

Trekking Panama's Camino Real

*A Rare Opportunity to Walk from one Side of Panama
to the other in One Week.*



JB
Journeys

Dates on Request with Minimum of 3 Trekkers

If the mossy river rocks, the gurgling translucent waters and the majestic, ancient trees could talk, they would tell epic stories of long mule trains hauling the King's gold, of dashing incursions by pirates against Castilla de Oro's New World fortifications and many untold story tales. This adventurous and extremely challenging trekking expedition led by the country's most experienced trekking guides takes you from Historic Panama City (1) over to the Embera village at Madden Lake (2), crossing the watershed divide of the Boqueron river (3) and reach the town of Portobelo on the Caribbean (4) from where you go on a scenery ride on the Panama Railway back to Panama City. Prepare yourself not only mentally, but also physically: 2 trekking poles are mandatory; well broken in hiking boots provide best foot comfort for the grounds & rivers you will encounter; and expect to be wet for most part of the day due to multiple stream crossings and river hikes over large distances.

National Geographic Traveler calls this one of the 50 Tours of a Lifetime. Mens Fitness names this trek one of 10 Unexpected Adventures in Central America.

Day 1 Arrive to Panama

On arrival to Tocumen International Airport in Panama City you will be greeted by an Ancon Expeditions of Panama representative and transferred to your hotel. Tonight you will meet with the Expedition Leader and the rest of the trip participants. Night at HAMPTON BY HILTON or similar.



Day 2 Historic Panama City - Madden Lake

Your morning begins with a thorough inspection of your equipment for the hike on the Camino Real. Afterwards, visit the ruins of Old Panama City, a UNESCO World Heritage Site which holds historical relevance to the area that you will explore in the upcoming days. Early afternoon drive to Madden Lake, where you board your

motorized dug out canoes in route to a jungle site where you will spend the night. Night in the jungle in screened tents (B,L,D)

Day 3 - 5 Chagres National Park

This morning you continue your adventure in the Chagres National Park. This protected area was created in 1985 to preserve 130,000 hectares (320,000 acres) of rainforests as part of Panama's conservation strategy and to help preserve the watershed which provides all of the fresh water needed for the operation of the Panama Canal, as well as the drinking water for the two largest cities in the country. The park is home to endangered species such as jaguars, Central American Spider Monkeys, and anteaters. It is also a



bird sanctuary for more than 400 species, including the harpy eagle -- the largest eagle in the world and Panama's national bird. As you skirt along the park's boundaries you will come across peasant farms and hamlets and gradually enter the thicker and more pristine rainforest, where you run into vestiges of late 1800's manganese mines, including railroad tracks and locomotives encroached in the tropical vegetation that has taken over these relics. You cross the watershed divide of the Boqueron River over a low mountain pass into the Nombre de Dios River basin as you head north toward the Caribbean Sea. Three nights in FIELD CAMPS (B,L,D)

Day 6 Portobelo

After four days of trekking, you finally reach the road which where an Ancon Expeditions' vehicle will transfer you to Portobelo, the final destination of the Camino Real on the Caribbean Sea. Set on a deepwater bay deemed easier to defend from the ravages of pirates, Portobelo was heavily fortified and for 150 years was home to the famous trade fairs, when the Spanish treasure fleet came to collect the riches that traveled across the isthmus on mule trains from Panama City and to leave merchandise brought from Seville for distribution throughout the Americas. Unsurprisingly, the wealth concentrated in the royal warehouses here was an irresistible target for the pirates who scoured the Spanish Main. Night at CASA DEL RAYO VERDE or similar in Portobelo (B,L,D)

Day 7 Bay of Portobelo - Panama City

This morning enjoy swimming in the Caribbean Sea. In the afternoon you will drive to Colon City to catch the train back to Panama City. The Panama Railway was inaugurated in 1856 and was the first train to cross the continent from one ocean to the other. The completion of the trans-isthmian railroad was inspired by the Gold Rush when pioneers were in need of a fast and safe way to get to California. The train ride is 1 hour long from coast to coast and skirts the Panama Canal. A farewell dinner is prepared for this evening. Night at HAMPTON BY HILTON or similar (B,L,D)



Day 8 Depart Panama

Today you are picked up at the lobby of the hotel 2.5 hours prior to your scheduled departure flight and transferred to Tocumen International Airport. Fly home (B)

- Pace: Challenging, hike 6-10 miles daily, rugged conditions, sleeping outdoors
- 8 days, 7 nights
- Dates: On demand with minimum 3
- Cost: \$1980 per person in double occupancy, minimum 3 persons. Single + \$250
- Accommodations: Three nights in hotel with private bath and hot water; four nights in field camp, rustic conditions
- Included: Lodging, taxes, meals as specified in the itinerary all land, and water transportation within Panama, airport/hotel transfers on scheduled arrival and departure dates, guides' services and expenses, park, museum and related entrance fees, ultralight jungle hammock and tarps, purifying water filters.
- Not Included: International airfare, meals not specified in the itinerary, alcoholic beverages, trekking poles (mandatory!), personal equipment, gratuities, travel insurance (recommended)
- Bring: Trekking poles, backpack, long pants, hiking boots, rain gear, camping towel. Each trekker is responsible to carry his/her own equipment. Porters carry general gear for the group. More details will be provided.