

# Panama Spanish Language & Cultural Immersion

## 14-Day Program

Forum on Education Abroad Member • Loyola University Maryland — Returning Partner 2026 • 20+ Years in Panama

### Why Panama for Spanish Immersion?

Panama offers what classroom Spanish cannot: real conversations with farmers, children, university students, and elders — all within a safe, accessible destination. Your students practice Spanish across contexts textbooks can't replicate: bargaining in markets, interviewing seniors about their life stories, teaching English to local kids, and navigating a university exchange. Three community service days and a university partnership make this as much about relationship-building as language acquisition.

### Program Itinerary

| Day | Program   | Language & Cultural Learning  |
|-----|---|---|
| 1   | <b>Arrival &amp; Welcome Dinner</b><br>Airport pickup, transfer to Istmo (1.5 hrs). Settle into bungalows. Welcome dinner with introductions and program orientation in Spanish.              | Introductions in Spanish, program expectations, basic conversational practice                 |
| 2   | <b>Beach Cleanup + Paddleboarding</b><br>Morning beach cleanup with local conservation group. Learn paddleboarding on Pacific waters.   | Environmental vocabulary, giving/receiving instructions in Spanish, community interaction     |
| 3   | <b>El Valle — Volcano, Market &amp; Butterfly Farm</b><br>Full-day excursion to a mountain town inside a volcanic crater. Hike forest trails & explore artisan markets (bargaining practice). | Nature & animal vocabulary, market bargaining, numbers & prices, asking questions             |
| 4   | <b>Community Service — Local School #1</b><br>Partner school visit for bilingual exchange. Students teach English while practicing Spanish with local children.                               | Teaching vocabulary, child-friendly communication, explaining concepts bilingually            |
| 5   | <b>Pineapple &amp; Coffee Farm Tour</b><br>Visit working farms in Capira. Tour fields, learn the harvest process, taste fresh products. Conversation with farmers.                            | Agricultural vocabulary, interview skills in Spanish, listening comprehension (rural accents) |
| 6   | <b>Beach Walk + Yoga en Español</b><br>Guided nature walk to explore tide pools and marine ecosystems. Evening yoga class conducted entirely in Spanish.                                      | Marine biology vocabulary, body & movement terms, following instructions in Spanish           |
| 7   | <b>University Exchange — UTP Penonomé</b><br>Cultural exchange with Panamanian university students. Bilingual interviews, presentations, and peer conversation.                               | Formal vs. informal register, interview techniques, presentation skills, peer conversation    |

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## Program Itinerary (continued)

| Day | Program   | Language & Cultural Learning   |
|-----|---|--|
| 8   | <b>Panama Canal + Casco Viejo</b><br>Tour Miraflores Locks and Canal Museum. Explore UNESCO-listed Casco Antiguo — colonial architecture, history.                  | Historical vocabulary, past tense practice, describing places & events, reading signs  |
| 9   | <b>Community Service — Senior Center</b><br>Visit the local senior center. Conduct oral history interviews with elderly residents, play traditional games.          | Formal address (usted), interview & listening skills, past tense narratives            |
| 10  | <b>Ola Waterfall + Nata Historic Church</b><br>Swim at Ola waterfall. Visit Nata de los Caballeros — one of the oldest churches in the Americas (1522).             | Historical & religious vocabulary, descriptive writing, comparative structures         |
| 11  | <b>Community Service — Local School #2</b><br>Return visit to partner school. Deeper engagement — collaborative project, games, or presentation in Spanish.         | Presentation skills, improvised conversation, building relationships, reflection       |
| 12  | <b>Emberá Indigenous Village</b><br>Travel by dugout canoe to the rainforest community. Learn from village elders, experience traditional dances, and share a meal. | Indigenous cultural vocabulary, cross-cultural communication, language preservation    |
| 13  | <b>Surfing + Farewell Bonfire</b><br>Morning surf class (instruction in Spanish). Afternoon free. Evening farewell bonfire — reflections and celebrations.          | Sports vocabulary, following rapid instructions, informal social Spanish, storytelling |
| 14  | <b>Departure</b><br>Breakfast. Final reflections. Airport transfer (1.5 hrs). Departure from Tocumen International Airport.   | Farewells, summarizing experiences, future tense (plans to continue learning)          |

All meals at Istmo included. Off-site lunches on Day 3 and Day 8 excursions not included.

### Optional Add-On: Daily On-Site Spanish Classes

\$18/student per class • Minimum 6 students per level • Taught by local certified instructor • Grouped by proficiency (Beginner / Intermediate / Advanced)

## Program Pricing

Larger groups = lower per-student cost. All pricing includes lodging, meals, activities, and ground transport.

| Group Size               | Low Season<br>(Apr–Nov) | High Season<br>(Dec–Mar) | Per Student      | Per Student      |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 7 students + 1 leader    | \$22,680                | \$24,377                 | <b>\$231/day</b> | <b>\$249/day</b> |
| 12 students + 1 leader   | \$31,225                | \$33,419                 | <b>\$186/day</b> | <b>\$199/day</b> |
| 14 students + 2 leaders* | \$34,643                | \$37,044                 | <b>\$177/day</b> | <b>\$189/day</b> |
| 22 students + 2 leaders  | \$48,315                | \$51,519                 | <b>\$157/day</b> | <b>\$167/day</b> |

\*At 14+ students, second faculty leader stays free.

## What's Included

- ✓ Private retreat center with 8 bungalows (24 beds)
- ✓ All meals prepared by on-site chef
- ✓ All activities, guides, and entry fees
- ✓ Ground transportation throughout
- ✓ Airport transfers
- ✓ University exchange coordination
- ✓ Community service partner coordination
- ✓ Bilingual on-site support

## Not Included

Airfare, travel insurance, off-site lunches (Days 3 & 8), personal expenses, optional Spanish classes

## Your Hosts

**Sean Davis** — M.S. Educational Administration. Former Peace Corps Volunteer (Chile). Founded an international school in Panama City. 20+ years in Panama.

**Ayesha Davis** — M.S. Environmental Engineering. Former Peace Corps Volunteer (Paraguay). 10+ years designing water/sanitation projects with the World Bank and IDB across Latin America.

## Safety & Support

- ✓ Panama: US State Dept Level 1
- ✓ On-site US-trained EMT
- ✓ Medical clinic 10 minutes away
- ✓ 24/7 emergency protocols
- ✓ Exclusive-use property (no other guests)
- ✓ Emergency documentation available

## Pre-Departure Support

Packing list, health/visa guidance, cultural orientation, parent FAQ, Spanish prep resources

## Ready to explore?

This itinerary is fully customizable. We regularly adapt programs for different group sizes, durations, proficiency levels, and academic focus areas. Need more grammar instruction? Want to add a homestay component? Let's build the right program for your students.

**Schedule a call:** <https://calendar.app.google/Nve9vFcYxtJKpRpE8>

**Want to visit first?** Our reconnaissance visits let you see the campus before you commit. 4 days / 3 nights — email us to book yours ([info@istmoretreat.com](mailto:info@istmoretreat.com)).