



Bridge of the World and Multicultural Panama

Heritage Routes of Panama

Panama is a crossroads for all mankind.

Panama Canal

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Introduction. Panama, the bridge of the world	2
The Heritage Routes of Panama	5
Ancient rocks	6
Biomuseo	7
El Caño	8
Indigenous groups	10
Panama Viejo	11
Colonial roadways	12
Portobelo	13
Congo Culture	14
Diablos of Colon	15
Pollera	16
Sombrero Pinta'o	17
Panama Railroad	18
Colon City	19
Panama Canal	21
Miraflores	22
Third set of locks	23
Map	24
Be a conscious traveler	27
Preserving the Bridge of the World	28

Panama, the bridge of the world

Bridge of the Americas

When it finished forming three million years ago, Panama became a land bridge that united the Americas and linked the biodiversity of an entire hemisphere.

15,000 years ago, Panama began to be populated by the continent's first humans. Over the millennia, these peoples gave rise to seven very distinct indigenous communities, which still preserve their traditions and ways of life.

500 years ago, Spaniards and Africans joined them, and their heritages merged with the indigenous roots of the isthmus. The foundations of Panama's extraordinary cultural diversity were laid.

Today, people continue to arrive from all over the world. Tourists and immigrants live side by side with the residents, who are all indigenous, white and black.

Today Panama is a global connection node thanks to its railroad, ports, airports and, of course, the famous Panama Canal.

Come and discover how Panama connected the entire planet.

Panama offers unique experiences.

Agua Clara Locks

Las Rutas Patrimoniales de Panamá.

Panama's Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development uses the Tourism-Conservation-Research approach as the strategic framework for Panamanian tourism, and implements the Heritage Routes: a network of circuits that reflect the essence of Panama's natural and cultural heritage and become a key differentiating element for the destination.

Bridge of the World Heritage Route.

Interpretación geológica e histórica de Panamá como puente terrestre. Esta ruta presenta el impacto del surgimiento de Panamá hace más de 3 millones de años, desde los tiempos en que lo cruzaban los caminos coloniales por donde circularon riquezas durante siglos, luego ofreciendo la experiencia e historia del primer ferrocarril interoceánico del mundo, hasta llegar al Canal de Panamá con toda su historia que llega hasta nuestros días.

Multicultural Panama Heritage Route.

La posición geográfica, las influencias extranjeras, el pensamiento y los cambios culturales por más de cinco siglos ha convertido a Panamá en un país con un crisol de culturas. Aquí se cuentan las historias, las tradiciones y el presente de las tres principales culturas que preservan y aun celebran tradiciones ancestrales. Estas culturas vivas compartirán con los visitantes su estilo de vida invitándolos a vivir junto a ellos experiencias auténticas.

Live the Heritage Routes of Panama.

Bridge of the World and **Multicultural Panama** are just two of the five Heritage Routes. To continue discovering Panama, choose another route and go on an adventure.

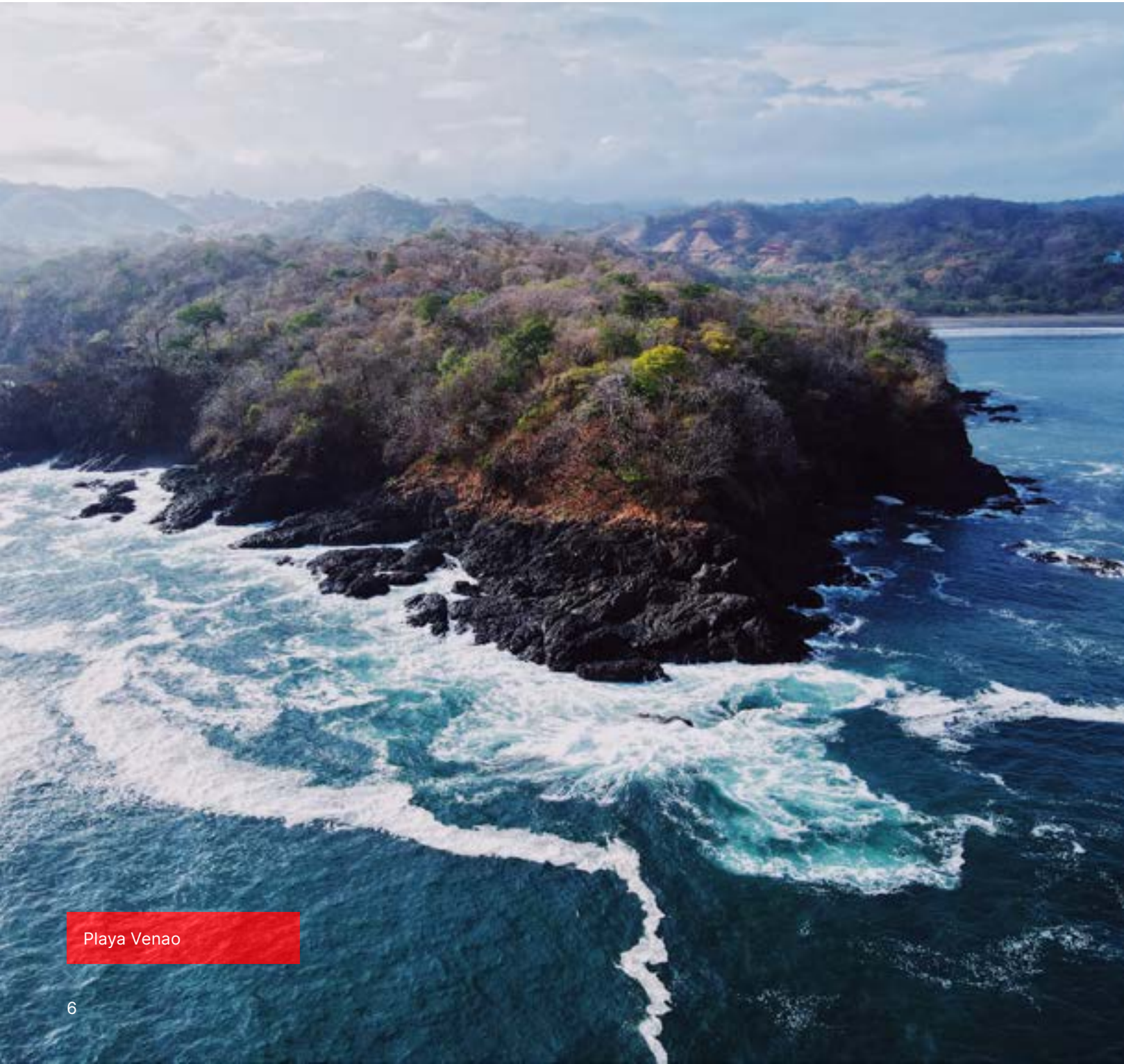
Forests of Life

Birds in Paradise

Ocean Wonders

Panama has rocks dating to more than 70 million years ago

In some places in Panama, such as Playa Venao, in the province of Los Santos, there are cliffs that date back to the very origin of Panama. These rocks are the hardened lava of ancient underwater volcanoes, and touching them is the closest thing to experiencing firsthand the rise of the Isthmus of Panama, an event that changed the world forever.



Playa Venao



Biomuseo

Biomuseo is the only building by Frank Gehry in Latin America

The Biomuseo, on the Amador Causeway, was built to tell the incredible natural history of Panama. Its rooms are the ideal place to discover the origin of the isthmus, and to understand why scientists say that Panama is the place that has impacted the planet the most since it emerged from the ocean 70 million years ago.

Panama's pre-Hispanic peoples had a rich material culture

The richest pre-Hispanic archaeological site in Panama is El Caño, in the province of Coclé. More than a thousand years ago, powerful caciques were buried here, sumptuously adorned with gold, stone and ivory ornaments. In the ceremonial center with basalt columns, human sacrifices were made to honor the deceased leaders.

Research projects:

Archaeologists from the El Caño Foundation began studying the site in 2008 and continue to excavate today. Their studies have shown that El Caño was used between 700 and 1000, and that the people who built and used it were much more complex than previously thought. The largest tomb found to date contained at least 25 bodies: the most important was covered with gold and copper pieces, and ornaments carved in stone, bone and ivory. The abundance and quality of the finds have led El Caño to be called "El Dorado of Panama".



Comarca Emberá-Wounaan

Panama's seven indigenous groups are descended from the pre-Hispanic inhabitants of the Americas

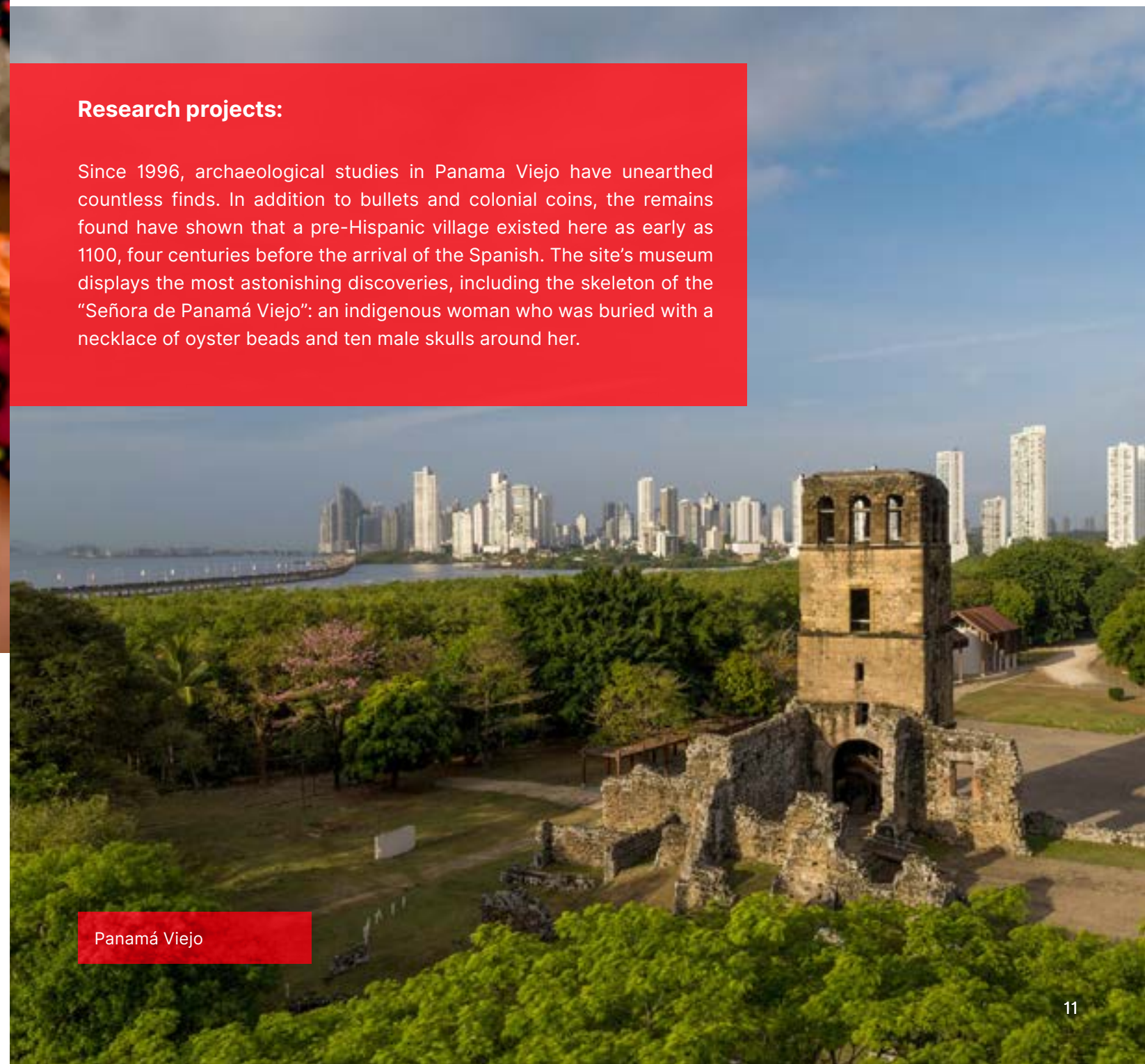
For millennia Panama has been home to multiple indigenous groups. Today, the Emberá, Wounaan, Guna, Ngäbe, Buglé, Bribri and Naso Tjër Di peoples are custodians of cultures and traditions that date back to the first settlers of this region.

Panama was the first city founded by Europeans in the Pacific coast of the Americas

Panama Viejo is the set of ruins of the first Panama City, founded in 1519. It became the starting point for the Spanish expeditions that invaded and conquered Central and South America. Later, it became the obligatory passage of countless treasures coming from Peru, which attracted the attention of the pirate Henry Morgan who plundered it in 1671.

Research projects:

Since 1996, archaeological studies in Panama Viejo have unearthed countless finds. In addition to bullets and colonial coins, the remains found have shown that a pre-Hispanic village existed here as early as 1100, four centuries before the arrival of the Spanish. The site's museum displays the most astonishing discoveries, including the skeleton of the "Señora de Panamá Viejo": an indigenous woman who was buried with a necklace of oyster beads and ten male skulls around her.



Panamá Viejo

Remnants of old colonial roads survive in Panama

The Camino de Cruces and the Camino Real formed one of the most important trade routes in the world in the XVI and XVII centuries. They connected Panama City on the Pacific with Portobelo on the Atlantic, connecting the two oceans and the entire planet. Tons of fabulous treasures plundered from South America passed through here, on muleback, heading for Spain.



Camino de Cruces



Portobelo

Portobelo was one of the most important ports in the colonial Caribbean

Between the 16th and 18th centuries, gold and silver looted from South America was stored in Portobelo before being shipped on galleons bound for Spain. Huge trade fairs were also held here every year. These riches made Portobelo the target of enemy nations, pirates and privateers. Although its forts are no longer under attack, the old cannons still stand guard over the bay.



Portobelo

The Congo Culture of the Panamanian Caribbean was listed as intangible cultural heritage

Congo culture is a rich set of ritual and festive expressions of the descendants of enslaved black rebels in Panama. The Congos Game is a performance with kings, angels and devils that represents the struggle of good and evil and between the slaves and the Spanish masters, and that traditionally takes place all along the coasts of Colon during the Tempo di Soto, between the day of San Sebastian and Ash Wednesday.

The devils of Colon are part of Congo Culture

Every Ash Wednesday, the towns and cities of Colon are filled with devils. Their costumes are all different, but follow a common pattern. Red and black dominate, and horns, crests, beards and feathers abound. Their ankles are loaded with bells, and the shoes can be as flashy as the huge masks.



Portobelo

The pollera, the national dress of Panama, has complex hand-made needlework

The Panamanian pollera is one of the most beautiful and elaborate typical costumes in the world, and wearing it is to connect with centuries of tradition. There are many types of polleras: the polleras montunas, the polleras de faena or the sumptuous polleras de gala. The whole process is a whole process: it starts with the blouse and the hairstyle, which includes a complex headdress with combs and tembleques made with fish scales. Then comes the jewelry: a collection of gold necklaces and chains, all with different names, as well as earrings, rings and bracelets. Only then come the petticoats and finally the polleron. All these luxurious garments are handmade, from the lace, embroidered textiles and jewelry.

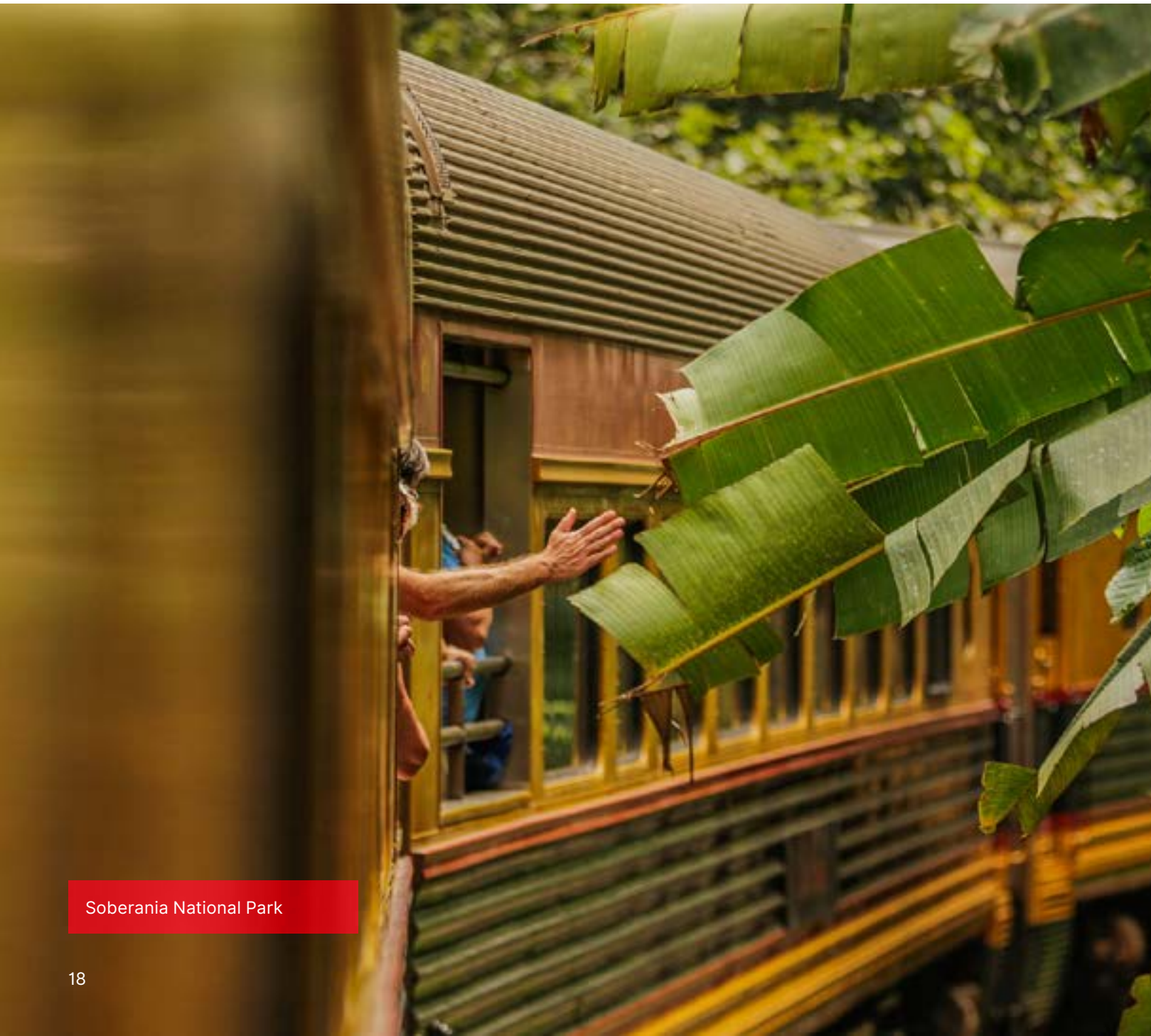


The sombrero pintao was listed as intangible cultural heritage

No garment identifies the Panamanian peasant more than his pintao hat. Whether to cover themselves from the sun during a day's work or to wear at a party, you will always see them proudly wearing this traditional garment. Our hat is of indigenous origin, and is handmade with vegetable fibers that go through a process of cooking, sun-drying, dyeing, weaving and assembling. To witness this art, visit La Pintada, in the province of Cocolé, and go to the workshop of one of the skilled artisans. You will be impressed with the complexity of a process that has been passed down from generation to generation.

The Panama Railroad was the first intercontinental railway in the world

The legendary Panama Railroad dates back to 1855 and was the first to cross an entire continent from coast to coast. Today it is possible to travel the route followed by thousands of adventurers in the 19th century, bound for California. Settle into the passenger car and admire the rainforest and the Panama Canal from a new perspective. On this journey, full of history and emotion, you will cross the American continent from the Pacific to the Atlantic in just one hour.



Soberania National Park



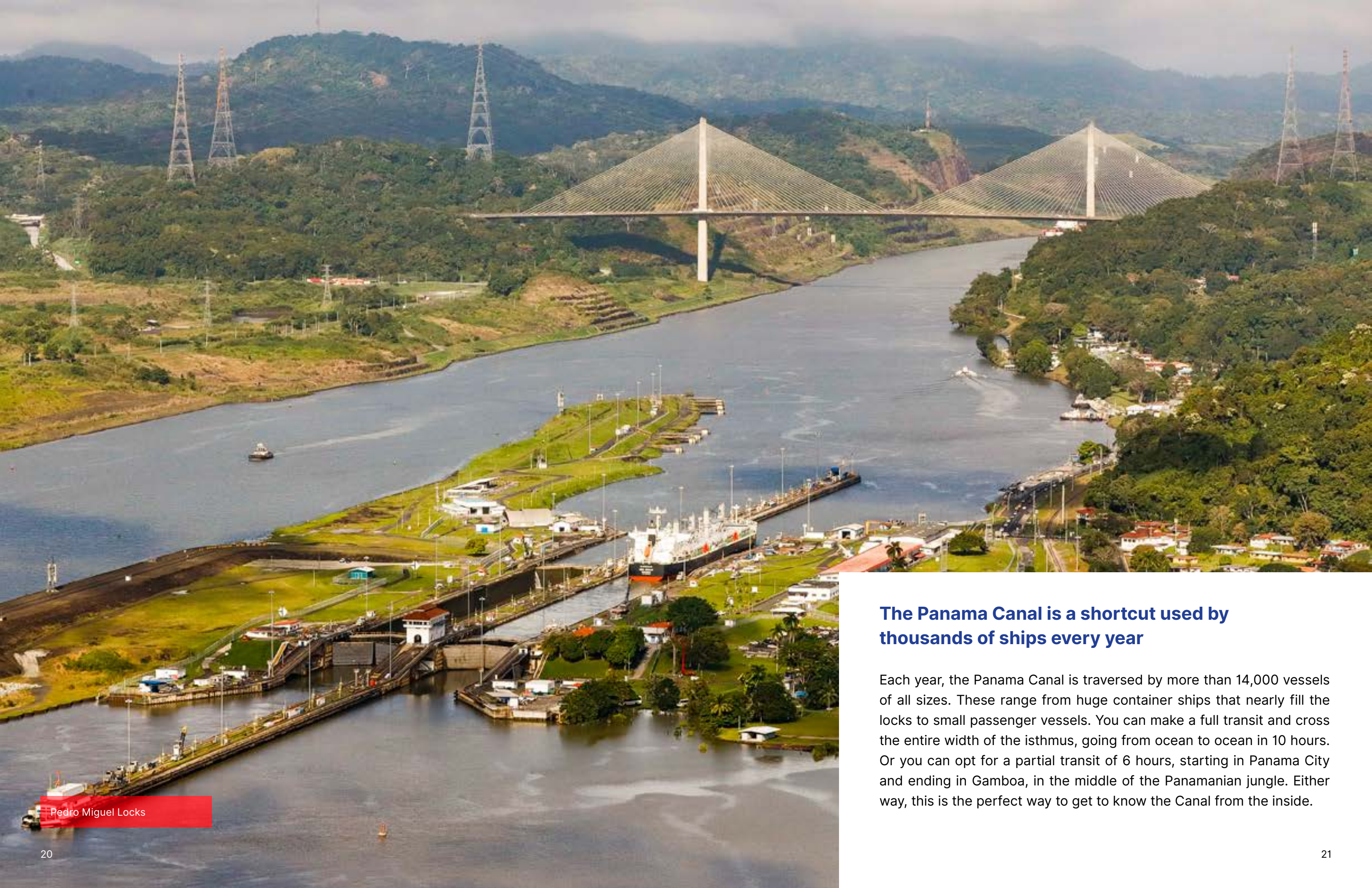
Colon, ca. 1910-1920

Research projects:

Historians are helping to renew public interest in the urban study of Colón. A recent analysis of images, plans and historical documents showed that the urban layout of Colon, with blocks of 300 by 300 feet and an alley in the middle, follows 19th century American urban planning patterns, such as those used in Galveston, Texas and Sacramento, California. For this reason, Colon is unique and different from all other cities in Panama.

Colon City was founded as the Atlantic terminus of the Panama Railroad

Colon began to be populated in 1850, with the workers who built the railroad line. During the Gold Rush it became the busiest port in the Caribbean. From its boom times, Colon preserves an architecture perfectly adapted to the hot and rainy Caribbean climate, with buildings with large balconies and covered sidewalks. Although today many of these buildings are in need of restoration, the true richness of Colon lies in its Afro-Antillean legacy: the heritage of those who built the world's first transcontinental railroad.



The Panama Canal is a shortcut used by thousands of ships every year

Each year, the Panama Canal is traversed by more than 14,000 vessels of all sizes. These range from huge container ships that nearly fill the locks to small passenger vessels. You can make a full transit and cross the entire width of the isthmus, going from ocean to ocean in 10 hours. Or you can opt for a partial transit of 6 hours, starting in Panama City and ending in Gamboa, in the middle of the Panamanian jungle. Either way, this is the perfect way to get to know the Canal from the inside.

Pedro Miguel Locks



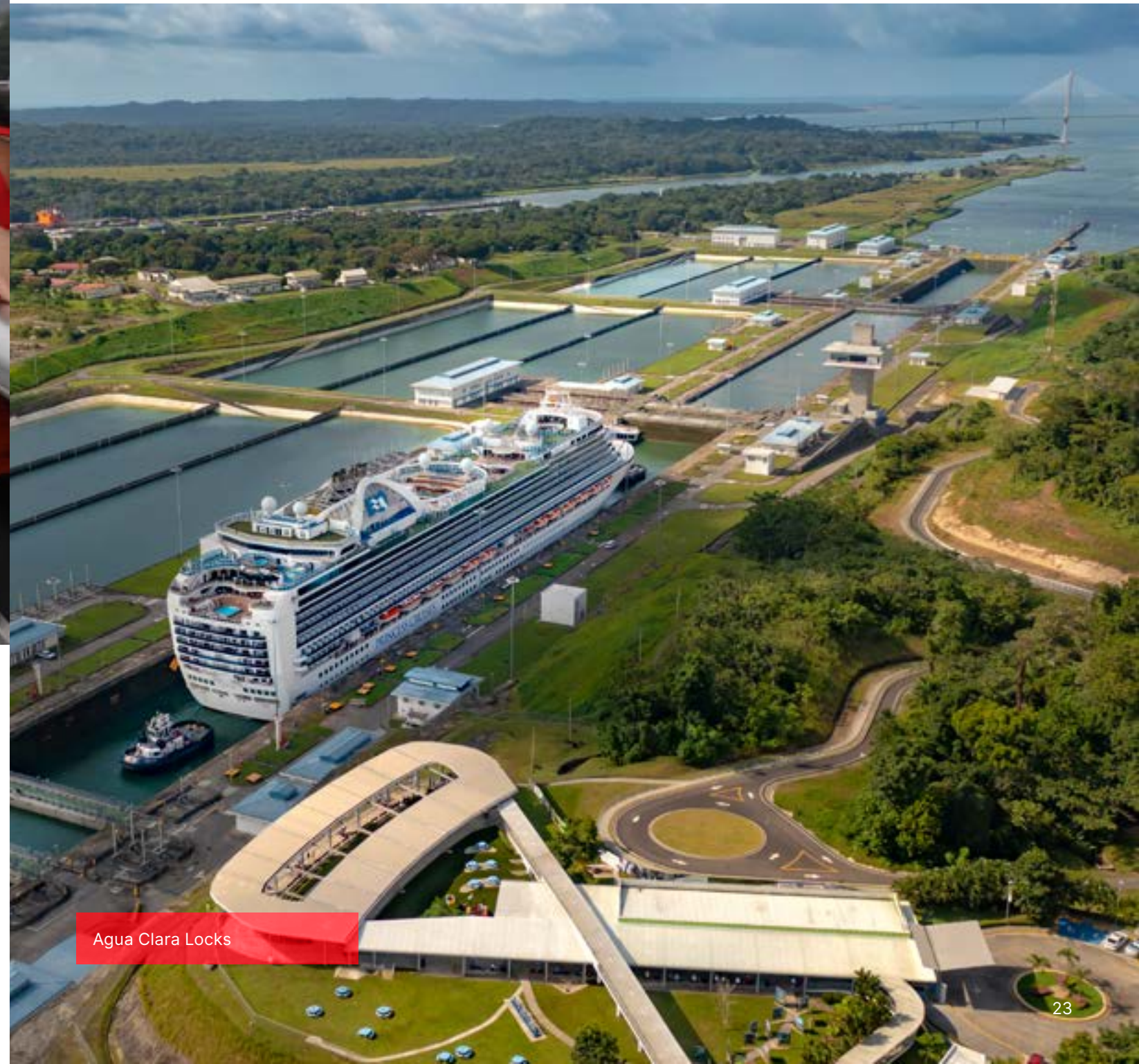
Miraflores Locks

At the Miraflores Locks Visitor Center you can see up close how the Panama Canal works

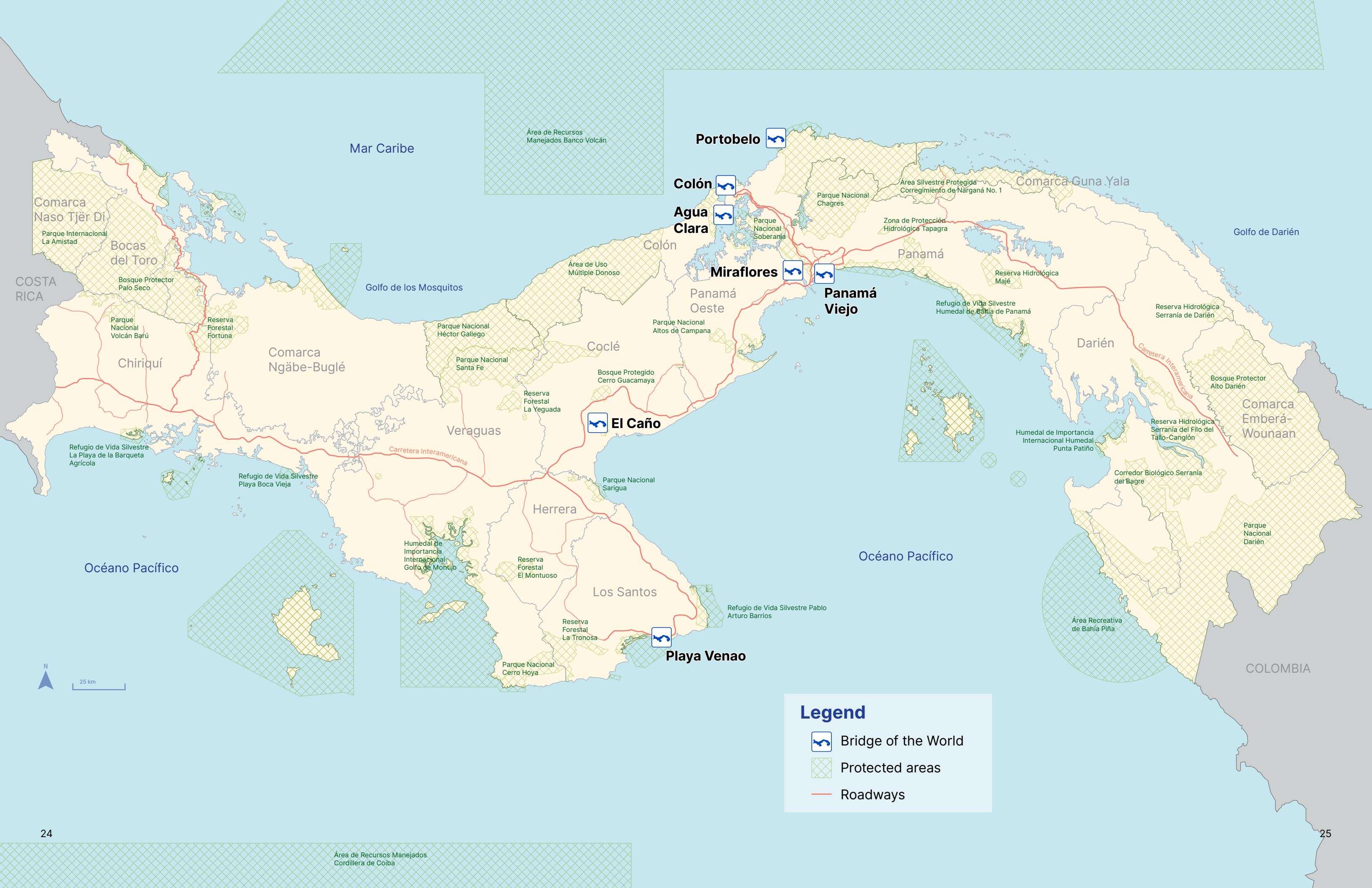
Miraflores is the best place to discover the Panama Canal. In its rooms you can learn how the Canal was built and how it works, and from its terraces you can see live the huge ships transiting through the locks. The largest ships that pass through here are the Panamax ships, which seem to almost touch the walls.

The third set of locks of the Panama Canal began operating in 2016




The Agua Clara Visitor Center is in the province of Colon, just an hour from Panama City. From here you will see the new locks that were made to accommodate the giant Neopanamax ships, which do not fit in the original locks. The lookout point in the center also offers stunning views of Gatun Lake.



Agua Clara Locks



Legend

-  Bridge of the World
-  Protected areas
-  Roadways



Be a conscious traveler

With the decisions you make during your visit you can help us preserve Panama's heritage and cultures.

Don't leave trash:

Take with you all waste and garbage generated during your activities and deposit it in the appropriate trash containers.

Support the local economy:

Prefer local businesses and tour operators that implement sustainable practices and contribute to the economic development of Panama's communities.

Education and awareness:

Learn about terrestrial ecosystems and the importance of their conservation, and share your knowledge with other travelers to promote responsible tourism.

Support conservation:

Participate in volunteer programs or donate to organizations dedicated to the conservation of terrestrial habitats.



Protecting the Bridge of the World

Currently, multiple institutions and community-based organizations collaborate to study and protect Panama's heritage and cultures. These are some of them.

Proposal for the Inclusion of the Transisthmian Route before Unesco
<https://mire.gob.pa/la-ruta-colonial-transistmica-de-panama/>

Panama formalized before the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) the submission of the dossier, the Management Plan and the Interinstitutional Management System for the Transisthmian Colonial Route (RCT) to be declared World Heritage of Humanity.

Centro de Investigaciones Históricas Antropológicas y Culturales AIP
<https://cihac.org.pa/>

It was created as a research center affiliated with the Panamanian Ministry of Culture with the mission of scientifically studying Panamanian history, culture and cultural heritage in order to promote cultural rights, intercultural dialogue, sustainable development and the protection of Panamanian cultural heritage.

Preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of the country - expanded canal
<https://pancanal.com/preservacion-del-patrimonio-historico-y-cultural-del-pais-canal-ampliado/>

Over the years, the Panama Canal has developed an important work of preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of the country, including buildings, monuments, valuable collections, film and photographic archival material.

Protecting the historical heritage is to preserve the national identity, leaving an important legacy for future generations.

The documents jealously guarded by the Canal, outline important moments in the life of Panama and its protagonists.

Our historical heritage is a treasure that we continue to safeguard.





Visit [visitpanama.com](https://www.visitpanama.com)

Visit <https://www.visitpanama.com> for additional information about the Heritage Routes of Panama.

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