



EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATIONAL JOURNEYS

Panama

destination FACTSHEET

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TOP 5 THINGS TO KNOW

1

All airlines now charge passengers a fee for their first checked bag. Please check with your confirmed airline prior to departure for the most up to date baggage policy so you are prepared. As an alternative you may want to consider packing lightly with a carry-on bag.

2

Visit a local travel doctor or your primary care physician with your itinerary to get the best personalized medical advice on any vaccinations or special medication needed for the program.

3

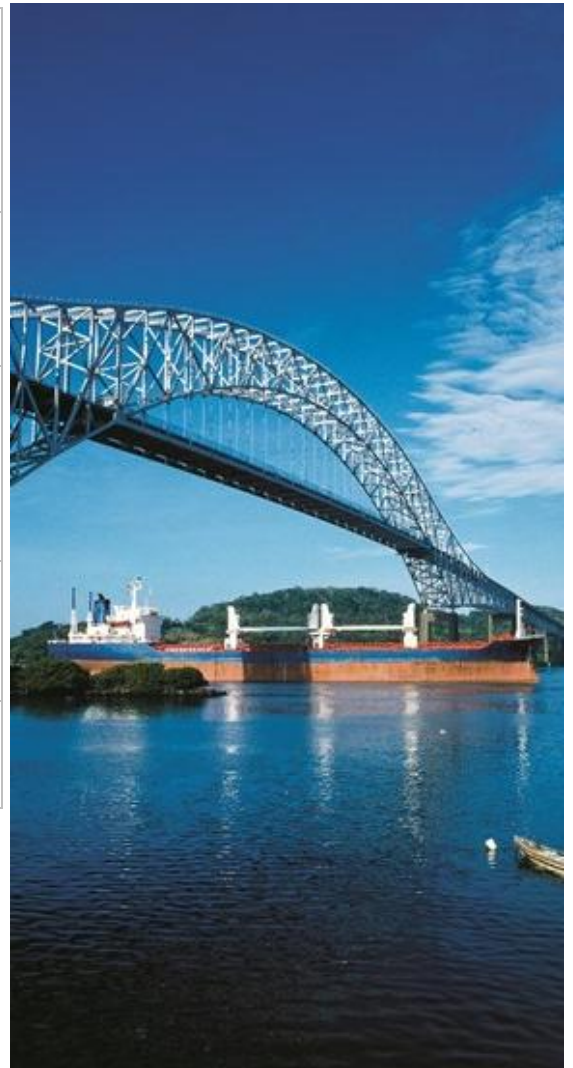
Buses in Panama are smaller than in Europe. Luggage may be transported on top of the bus rather than in compartments underneath. Bags will be covered when needed.

4

Although the day is full of activities the evenings in Panama are more low key. Remember to bring cards, games or other materials to keep you busy at night.

5

Filtered water is included in the program but you will be asked to use a refillable water bottle.





ACIS TRIP SERVICES

Hotel

We take pride in the type of accommodations we use to ensure the best experience while on the program. Hotels are likely to be more rustic and secluded than what you are used to in the United States. As you will be staying in areas of incredible bio-diversity it is possible or even likely to see insects, small animals and even monkeys around your accommodation.

Rooming

Students are assigned to triple rooms, which may include three single beds or one shared bed and one single bed, depending on hotel availability.

Meals

Continental or buffet breakfasts and dinners are included daily. Due to flight schedules groups often arrive in Panama City after the dinner hour. It may be wise to bring a packed lunch with you to the airport as food may not be provided by the airlines during your flight(s). You'll enjoy traditional Panamanian food throughout the trip. Panamanian food primarily consists of black beans and rice as staples, alongside plantains, yuca (cassava) and various meats like chicken, beef, pork and seafood (found more abundantly in coastal towns) and a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Be careful of food from street-side vendors and open markets.

Cultural Immersion

Students will have the opportunity to engage with Panama's rich and diverse culture throughout the program. Experiences may include interacting with local communities, learning about traditional customs, and gaining insight into daily life in both urban and rural settings. Participants will be exposed to Panama's unique blend of Indigenous, Afro-Caribbean, and Spanish influences through food, music, language, and guided activities. These experiences are designed to foster cultural awareness, global perspective, and meaningful connections with the places and people visited.

Tour Manager

A local guide and bus will accompany the group throughout the trip.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND TRAVEL TIPS

Flights



Most flights to Panama are day flights. You may arrive in the evening.

Passport Requirements 	Passports ARE required for all passengers traveling to Panama and must be valid for at least 90 days after returning to the USA. Visas are not required for US citizens traveling to Panama. Non-US citizens should check with the Panamanian Embassy for any specific Visa requirements. In such cases, the passenger will be responsible for obtaining their own Visa. Please make 2 colored copies of your passport. One for the group leader and one to keep in a location separate from your passport.
Time Difference 	Panama is one hour behind or same as Eastern Standard Time dependent upon the time of year. They do not change their clocks for Daylight Savings Time.
Luggage Restrictions 	All airlines now charge passengers a fee for their first checked bag. Please check with your confirmed airline prior to departure for the most up to date baggage policy so you are prepared. As an alternative you may want to consider packing lightly with a carry-on bag.
Tipping 	Pre-paid tips will be listed on your account to cover tour manager, local bus and guide. All meals included in the itinerary also include gratuity, so it is NOT necessary to leave an additional tip at meals.



WHAT TO PACK

What to Wear

We advise you to bring comfortable, casual, breathable clothes to Panama.

- ✓ Basic Medical Supplies such as anti-diarrhea medicine, aspirin, Band-Aids.
- ✓ Beach Towel and Bathing Suit. For beach and pool time
- ✓ Binoculars for viewing the wildlife. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish the monkeys and birds in the trees.
- ✓ Games. It's a good idea to have games or cards for relaxing evenings.
- ✓ Refillable Water Bottle to be eco-friendly.
- ✓ Hat to block the sun during long days of hiking.



- ✓ Insect Repellent with DEET
- ✓ Jacket/Lightweight Raincoat.
- ✓ Long Pants for walks through National Parks and Forests or for horseback riding.
- ✓ Plastic Bags for wet bathing suits/clothes
- ✓ Small Flashlight for viewing wildlife
- ✓ Small Suitcase and Carry on (pack as lightly as possible!)
- ✓ Shorts/T-Shirts
- ✓ Sunscreen. The sun is very strong.
- ✓ Two pairs of walking shoes/sneakers for hiking in case one pair is wet. Never bring new shoes!
- ✓ If surfing is on the program it's suggested to bring a long sleeve rash guard



HEALTHCARE

We recommend you visit a local travel doctor or your primary care physician with your itinerary to get the best personalized medical advice on any vaccinations or special medication needed for the program. You can also check with the Department of Health and Human Services for specific health concerns when traveling: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>

Most Panamanian food and water are sanitary, but in rural areas, you run a mild risk of intestinal ailments. Use common sense and watch what you eat -- avoid ice, uncooked food, and unpasteurized milk (including milk products), and drink bottled water. Mild cases of traveler's diarrhea may respond to Imodium (known generically as loperamide) or Pepto-Bismol (not as strong), both of which can be purchased over the counter. Perfume, aftershave, and other lotions may attract mosquitoes. Poisonous snakes, scorpions, and other pests pose a small (overrated) threat.

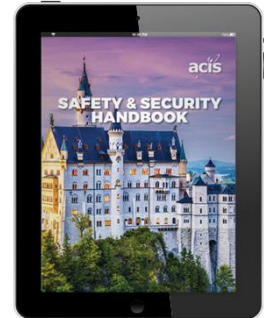
Watch out for riptides. Wherever there are waves, ask the locals if it's safe to swim; if you're uncertain, don't go in deeper than your waist. Follow the instructions of your local guide and group leader. If caught in a rip current, swim parallel to the beach until you're well out of it, then swim back to shore. In the event of a medical emergency where medical expenses and/or insurance is involved in Panama, the passenger must pay the expenses directly and mail receipts to our Boston office for reimbursement. Deductible amounts according to the type of insurance purchased will apply.



SAFETY AND SECURITY

Should you have any issues at all during your trip, please call ACIS and we will rectify the problem immediately. It is vital that you notify us as soon as you experience a problem as we can resolve issues very quickly on the spot before it adversely affects your trip.

ACIS Emergency number 617-450-5678



OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

School Visits

If you have a school visit during your program, it is customary to bring some sort of donation. We recommend school materials such as pencils, pens or notepads. If you prefer not to carry anything in your luggage you can put aside a few dollars each and stop at a local store to buy supplies before your visit. Any donations must be given to the school principal or teacher as it is important that it is fairly distributed.

Buses

Transportation will be arranged according to group size: groups of up to 8 passengers will travel in 12-seater buses; groups of 9–18 passengers will use 20-seater buses. For city visits, 20-seater buses may also be used to allow for easier and more flexible transportation. Groups of 19 or more passengers will be accommodated in 30- or 40-seater buses. While 53-seater buses may be available depending on the itinerary, we do not recommend them as their size makes it difficult to navigate certain roads.

Driving Times

Driving Times: Panama is a beautiful and diverse country with many different climates and terrains. Driving times can be longer than expected when looking at a map. Your tour manager will make stops along the way and point out the local flora and fauna to ensure a more pleasant journey.