JOURNEY
LATIN AMERICA



PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

SIGNATURE COSTA RICA AND PANAMA COAST: PACIFIC ROUTE

14 days from **£3,820pp**

COSTA RICA / SAN JOSE, CENTRAL HIGHLANDS AND CENTRAL VALLEYS / OSA PENINSULA / PANAMA / BOQUETE AND THE CHIRIQUÍ HIGHLANDS / PACIFIC COAST OF PANAMA / PANAMA CITY



WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

A passion for the region runs through all we do

All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America

Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

Fully bonded and licensed

ATOL-protected

On your side when it matters

Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks

We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions

Let us show you the Latin America we know and love

OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

Spend time at an enchanting wildlife lodge in Costa Rica before moving on to Panama, full of delightful surprises and unspoilt landscapes. After these explorations, laze on a sunlit beach on Panama's Pacific coast.

DAY 1	**Arrive in San José and transfer to your hotel.**
DAY 2	**Fly to Drake Bay on the Osa Peninsula and take a boat to your lodge.**
3	**Wildlife-spotting hike in Corcovado National Park.**
DAYS 4	**Snorkelling excursion; whale and dolphin watching in season.**
DAY 5	**By boat and vehicle to Boquete, Panama.**
DAY 6	**Hanging Bridges excursions**
DAY 7	**Optional excursions in Boquete**
DAY 8	**Transfer to Boca Chica.**
DAYS 9-10	**At leisure on the Pacific coast.**
DAY 11	**Fly from David to Panama City.**
DAY 12	**Panama City tour**
DAY 13	**Day at leisure - optional activities available**
DAY 14	**Transfer to Panama City for international flight home.**

ITINERARY

Tiny Costa Rica is a volcanic country of fertile plains, rolling hills supporting acres of coffee plantations and tropical lowlands bursting with fruit. Throughout, it has a friendly, relaxed ambiance. After a night in the modern capital San José, you'll move on to a wildlife lodge in an area of the Pacific coast where exotic flora and fauna is especially prolific, and follow trails through the rainforest.

Continue to Panama, an up-and-coming destination for nature lovers with some amazingly unspoilt beaches to boot. You'll spend time in the glorious, rugged mountain landscapes surrounding Boquete, a centre for active adventures: you'll be very tempted to pull on your walking shoes and get out on to the wooded trails in search of quetzals.

After this, travel to the Panamanian Pacific coast for a few days' relaxation in low-key Boca Chica, a fishing village at the end of the road opposite a string of tiny islets. The beaches here are powder-white, backed by coconut palms and dense, untouched forest.

Your trip finishes in Panama City, a thriving cosmopolitan metropolis with a rich and varied history and the location for one of the greatest feats in engineering, the Panama Canal.

DAY 1

Arrive in San José and transfer to your hotel.

You will be met at the airport by our local representative who will take you to your hotel in the modern capital.

DAY 2

Fly to Drake Bay on the Osa Peninsula and take a boat to your lodge.

Transfer to the domestic airport in San José for your flight to Drake Bay, a small village on the Osa Peninsula, and continue by boat to your lodge.

Wildlife reserves have been established throughout the Osa Peninsula, most notably Corcovado National Park which protects about one third of the region. Its rainforest and mangrove swamps are home to an astonishing diversity of flora and fauna. White-faced, spider and howler monkeys, white-lipped peccaries and coati all reside here as well as the elusive jaguar. The area is particularly known for its large population of scarlet macaws as well as many other species of bird.

3

Wildlife-spotting hike in Corcovado National Park.

This stimulating, adventurous guided tour takes you deep into the heart of Corcovado National Park, one of the most biodiverse places on the planet. After a 30-minute boat trip from the lodge, you'll enter the park via the San Pedrillo Ranger Station. White-faced, spider and howler monkeys, white-lipped peccaries, coati, scarlet macaws, toucans, and countless other birds and insects are often observed as you hike through the dense jungle on well-marked trails with your naturalist guide. One of the trails leads to a waterfall and an opportunity for a refreshing dip.

DAYS 4

Snorkelling excursion; whale and dolphin watching in season.

Take a 45-minute boat ride to Isla del Caño whose pristine waters make it one of the best places to go snorkelling in Costa Rica. The reefs and rock formations surrounding the island are teeming with marine life and on any given day you may see white-tipped reef sharks, sea turtles, manta rays, eels, and barracudas, as well as many shoals of tropical fish. You may also see Humpback whales or a pod of dolphins

DAY 5

By boat and vehicle to Boquete, Panama.

Today you'll take a scenic 1½ hours boat journey up the Sierpe River to the small town of Sierpe, from where it's a further 200km (3-4 hours depending on border traffic) to Boquete, a small provincial town in Panama which enjoys a pleasant mountain climate and the surrounding area is very beautiful.

The cool mountain air, rugged mist-shrouded hills, Alpine forests and boulder-strewn rivers come together to create a delightful landscape, while the fertile volcanic soils produce an abundance of coffee and citrus fruits.

The volcano Barú (3,475m) looms above the town and Caldera river runs through a steep gorge, while the La Amistad National Park straddles the border with Costa Rica with hiking trails, bathing pools and waterfalls. The town itself has a few quaint old buildings and some good restaurants.

DAY 6

Hanging Bridges excursions

This is a wonderful opportunity to appreciate the biodiversity of Boquete's cloud forest from a lofty perspective. It consists of a circuit of 8 bridges covering a staggering 4.5 km route over the treetops. The bridges are located within the Rio Cristal private forest reserve in the Talamanca mountain range bordering La Amistad International Park. You will be accompanied by a local guide who will tell you all about the lush flora and fauna of the forest. Enjoy breathtaking views of rivers, waterfalls and the towering Volcan Barú.

The climate and elevation of Chiriqui Province makes it Panama's foremost coffee growing region. The lower slopes around Boquete are carpeted with velvet-green plantations, while the upper reaches are crowned with richly diverse and misty cloud forests which remain an important habitat of the Resplendent Quetzal. Today you'll visit a local finca for an interactive experience with Panama's delicious coffee. The experts will explain all the process coffee beans go through and you'll get to enjoy a freshly brewed cup of coffee whilst soaking up the views of Baru Volcano, the highest peak of the country at 3,475 metres above sea level.

DAY 7

Optional excursions in Boquete

There are numerous hikes in the countryside surrounding Boquete, including the Sendero Los Quetzales from where you can walk (7-8hrs) over the mountains to Cerro Punta, the best area to spot the resplendent quetzal – the colourful bird which is a Central American icon.

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DAY 8

Transfer to Boca Chica.

Transfer to Boca Chica, a little town at the end of the road on the Gulf of Chiriquí, on the Pacific Ocean side of the country. It's a modest town of low rise buildings and lovely sand beaches, the jumping-off point for visits to the islands in the gulf, which is famous for excellent fishing opportunities.

DAYS 9-10

At leisure on the Pacific coast.

Two whole days at leisure in this idyllic, relaxing spot. Away from the lodge you can take advantage of opportunities to visit Boca Chica and the islands of the national marine park, with sea kayaking, fishing, diving and snorkelling, and bird-watching among the activities on offer.

DAY 11

Fly from David to Panama City.

Transfer to David airport and fly to Panama City.

This thriving cosmopolitan metropolis sits at the Pacific end of the Panama Canal. The city dates back to 1519 when it was a settlement base for transporting Peruvian gold back to Imperial Spain. Its subsequent wealth made it a frequent target for pirate raids. These days, soaring skyscrapers, sparkling banks and smart modern offices overshadow forts, Spanish convents and sumptuous French-style mansions, reminders of its colonial heyday.

DAY 12

Panama City tour

Your guided city tour starts with a visit to the Panama Canal Visitors' Centre at Miraflores Locks, where huge ships can be seen passing through the original canal or the new extension running alongside it, which accommodates the massive ships which now transport cargo across the globe and pay up to $500,000 each time for the privilege of transiting.

Continue to Casco Viejo for a walking tour of the capital's atmospheric and vibrant historical quarter, which is home to the Presidential Palace, the Metropolitan Cathedral, the National Theatre, the French Plaza and several other iconic landmarks which are testament to the city's eventful history, mélange of cultures and rich heritage. From the top of the old city's walls, you will have views over the Pacific Ocean, speckled with small fishing boats dwarfed by the presence of massive vessels waiting their turn to pass through the canal. There's also a magnificent vista of the sky-scraper-pocked skyline of modern Panama City.

DAY 13

Day at leisure - optional activities available

There are many things to do in and around Panama City. You may like to do a gastronomy-themed walking tour of the city or explore Metropolitan Nature Park, the only protected rainforest within capital city limits in Latin America.

Further afield you can go wildlife spotting with a naturalist guide on Lake Gatún or visit an authentic indigenous Embera community whose villagers share their native foods, perform a tribal dance, and offer native body paintings while explaining their way of life, traditions and beliefs.

DAY 14

Transfer to Panama City for international flight home.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Services of our team of experts in our London office

Services of Journey Latin America local representatives and guides

All land and air transport within Latin America

Accommodation as specified

Meals as specified

Excursions as specified, including entrance fees

INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

Osa Peninsula: Hiking and Snorkelling at your lodge

Boquete: Hanging Bridges

Boca Chica: Activities at the beach resort

Panama City: tour of Miraflores Locks and Casco Viejo walking tour

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Tips and gratuities

Meals other than specified

International flights to Latin America

Airport taxes, when not included in the ticket

Optional excursions

ESSENTIALS

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS
14 days, 13 nights: San José 1; Osa Peninsula 3; Boquete 3; Boca Chica 3; Panama City 3.

ACCOMMODATION
This trip combines friendly mid-range hotels with well-equipped rooms with private bathroom and comfortable but not luxurious wildlife and beach lodges. Throughout Costa Rica and Panama accommodation is of a high standard.

TRANSPORT
2 domestic flights (1 hour each), 2 road journeys (max 4 hours).

MEALS
Breakfast daily, full board days 2-4.

GUIDES
Our local, trusted and carefully selected partners understand the expectations of our customers very well, and their staff and guides are consistently singled out for praise by clients on their return.

On this holiday, you will be joined by different guides for each activity and or region, ensuring you benefit from specialised expertise and knowledge, often from someone local to the area.

INSURANCE
Travel insurance is essential.

Details of our recommended policy can be found on our Travel Insurance page.

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GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

GIVE US A CALL

We'd love to chat

0208 747 8315

OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm
Saturday & Sunday: Closed

SEND US AN EMAIL

tours@journeylatinamerica.com