

panama

AZUERO



STUDENT INFO PACK

CERRO HOYA & SANTA FE EXPEDITIONS



Digital Dashboard

SNAPSHOT OF PANAMA

- Currency: USD (Coins are called Balboas).
- Electricity: 110v (Type A/B — same as the USA/Canada).
- Bring cash when traveling to Santa Fe or Cerro Hoya, there are very few ATM available on that region..
- Water: Tap water is safe in Panama City, but stick to bottled/filtered in Bocas del Toro and San Blas.
- Weather: "The Dry Season" (Dec–April) vs. "The Green Season" (May–Nov).
- Get a SIM Card in a shop in Panama city and get connected in seconds, there are cards starting at \$5 USD for 7 days of unlimited data.
- Which carrier to choose? Used Tigo, works better in Azuero.

LOGISTICS & THE "METRO" HACK

- Transport: Download Uber and Indrive. For the City, mention the Tarjeta Metro (costs \$2, rides are \$0.35).
- SIM Cards: Tigo or +Móvil are the big players. Advise students to get an eSIM (Airallo) before landing for instant data.
- Student Discount: Remind them to carry their ISIC Card. It works for 10–20% off at spots like Poin Panama, Scuba Panama, and many gyms.



DR LUIS URENA



Get to Know the Panamanians

written by XXX.xxx / photos by Panama Wildlife Conservation

THE "DRESS CODE" REALITY CHECK

Panama has a "Dual Identity" that trips up students:

- Panama City: Very urban and surprisingly formal. Many clubs, upscale malls, and government buildings prohibit flip-flops and tank tops. Men should pack at least one pair of long chinos.
- The Interior: Casual and moisture-wicking.
- The Must-Pack: Reef-safe sunscreen. Panama has strict coral protection rules in place for 2026.

THE "SECRET" STUDENT TIPS

- The "No-Flush" Rule: In many older areas of Casco Viejo and rural provinces, toilet paper goes in the trash bin, not the toilet. Make a cute icon for this, it's the #1 mistake students make.
- Safety Zones: Color-code a mini-map. Green: Casco Viejo, Bella Vista, Clayton. Yellow/Red: El Chorrillo (don't wander past the tourist police lines), Curundú, and Colón City.
- The "Sancocho" Cure: Tell them that Sancocho (chicken soup) is the national dish and the local cure for everything from the flu to a hangover.

CULTURAL ETIQUETTE & "PANA-SLANG"

- The Greeting: A single cheek kiss (right side) is common for social greetings between women or men and women.
- Punctuality: "Panamanian Time" is real. If a party starts at 8:00 PM, don't show up until 9:00 PM.

MINI PANA DICTIONARY

- ¿Qué sopa?: (What's up?) — Slang for "Qué pasó."
- ¡Chucha!: (Versatile exclamation) — Use with caution, it's informal/slangy.
- Parranda: A big party.
- Yeyé: A "preppy" or wealthy person.

**GLOW-THROATED
HUMMINBIRD**



Wanderlust: Jungle Safari, looking for unique and endangered wildlife

written by XXX.xxx / photos by Panama Wildlife Conservation

SPOTLIGHT: THE "HARLEQUIN TOAD"

Species: Harlequin Toad (*Atelopus varius*)

Location: Santa Fe National Park

STATUS: CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

Why they are unique:

- Due to their smooth skin and startling, toxic skin patterns, ranging from neon green and black to vibrant orange and yellow. Unlike most toads, they walk or hop short distances rather than leap. They are vital indicators of clean water and ecosystem health.

The Santa Fe Connection:

- Across Costa Rica and Panama, these toads have almost completely vanished due to a deadly fungus (chytrid). Santa Fe National Park is one of the last remaining places on the planet where a wild, unaffected population still thrives. Seeing one is a rare privilege.

SPOTLIGHT: THE EMERALD GIANT OF AZUERO

Species: Great Green Macaw (*Ara ambiguus*)

Location: Cerro Hoya National Park

STATUS: CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

Why they are unique:

- This is one of the largest parrots in the world, measuring up to 90 cm (35 inches) long. They are almost entirely a brilliant, emerald green, with a shock of scarlet red on their forehead and pale blue on their wings and lower back. They have an extremely loud, raucous call that can be heard from miles away.

The Cerro Hoya Connection:

- These macaws rely entirely the largest trees for food and nesting sites. Cerro Hoya National Park is so remote and rugged that it protects one of the last stands of these trees, making it a crucial sanctuary for the remaining population (estimated at less than 1,000 adults worldwide) with azuero population to less than 50..





COMMUNICATION IN REMOTE AREAS

Many areas in Cerro Hoya and the northern parts of Santa Fe have zero cellular coverage.

- Satellite Devices: Expeditions must carry a Starlink kit to communicate.
- Check-in Policy: Field teams must "check-in" with the base coordinator every 12 hours. If a check-in is missed by >4 hours, SINAPROC will be alerted.

PWC Coordinators.

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PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

