



23rd of January 2020

Dear ALLIANCE Schlumberger members,

As our 2020 LAM Reunion in Panamá City is just around the corner, here is an update on attendance, activities and some advice before you pack your bags.

At the last count attendance will be 138 Alliance members and spouses, coming from 21 different countries. Although the largest contingents will be from the UK, France and the USA, there will be a significant representation from Latin American countries, namely: Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Trinidad and Venezuela.

Further, 25 of you are newcomers to Alliance Schlumberger, and for 46 of you this will be the first participation in an Alliance reunion.

This is all great news!

One particular point to note: at this time a total of 62 attendees have booked the Monday evening sunset cruise in the Bay of Panama. That is already a large number, however the Red Cat can accommodate up to 75 people very comfortably. So, those of you who have not yet made up their mind can still decide to attend, it will be a lively event and a perfect way to close out our first reunion in Latin America!

Now to the practical side of this letter... in the following pages you will find:

- An updated schedule for our activities
- Details on the weather and related matters in Panamá in February
- Advice about transportation on arrival at Tocumen airport
- Health-related advice (allergies anyone?)
- Some pointers on the local dress code

Don't hesitate to contact us with your questions at panama@allianceschlumberger.org. We look forward to seeing you soon in Panamá!

Benoit, Cesar, Jaime, Mauricio and Patrick

Reunion Schedule Details

Friday February 7th

- 17:00 Cocktail starts at Salon Miramar and Terraza del Pacifico on level 5 of the Intercontinental hotel
- 18:00 Live entertainment with saxophone and steel band
- 19:00 Buffet starts
- 21:00 End of activity

Saturday February 8th

Group A: Gatun Lake then Miraflores Locks

- 08:45 Meeting in the hotel lobby, then departure by bus for the Gatun Lake boat dock
- 10:00 Boat tour around the Chagres river and the Gatun lake
- 11:30 Return to the Gatun Lake dock and depart for the Gamboa Rainforest Resort
- 12:00 Buffet lunch in the Gamboa Rainforest Resort Grand Ballroom, including folkloric show
- 13:45 Meeting in the hotel lobby, then departure by bus for the Miraflores Locks Visitor Center
- 14:30 Visit to the Miraflores Locks and IMAX film projection
- 16:15 Meeting at the departure point, buses head back to the hotel
- 17:15 Arrival at the Intercontinental Miramar hotel

Group B: Miraflores Locks the Gatun Lake

- 08:30 Meeting in the hotel lobby, then departure by bus for the Miraflores Locks Visitor Center
- 09:30 Visit to the Miraflores Locks and IMAX film projection
- 11:15 Meeting at the departure point, buses head for the Gamboa Rainforest Resort
- 12:00 Buffet lunch in the Gamboa Rainforest Resort Grand Ballroom, including folkloric show
- 14:00 Meeting at the departure point, then departure by bus to the Gatun lake dock
- 14:30 Boat tour around the Chagres river and the Gatun lake
- 16:00 Meeting at the departure point, buses head back to the hotel
- 17:00 Arrival at the Intercontinental Miramar hotel
- 19:00 Gala Dinner at the Marina Grand Salon on the 3rd floor
- 19:30 Dinner service starts
- Midnight End of activity

Sunday February 9th

- 08:45 Alliance SLB LAM meeting at salon Bahia on level 2
- 10:30 Coffee Break

Panama Viejo and Casco Antiguo

- 12:45 Meeting in the hotel lobby, then departure by bus for the Historical District of Panamá Viejo
- 13:45 Guided tour of the Historical District and reunion group photos
- 15:00 Meeting at the departure point, then buses head for the Casco Antiguo
- 16:00 Guided walking tour of the Casco Antiguo
- 18:00 Gathering for sunset drinks and finger food up on the CasaCasco rooftop terrace
- 21:30 Buses head back to the Intercontinental Miramar hotel

Monday February 10th

Golfers

06:30 Bus departs from the Intercontinental hotel going to the Tucan Golf Club
07:00 Golf round (additional details will be provided on February 7)
Noon Bus heads back to the Intercontinental Miramar hotel

Sunset cruise

Note: take along your passport or a copy of it, it will be required at boarding time!

15:15 Meeting in the Hotel lobby then depart for the Balboa Yacht Club dock
16:15 Embark on Red Cat for the Sunset Cruise
18:30 Back at the dock; board buses back to the Intercontinental Miramar hotel
19:00 Arrival at the hotel

Tour Details

Gatun Lake and Miraflores Locks



Participants will be divided into two groups, which will switch activities after lunch, taken in common at the Gamboa Rainforest Resort.

Group A will start with the Panama Canal Miraflores Locks. The Visitor Center building has three levels that allow you to observe the operation of the canal, the passage of ships through the locks and their movements. You will enjoy four exhibition halls that talk about the history, biodiversity and operation of the canal as well as its international importance. The building terrace is the ideal place to take photos and bring home memories of this engineering marvel.

You will also enjoy the documentary “Panamá Canal Land Divided - A World United” at the IMAX theater. This new feature, recorded in IMAX 3D format and projected on the second largest screen in the world, is for all those who wish to know more about the history and scope of the interoceanic route. The 40-minute documentary tells the impact of the Panamá Canal, its locks, operations and the vessels that have traveled this route.

Group B will go directly to the Gatun Lake boat dock for the Chagres River and Gatun Lake tour. After boarding the boats at the dock, you will sail through the Chagres River before entering the Gatun Lake and the Panamá Canal area.

Gatun Lake is one of the largest artificial lakes in the world. As your boat makes its way across the lake, you will visit several islands where you may be able to see white-faced and howler monkeys, as well as numerous bird species. This tour will satisfy nature lovers as they will experience lakes, islands, forests and animals.

We will take our lunch break at the the Gamboa Rainforest Resort. During lunch we will be treated to a folkloric show given by the “Panama Danzas Hoy” group. After lunch the two groups will switch activities.

The tours will conclude around 16:00, and buses will take everyone back to the Intercontinental Miramar hotel, arriving around 17:00.

Included in the tour:

- transportation in buses with capacity for 27 passengers (air conditioning & reclining seats)
- guide in English
- visit to the Visitor Center of the Miraflores Locks
- entrance to the IMAX 3D Theater Hall (duration 45 min)
- tour on the Gatun Lake
- lunch at the Gamboa Rainforest Resort Grand Ballroom

Panamá Viejo and Casco Antiguo



We will go first to the Monumental Ensemble of Panamá Viejo to learn about its history. Panamá Viejo was the first Spanish settlement on the Pacific coast of the American continent and is already 500 years old. This world historical heritage covers 28 hectares to the East of the Panamanian capital and includes old buildings of incomparable wealth such as the Cathedral Tower, the King's Bridge, the Slaughterhouse Bridge, ruins of The Convents of La Concepción, San Juan de Dios, San Francisco, La Merced, the Company of Jesus and El Cabildo, among others.

The city suffered the devastating consequences of three fires and an earthquake in 1621. It was destroyed and sacked by the Pirate Henry Morgan on January 28, 1671. This destruction led to the construction in 1673 of the better protected and defended new city, on the site which is now called the Casco Antiguo or Casco Viejo.

After touring this monumental complex and its museum we will group in a nice spot for the official reunion photos, before boarding the buses taking us to the Casco Antiguo, designated since 1997 as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Gudies will walk us through the Casco Antiguo, which contains much of the country's recent history and in particular beautifully restored old churches, squares and convents, as well as restored residential buildings and the Palacio de las Garzas, seat of the Panamanian government. We will also wander around cobbled streets lined with small boutiques offering curios, local and international food fare, clothing, etc.

To conclude our tour of the Casco Antiguo we will stop for sunset drinks and light snacks at the CasaCasco Terrace, which offers a spectacular view of the city and part of the Bay of Panamá. That will be from 6 to 9 p.m. Buses will then be available to take us back to the Intercontinental Miramar hotel.

Included in the tour:

- transportation in buses with capacity for 27 passengers (air conditioning & reclining seats)
- guide in English
- visit to the Monumental Complex of Panamá Viejo
- walking tour of the main tourist points in the Casco Antiguo
- stop at CasaCasco (exclusive terrace) for sunset drinks and snacks

Advice for an easy and comfortable stay in Panamá

Special requests

Please let us know in advance of any **food allergies, dietary requirements and other specific items** which are important for your safety and comfort, so that we can make arrangements accordingly with the Intercontinental hotel and with Allegro Tours.

Health

Do not forget to check if your country of residence requires specific vaccinations before visiting Panamá! Although at the time of writing this document there are no specific requirements for vaccinations in order to enter the country, you should ensure that all your regular vaccinations are up to date.

Further, it is wise to carry a yellow fever vaccination certificate if your country of residence is known to be affected by yellow fever.

If you intend to visit the Eastern part of the country (Darian province, San Blas islands in the Guna Yala comarca) we recommend that you take malaria prevention medicine with you.

Here are a few sites which will provide you with ample information on the vaccination matter:

UK citizens: <https://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/destinations/central-america/panama.aspx>

US citizens: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/panama#vaccines-and-medicines>

French citizens: <https://www.pasteur.fr/fr/centre-medical/preparer-son-voyage/panama>

And for all: <https://airfrance.traveldoc.aero/>

Medical assistance

Panamá City is well equipped in public and private hospitals, providing international standards of medical care. Here are the two main private ones:

Pacífica Salud, Hospital Punta Pacífica

- affiliated with Johns Hopkins Medicine International
- street address: Boulevard Pacífica y Vía Punta Darién
- emergency number: 204-8184
- switchboard: 204-8800
- website: <https://www.pacificasalud.com/home/en>

Centro Médico Paitilla

- street address: Avenida Balboa y calle 53
- emergency number: 265-8888
- switchboard: 265-8000
- website: <https://centromedicopaitilla.com>

These two medical centers accept the CIGNA cards without questions and can deal directly with CIGNA in case of emergencies.

You can also follow this link for information about other hospitals:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_hospitals_in_Panama#Panam%C3%A1

Getting there

By the time you read these lines we expect that you will have already booked your flights! Only a few words about Tocumen International Airport then...

Clearing immigration, picking up luggage and clearing customs is easy and usually pretty fast, as Tocumen is a modern and efficiently run airport. Signage is clear.

Tocumen airport is 22 kms from Avenida Balboa and the Intercontinental Miramar hotel. Depending on the time of the day and traffic conditions, the journey will take between 20 and 40 minutes. You can ask the Intercontinental hotel or Allegro tours (Karelys Delgado, see following page) to arrange a pick-up at the airport arrival lobby. Alternately, you can use Uber if you have an account with them, they are very efficient and dependable in and around Panamá City, and their fares are equal to or less than the regular taxi ones. Finally, you can simply hop in a taxi at the stand outside the arrival area, there are always plenty there. The fare should be about USD 25 but do agree the price before starting the ride. Most taxis have a functioning meter ... but the driver will try to convince you that it doesn't. And verify before boarding the taxi that its seat belts are operational!

Weather

During February and March the weather is pleasant, overall sunny and dry, with temperatures ranging from 23 degrees C at night to 32 degrees C in the early afternoon. Of course, Panamá being a tropical country, one can always expect the occasional rain shower during the afternoon... but the chances of that happening are at their minimum during February and March.

Clothing

With so much blue sky and sunshine during the day, you will need to protect your skin! So, don't forget your hats, long sleeve shirts, sunglasses and sun block. But if you do forget some of them, do not worry, they are all available in Panamá's world-class shopping malls.

As we will hike and walk outdoors during the tours, bring comfortable clothes, shorts, summer dresses and sneakers.

At night Panamanians like to dress up and the trend is smart casual: men wear slacks and dress shirts or guayaberas (long sleeve shirts popular in many Latin American countries) and women wear dresses, skirts, pants or dressy jeans.

For our welcome cocktail dinner party, we want you to be relaxed as many will have just arrived from the airport, therefore we do not impose a dress code. However, we ask you to avoid shorts / tanker tops / flipflops as the Intercontinental is a 5-star city property.

For our gala dinner, you are free to dress up as much as you want! But we recommend adopting the local norm and be casual chic. Do not hesitate to put on a guayabera, they are very elegant and comfortable when comes the time to hit the dance floor and practice your salsa steps...

As air conditioning is used in most buildings, the indoors air can be quite cold. We recommend that you always carry a sweater or a light jacket when indoors or during evening times if it is breezy outdoors.

Options for additional trips and activities

Allegro Tours Panamá can organize tailor-made trips or activities before or after our reunion, for the benefit of individual participants. Bookings for such tours are up to each participant and must be settled directly with Allegro Tours. You can of course book from any other reputable tour operator in Panamá.

Here are the contact details of our English-speaking correspondent at Allegro Tours. You can request information directly from her and make plans before you arrive, if necessary or convenient.

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Here below is an indication of a few typical Panamá-based trips that participants could think about. Additionally, Allegro Tours can propose overseas trips to Cartagena (Colombia), San Jose (Costa Rica) or other Central American locations, all at attractive package prices.

Around Panamá City

half-day outings: to Taboga island in the Bay of Panamá, the Canal Museum in Casco Antiguo, the Biomuseo on the Amador Causeway, the rainforest trails near Gamboa, the indigenous Embera community living on the banks of the Chagres river, etc.

full day outings: to Contadora island in the Bay of Panamá, the city of Colon

Tierras Altas de Boquete

Return flights to the city of David then transfer to the hotel in Boquete
Two nights and three days at the Hacienda Los Molinos
Guided tours around Boquete (forest trails, coffee plantations)

San Blas islands

Return flight to Achutupu airport then transfer by boat to the hotel
Two nights and three days at the Dolphin Island Lodge, full pension
Day tours to nearby islands

Bocas del Toro

Return flight to Bocas airport then transfer to the hotel
Three nights and four days at the Hotel Playa Tortuga
Excursion to Boca del Drago, Isla Pájaros and Playa de las Estrellas

Money matters

The legal currency of Panamá is the Balboa, which is equal in value to the USD. However, all business transactions are made in USD, and USD bank notes are used throughout the country. Panamanian coins are of the same value, size and metal composition as US coins, and both can be used. For cash withdrawals, ATMs accept most bank cards (Visa, MasterCard, Amex, Cirrus, Plus). Note that the typical bank charge for a cash withdrawal using a non-Panamanian card is USD 5.25.

Other

Electricity voltage is 110 V at 60 Hz, and the type of plugs in use throughout the country is US type A or B.

Mobile phone service is available from four operators: +móvil (owned by Cable & Wireless), Claro, Digicel and Movistar. You can buy temporary sim cards on arrival at the airport, but you should check with your home operator to see what coverage it offers in Panamá. Whatsapp works well in Panamá and is widely used as a primary means of communication.