

# PANAMA AND COSTA RICA WITH SMITHSONIAN JOURNEYS



*In alliance with SMITHSONIAN JOURNEYS, PONANT discover Panama and Costa Rica on this splendid 8-day cruise aboard Le Champlain, which explores the region's abundant natural splendors, local indigenous communities, and the modern marvel of the Panama Canal. This cruise is part of a collection of PONANT voyages that are specially tailored for English-speaking travelers who want to engage with the world. In addition to the usual elements of the PONANT experience, the listed price for these voyages includes transfers to and from the ship, talks and discussions aboard ship by world class experts, and a shore excursion or activity in each port of call that encourages guests to embrace the sights, sounds, tastes, and smells of the local environment and culture.*



## **DATES:**

**2027 – FEB 19-26\***

**DURATION: 8 DAYS 7 NIGHTS**

**EMBARK: COLON, PANAMA**

**DISEMBARK: PUERTO CALDERA, COSTA RICA**  
\*Reverse Itinerary

**SHIPS: LE LAPÉROUSE**

**FROM: \$7,130**

*All Inclusive – Port Charges, Open Bar, Gratuities to ship crew, Shore Excursions*

## Expedition Highlight

- A voyage specially tailored for English-speaking travelers including discussions with experts, transfers before and after your cruise, and an included excursion or activity in each port of call.
- Engaging discussions onboard with two Smithsonian Journeys Experts.
- A specially arranged visit to the Punta Culebra Nature Center at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI), guided by Smithsonian staff.
- Opportunity to swim and snorkel on beautiful Holandes Cayes, one of the magnificent islets of the San Blas Islands.
- A daytime crossing of the Panama Canal, a true masterpiece of civil engineering.
- The UNESCO World Heritage Darién National Park and its magnificent rainforest.
- An exploration of the region's rich and myriad tropical flora and fauna in Manuel Antonio National Park.
- Encounters with the local indigenous Kuna and Emberá communities.

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1 –COLÓN, PANAMA

*Embarkation from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM*

*Departure at 8:00 PM*

Colón is the second largest city in Panama, at the Caribbean entrance of the Panama Canal. Colón is today an important port, and the free trade zone created in 1953 contributed greatly to the development of the city. Colón was founded in 1850 by Americans working on the Panama railroad connecting the Atlantic and Pacific coasts



through the Isthmus of Panama; the city rapidly overshadowed the older Caribbean ports of Panama when the canal opened.

### DAY 2 - SAN BLAS ISLANDS, PANAMA

Located on the north-east coast of Panama, the San Blas archipelago is a string of coral islands in the heart of the Caribbean Sea. More than 300 islands and cays cover an area of 300 square kilometers offering travelers a multitude of treasures. Sheltered behind a long coral reef, the San Blas Islands are full of enchanting anchorages. The long sandy white beaches bound by crystal-clear waters will allow you to relax and enjoy incredible marine fauna before engaging with the Kunas Indian community. Still subsisting on hunting and fishing, they will welcome you in their villages of bamboo houses gathered near the beaches.



### DAY 3 – CROSSING THE PANAMA CANAL

Aboard your ship, experience something unique, that has inspired the imagination of numerous adventurers in the 20th century: sailing the Panama Canal. Its construction started in 1880 under the direction of Ferdinand de Lesseps. Abandoned then resumed, this marvel of engineering was completed by the United States and opened in



1914. The canal crosses the Isthmus of Panama and links the Atlantic to the Pacific. Including three levels of locks and by raising ships to the level of Lake Gatun, almost as if the water was a lift, it allows them to avoid having to round Cape Horn.

#### **DAY 4 - PLAYA MUERTO, DARIEN NATIONAL PARK, PANAMA**

The most remote and least developed region of Panama, the province of Darien is an unspoiled land with an extremely rich variety of flora and fauna. Listed by UNESCO as World Heritage, Darien National Park offers its extraordinary scenery of rocky coastlines, mountain ranges, mangroves, rivers and creeks. Discover Playa Muerto, a tiny coastal village home to the Embyras Amerindian community. You will visit the village, attend traditional songs and dances of the locals, and admire beautiful local craft.



#### **DAY 5 – FUERTE AMADOR, FLAMENCO ISLAND**

An artificial peninsula situated at the Pacific entrance to the Panama Canal, Fuerte Amador is the gateway to several noteworthy sites. Right near there, the impressive Miraflores Locks are a shining example of the engineering feats deployed during the construction of the Panama Canal. Further north, in villages nestling amid dense vegetation, lives the Embera tribe, guardian of the forest



and of the Chagres River. This proud people have successfully preserved their traditions and their ancestral way of life, which predate the colonization of the region by the Spanish.

#### **DAY 6 - AT SEA**

#### **DAY 7 - QUEPOS, COSTA RICA**

Quepos makes for a charming stop-off on the Pacific coast, just next-door to the famous Manuel Antonio National Park, an untouched tropical natural reserve lined with white sandy beaches. The town's seafront is an opportunity to stroll through market stalls touting pineapples and bananas in the shade of the manchineel trees. In this coastal town crisscrossed with tree-lined streets in bloom, admire the houses and their incredible sculpted balconies. Enjoy a spot of shopping in the many traditional boutiques: pick up some handmade cotton clothing, ceramics embellished with Costa Rican designs and home décor pieces in hand-painted wood.



#### **DAY 8 - PUNTARENAS, COSTA RICA**

##### **Disembarkation at 8:00 AM**

The capital of the eponymous province, Puntarenas is sometimes called “the pearl of the Pacific”, for its unique charm. It sits on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica, along the Gulf of Nicoya, lined with long expanses of wild natural environments. Further inland, among the countless natural wonders to be found in the generous rainforest of the Costa Rica’s national parks, Poas and Arena volcanoes towers up in all their majestic glory. In this luxuriant natural setting, Costa Rica protects one of the planet’s richest biodiversity: monkeys, sloths, tropical birds, iguanas, crocodiles, waterfalls, canyons, and more than ten thousand species of tropical plants.



## LE LAPÉROUSE

**GUESTS:** 184

**RATES – 2027** (Rates subject to change without notice – **Book early for best rates.**)

**All inclusive** – Gratuities to crew; all beverages – open bar; Shore excursions; Port Charges; Room Service.

**NOTE:** There are other dates without Smithsonian Journeys or included shore excursions. Just ask!

SUITE –	2027
Deluxe – Deck 3	\$7,130
Prestige – Deck 4 - 6	\$7,860
Deluxe Ste – Decks 3-6	\$11,900
Prestige Suite – Dk 5 & 6	\$15,930
Privilege Suite – Dk 5-6	\$17,550
Grand Deluxe Suite	\$19,230
OWNER SUITE	\$26,640



**Reservations & Information**  
**1-855-EXPLOR1 (397-5671)**  
 Email - [info@explorcruises.com](mailto:info@explorcruises.com)  
[www.explorcruises.com](http://www.explorcruises.com)

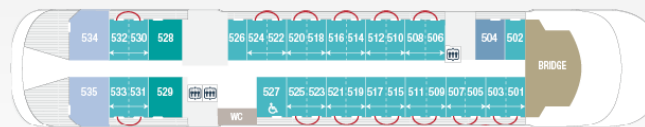
## DECK PLAN

### DECK 6



Prestige Suite (Prestige Suites consist of two combined Prestige Staterooms) Not available in 2018  
 Prestige Stateroom  
 Deluxe Suite  
 Privilege Suite  
 Grand Deluxe Suite  
 Owner's Suite

### DECK 5



Prestige Suite (Prestige Suites consist of two combined Prestige Staterooms) Not available in 2018  
 Prestige Stateroom  
 Deluxe Suite  
 Privilege Suite  
 Grand Deluxe Suite  
 Owner's Suite

### DECK 4



Prestige Stateroom  
 Deluxe Suite

### DECK 3



Deluxe Stateroom  
 Deluxe Suite