (UNESCO 1997 and extended in 2003).



In 1846 gold was discovered in California and the city reemerged with the Interoceanic Railroad construction and the start of the French attempt to build the Panama Canal. This complex is located in San Felipe Neighborhood in the center of the city, and includes civil, military, and religious buildings. Its streets are narrow and brick-made. The landscape shows the influence of neoclassical, European, and colonial art.



Antonio Fernández de Cordoba, President of the Real Audience, founded it in 1673. This city suffered three devastating fires, and in 1675, it was fortified with a thick stone wall and seven bulwarks to protect it.



It is a charming spot to visit, where you can appreciate the following monuments: The Metropolitan Cathedral, San Francisco de Asis Church, Presidential Palace, City Hall, The Wall, National Theater, Interoceanic Panama Canal Museum, Plaza of France, Gongora House, and others.

PANAMA LANDSCAPES

PORTOBELLO & SAN LORENZO

Portobelo Monumental Complex was declared World Heritage-UNESCO-1980. The city of Portobelo was very important for the transportation of gold and silver to Spain through the system of fairs and galleons established by the Spanish Crown.



It was the crossroad of two trading points: Peru, where gold and silver were taken to Spain; and Seville, trading capital of Spanish Crown Empire, toward Latin-American colonies.



It is located in Colon Province at the Caribbean side, in an intermediate point between Panama Canal Atlantic entrance and Archipelago San Blas. It takes 90 minutes to get there from Panama City, but you can also go by airplane.



In 1575, King Felipe II ordered the construction of a fortress to protect trading operations done at the entrance of Chagres River. Layouts were done by the architect Juan Bautista Antonelli and, in 1597, Francisco Valverde y Mercado founded San Lorenzo Fortress.

