

MULTISPORT

PANAMA

Canal, Rainforest & Highlands



Classic
JOURNEYS



“Classic Journeys provides unbeatable access to experiences around the globe.”

— *Travel + Leisure*

Canal, Coffee & Quetzals

As you may have heard, there is a canal in Panama. Watching a football field's worth of ship rise in a lock on a pillow of water is one of the world's great manmade miracles. But what about the much tinier spectacle of a hummingbird barely larger than your thumbnail? Or the quiet whiiiiish as your native dugout canoe slices through a rainforest river? Panama is one of the finest ecotourism destinations—easy to reach, friendly in the extreme, and not yet on everybody's radar screen. From anteaters to mantled howler monkeys, the wildlife is extraordinary. The Audubon Society conducts its Christmas bird count here so you can just imagine the abundance. To explore the culture of this bridge between continents, we'll take you to a native village and introduce you to our friends along the way. You'll see things you've never seen, in a place you never thought to visit—which makes Panama our favorite new example of a travel adventure.

DAY 1

PANAMA CANAL

- Sail across Gatun Lake to see gigantic cargo and passenger ships pass through the Panama Canal
- Spot myriad bird species on an afternoon jungle walk in Soberania National Park

Mid-morning, we'll meet at our luxury hotel right in the heart of Panama City. We'll make our way out of vibrant metropolis and sail across Gatun Lake, weaving among gigantic cargo and passenger ships. This artificial lake is the part of the passage that crosses the Continental Divide from Gatun on the Atlantic to the Miraflores Locks on the Pacific side. We'll also catch a first glimpse of Panama's wildlife such as green iguanas, crocodiles, white-faced capuchin monkeys and osprey on the hunt for peacock bass.

Every schoolchild learns about birds migrating south for the winter. What you probably never knew is that portions of four major North American flyways all converge in Panama. The predictable result is one of the great bird watching opportunities you'll find anywhere. Sobernia National Park (where our hotel is located) is the site of the Audubon Society's annual Christmas count because so many species fly through. On our afternoon jungle walk, you're likely to see species you've never imagined!

OVERNIGHT: PANAMA CITY
MEALS: L, D

DAY 2

EMBERA VILLAGE

- Dugout canoe ride up a rainforest river
- Visit to a native tribal village to meet local families
- Explore a rich habitat for jaguars, harpy eagles and blue-fronted parrots

After breakfast, we board traditional piraguas (dugout canoes) for a journey up the Chagres River. It's a sensational perspective on the rainforest that crowds the river like a tall wall of green on each bank. We're privileged today to meet members of the Embera tribe, one of country's seven remaining indigenous tribes. Their village sits right on the river where they'll greet us and welcome us into thatched huts that stand on stilts (equally important protection from rainy season floods and jaguars). Lunch is likely to be the typical fare of tilapia and fried plantains on banana leaves, and we'll have a chance to interact with the villagers and learn about their folkways.

This whole day is a firsthand look at the cultural and environmental challenges that face Panama and so many other countries. The Embera and the wildlife with which they share their land are all threatened by deforestation and development. As you'll see, Chagres National Park remains a rich habitat that contains jaguars, anteaters and mantled howler monkeys as well as bird sanctuary with more than 560 species. Conservation groups are fighting to protect the park and to extend it as well to preserve the biodiversity.

We leave the rainforest as we arrived—in piraguas—and return to our hotel to relax before dinner.

OVERNIGHT: PANAMA CITY
MEALS: B, L, D

DAY 3

PANAMA CITY

- Stroll the historic streets of the French Colonial Panama
- Marvel at the Miraflores Locks on a guided visit

This morning, join our guide for a visit to Panama City. The nation's capital, it's a lively mix of historic and modern. We'll take a walk in the oldest districts to the 16th century ruins of Panama Viejo as well as 17th century Casco Viejo, where we see the rich architectural influence of Colonial Spain.

We've reserved the afternoon to visit the Panama Canal. You've known since grade school that is one of man's greatest engineering feats. The real revelation, though, is that it is much more than a channel full of water. The canal is actually a series of lakes, locks and channels – and you may be surprised to learn that it actually runs north and south! Here our guide leads us on a visit to the canal museum where we can also see ships being raised or lowered in the locks. The day ends with a short flight to David City.

OVERNIGHT: CHIRIQUI WESTERN HIGHLANDS
MEALS: B, L, D

DAY 4

CHIRIQUI WESTERN HIGHLANDS

- Enjoy a morning walk to meet local farmers
- Explore a UNESCO World Heritage site in search of the famed quetzal bird

Most of the produce and dairy that you eat in Panama comes from the Chiriqui province and the rolling foothills of the mountain range known as the Cordillera Central. We go wandering here on trails that local farmers use for access to the patchwork of fields. It is a beautiful walk with Volcan Baru and the mountains in the distance. Strawberries, tomatoes and carrots are among the crops grown here. Along the way, we'll meet the farmers and talk with them about their life on the land and what it's like to work in this lush terrain.

Sharing its boundaries with neighboring Costa Rica, La Amistad International Park is a World Biosphere Reserve and UNESCO World Heritage Site. We spend this afternoon walking El Retoño trail and learning about the dynamics of a tropical cloud forest. As we explore the trails of La Amistad we will be on search for the resplendent quetzal, the silvery-fronted tapaculo, the black and yellow silky flycatcher and many other western highland birds.

OVERNIGHT: CHIRIQUI WESTERN HIGHLANDS
MEALS: B, L

DAY 5

CHIRIQUI WESTERN HIGHLANDS

- Kayak on Las Lagunas
- Visit a working coffee plantation for a tasting
- Celebrate your Panamanian vacation over a festive farewell dinner

Las Lagunas are the highest natural lakes and wetlands in Panama and the fifth highest ecosystem in Central America. The calm, reflective waters are absolutely perfect for kayaking. This morning, we board sit-on-top kayaks for a paddle. This style of kayak is great because they are more comfortable and easier to maneuver than the traditional

DAILY ITINERARY

PANAMA | CANAL, RAINFOREST & HIGHLANDS | MULTISPORT

style. So as you glide over the water, you can really focus on breathtaking vistas, the tropical forest at the lakes' edge, and keeping your eyes open for the birds and wildlife that are plentiful in this ideal habitat.

The volcanic slopes of Baru offer ideal soil and climate for shade-grown coffee. This afternoon, we visit a working plantation (finca), known for its sustainable farming practices. On our walk, you'll get an up-close look at how cultivation and harvest work. (The beans are harvested by Guaymi Indians in the months of October and February.) You'll also learn firsthand how the crop is transformed from bright red "cherries" to the rich coffee beans that are highly sought after. Of course, the visit isn't complete until our finca hosts treat us to a coffee-tasting.

Later in the afternoon, we'll also visit with a local family that still uses a horse- or ox-powered trapiche mill to press sugar cane. The juice is transformed by long exposure to heat into small bricks of brown, molasses-rich raspadura,

Panama's classic sweetener that's used in beverages and cooking. It's a fascinating look at a centuries-old process that is rapidly disappearing.

OVERNIGHT: CHIRIQUI WESTERN HIGHLANDS

MEALS: B, L, D

DAY 6

DEPARTURE

After an early breakfast we take a short flight back to Panama City. We will part company at the domestic airport in time for most flights back to the US.

MEALS: B



Tour Hotels



Bristol Panama

Named one of the 'Top 10 Hotels in Latin America' by Condé Nast Traveler, this 5-star luxury hotel in Panama City's Financial District. The rooms are sophisticated and elegant, and the property also offers a spa and outdoor pool.

OVERNIGHT: PANAMÁ CITY | NIGHTS: 2



Casa Grande Bambito

This luxurious boutique hotel is located in a rainforest surrounded by mountains, volcanic rocks and springs in the highlands of Panama. All accommodations are in suits, and the property offers hot springs, sauna and spa treatments.

OVERNIGHT: BAMBITO | NIGHTS: 3

Tour Dates & Prices

Tour Dates	Price per Person	Price per Person
	Double Occupancy	Single Occupancy
Jun 28-Jul 3, 2020	\$3,695	\$4,290
November 1-6, 2020	\$3,695	\$4,290
Dec 27, 2020-Jan 1, 2021	\$3,895	\$4,490
February 14-19, 2021	\$3,695	\$4,290
March 7-12, 2021	\$3,695	\$4,290
Jun 27-Jul 2, 2021	\$3,795	\$4,390
November 7-12, 2021	\$3,795	\$4,390
Dec 27, 2021-Jan 1, 2022	\$3,995	\$4,590

Want a different date? Or your own date? Visit CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE to learn more about private journeys.

INTERNAL AIRFARE

This trip includes an internal flight which is priced separately from the land tour at an approximate cost of \$285 per person.

Trip Essentials

TRIP LENGTH: 6 Days, 5 Nights

START: 9:00 AM Lobby of Hotel Bristol, Panama City, Panama

END: 9:00 AM Panama City Airport, Panama City, Panama Guests will depart at their leisure upon arrival to the Panama City Airport

TERRAIN: Easy to moderate forest and jungle trails.

2 to 3 hours of walking per day.

What's Included

- Memorable accommodations for 5 nights
- All breakfasts and lunches, and 4 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to tastings, historic sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

- **Invisible Check-In**
- **Privileged Access Events**

READY TO BOOK?
CLICK TO MAKE A RESERVATION

Or give us a call

1-833-387-1210

Mon-Fri 8:00AM – 5:00PM PST

moreinfo@classicjourneys.com



TRAVEL WORRY-FREE!

It's easy with insurance from Travel Guard. Your policy can cover trip cancellation, travel delays, lost luggage, medical emergencies, and more. If you are traveling with kids, add them to your policy at no extra cost. [Click here](#) or call 800-826-4919 for details.

AMBASSADOR CLUB

As a Classic Journeys guest, you are invited to join the Ambassador Club after your first Classic Journeys tour. As a member, you'll have access to a [whole suite of Ambassador benefits](#) you can use immediately and as often as you like.

ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

When you travel with Classic Journeys, you can expect handcrafted surprises built into every trip, but some things just can't be anticipated. Unusual weather, a once-a-year festival or an unscheduled site closing will inspire us and your local guide to improvise and modify this itinerary. Likewise, the hotels named here are used on the majority of our trips, but occasionally one of them can't accommodate us. If that happens, you can count on us to let you know before departure and make sure you're in a hotel of equal or better quality. It's our goal to make your trip exceptional!

**Any discount offered cannot be combined with other offers, and only applies to published (regularly scheduled public) departure dates in our catalogs or on our website.

THE Classic Journeys Difference

HANDCRAFTING TRIPS OF A LIFETIME.



At the end of the day, we fundamentally believe that every guest on every departure of every trip should have a trip of a lifetime. We're fortunate to play the role of well-connected friend, linking our guests with amazing guides, artisans, winemakers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, naturalists, and too many others to list here.

That's what motivates me and our team — in our La Jolla HQ and around the world — every day. Join Us!

President & Founder



You can expect the highest standards:



Luxurious Lodgings:

Ours include coveted properties that appear in "World's Best" and "Gold List" rankings.



Included Activities:

You'll never be surprised with add-on fees on your activities that include snorkeling to cooking lessons.



Local Guides:

Your guides are locals who are always at your side like well-connected friends.



Small Group Travel:

With an average of just 10-12 guests, it's a small footprint that guarantees you access that's off-limits to larger groups.



Amazing Cuisine:

From Michelin-starred restaurants to lunch in a farmhouse kitchen, you'll have a seat for the region's signature dishes.



Unmatched Value:

"Excellent value" and "unbeatable access" are two of the reasons that Travel + Leisure has consistently voted us a World's Best Tour Operator.

You'll enjoy these handcrafted travel experiences in Panama...

- Seeing the ships up-close at the Miraflores Locks
- Canoeing to the rain forest village of the Embera Tribe
- Walking past waterfalls in a bamboo forest
- Kayaking on the calm waters among uninhabited islands
- Exploring with local guides who help you spot anteaters and monkeys in the rainforest

"We loved the well-organized days, the wonderful hotels, and having a guide that cared about each one of us. On each Classic Journeys trip we have taken, we experienced what it is like to live in that country."

—Paul and Barbara S., Stone Mountain, GA

Let's Go!

TO RESERVE: 833.493.5038 | CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/RESERVATIONS

You might also enjoy...



Argentina

Patagonia & Mendoza Wine Region

Culture + Walking

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Discovering glacial caves and ice towers
- Tasting wine in the shadow of the Andes
- Savoring lamb barbecue, an Argentinean specialty

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/argentina/>.



Belize & Guatemala

Coral Reefs & Mayan Pyramids

Multisport

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Snorkeling with sea turtles and schools of angel fish
- Exploring the awesome Mayan ruins at Tikal
- Spotting emerald toucans, nurse sharks and spider monkeys in the company of expert naturalists

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/belize/>.



Colombia

Cartagena, Coffee & the Coast

Culture + Walking

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Exploring Guatapé, the world's most colorful town
- Tasting coffee on a mountainous family plantation
- Cooking Colombian specialties in a chef's own kitchen

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/colombia-cultural-walking-tour/>.

You might also enjoy...



Costa Rica

Arenal & Manuel Antonio Park

Multisport

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Standing in a cloud of butterflies or hummingbirds
- Exploring the forest canopy on hanging bridges or by zipline
- Seeing scarlet macaws, crocodiles and howler monkeys

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/costarica/>.



Galápagos

Island-Based Wildlife Adventure

Multisport

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Coming face to face with giant tortoises and Galápagos penguins
- Checking off your bucket list as you spot each of the Galapagos Big Five
- Meeting the locals on a sustainable coffee plantation

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/galapagos/>.



Peru

Machu Picchu, Sacred Valley & Cusco

Culture + Walking

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Witnessing ancient examples of architectural genius
- Sampling native delicacies at a mountain hacienda
- Mingling with craftsmen, shopkeepers and shepherds

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/peru/>.

“Enthusiasm is Contagious”

AS TRAVEL + LEISURE NAMES CLASSIC JOURNEYS THE WORLD'S BEST TOUR OPERATOR FOR 2019, FOUNDER EDWARD PIEGZA REVEALS HOW IT FEELS. ENTHUSIASTICALLY.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Just before publication of this issue, Travel + Leisure magazine announced that its readers have voted Classic Journeys the World's Best Tour Operator for 2019. It's the second time Classic Journeys has won that recognition and the 14th consecutive year the company has been in the Top 10.

Congratulations! How did you get the news?

I received a top-secret email and phone call from the editor of *Travel + Leisure* a few weeks ago with orders not to tell ANYONE. Friends and neighbors must have wondered why my smile has been so extra big lately. Now they know.

And how does it feel to be the World's Best Tour Operator again?

Awesome. Humbling. So, so satisfying. Deeply gratifying to learn that we have achieved what we set out to do which is to handcraft trips of a lifetime for every guest who travels with us. I'm known as long-winded, so I could probably come up with 10 or 15 more ways to describe it if you want me to keep going.

Why do you think *Travel + Leisure* gave you this recognition?

Actually, it isn't the *T+L* editors who make the decision. That's the best part. Their readers cast the votes. So the people who do the traveling, the guests who explore the world with us and our competitors — they are the ones who raised their hands to tell *T+L* that Classic Journeys is the World's Best Tour Operator based on their own experiences. Let me say it right here: "To all of you who voted for us, you are the World's Best Guests!"

What do you think makes your guests the World's Best Guests?

That's easy. They are curious. They care about connecting with people of different cultures and immersing themselves in the world. They treasure experiences more than things. Like the old ad slogan went, they go for the gusto and crave the chance to have one-of-a-kind moments. They are incredibly interesting and interested people, and all of us at Classic Journeys count it as a real privilege to share in their passion for travel. And we feel that way on the

other 364 days of the year when we're not celebrating recognition like this.

I guess this is what you meant when you told me that "Enthusiasm is contagious."

Absolutely. That's not our official motto, but it could be. We love what we do. We enjoy helping guests figure out how to invest their precious time and budget. I can honestly say that all of us feel that way — the Guest Services folks who interact with you while you're planning your trip, the Tour Operations team members who plan all of the logistics, the local guides who lead each one of our trips full time. There's just a huge amount of positive energy in what we do, and I think it truly is hard to resist. We'd climb into every one of our guest's suitcases and go along with them if we could. Because we can't, we call each guest while they're on tour just to be sure they are having a trip of a lifetime.

Has anyone ever called Classic Journeys obsessive?

I hope so, because we are. Everything is in the details. For instance, we've created a special tour for the total eclipse of the sun which is going to pass over parts of South America in 2020. We've already analyzed likely traffic patterns in the most remote areas and figured out how to structure our itinerary so that our guests will be in place in the path of totality while the people who don't plan ahead will be stuck in jams on remote dirt roads. We enjoy obsessing about details like that so that our guests never have to.



How can you top this?

Oh, we never let ourselves think of it that way. We just continue to approach every single guest on each and every departure like the most important guest we've ever had. It seems to be working! Of course, we keep looking for new ways to win more converts. For 2019, we've launched a new series of Classic Journeys that are based from

"I voted for you!"

We've heard that expression so many times lately from guests who registered their votes with *Travel + Leisure*. Given the results, we know it's true ... and you know that your votes really count!

STAFF AND GUIDES

"I always feel like I'm traveling with a best friend. I prefer your local guides to the ones that other companies fly in."

ITINERARIES AND DESTINATIONS

"If it's on my bucket list, you always seem to go there. Of course, with so many options you always seem to make my list longer and longer!"

ACTIVITIES

"On your trips, I've cooked with Michelin chefs, sung songs with Quechua schoolchildren, and walked on glaciers with the descendants of Vikings. Fun doesn't begin to describe it."

ACCOMMODATIONS

"How you manage so many 5-star properties on these trips shocks me. But please, please, please keep it up!"

FOOD

"I have never eaten so well so often so happily. When you people claim that you are foodies, you aren't kidding."

OVERALL VALUE

"We have never had a better vacation at any price."

river cruise boats. On a different note, seeing how many travelers can't always find as much vacation time as they really want, we have developed a series of 6-day or shorter quick trips that go as far afield as Iceland, the Galápagos and Morocco.

Final thoughts?

It's always an honor to win recognition. But, for all of us at Classic Journeys, the biggest privilege is to share the dreams of our guests and make those dreams come true. That connection is the best feeling of all.