

# PANAMA

Minneapolis Jewish Federation  
January 27 - February 1, 2026





# PANAMA

A land radiating with life and full of authenticity. Where Northern and Southern worlds connect, old and new worlds coexist, and cosmopolitan landscapes live in harmony with wild, untamed rainforests. This Central American country is bordered by Costa Rica and Colombia in-between the Caribbean Sea and the North Pacific Ocean. Panama is a narrow land bridge connecting North and South America and is slightly smaller than South Carolina. It's also home to the most developed city in the whole region – Panama City – City of skyscrapers, as well as the perfect contrast of historic neighborhoods and ruins. There has been Jewish life in Panama since 1501 when the first conversos arrived from Spain and Portugal. The current Jewish population of Panama is around 20,000 and is centered in Panama City - the largest in Central America. There are numerous synagogues, Jewish day schools, and a significant number of kosher restaurants, supermarkets, and shops. Panama City is the quintessential Jewish urban community who work very hard to preserve its traditional Jewish values.





PANAMA JANUARY 27 - FEBRUARY 1, 2026

# Your Itinerary

DAY 1: TUESDAY, JANUARY 27

Group arrival to Tocumen International Airport and transfer to hotel.

**Welcome Dinner** with the Israeli Ambassador (TBC)

**Overnight, JW Marriott Hotel, Punta Colón**

DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28

Breakfast at the hotel.

Proceed to the nursing home **Hogar Simjati**, one of the projects which received aid from **JDC** (Joint Distribution Committee)

Visit **Kol Shearith Synagogue** in Costa del Este. We will be learning about the first Jewish community in Panama and visiting their Synagogue. Also, will meet the Rabbi and learn about some of their projects.

Enjoy a **Cooking Class** taught by a **Panamanian Jewish chef**. Then partake in lunch together!

Tour of the picturesque **Casco Viejo**, commonly called the walled city. Together with Old Panama, the Casco Viejo is recognized as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and is appreciated worldwide for its unique historical and artistic value.

Next, we stop at a local shop specializing in the production of chocolate made of 100% Panamanian Cacao. The Latin name for cocoa "Theobroma" means, "food of the gods", and we agree! Learn about cocoa crops processing, and partake in a **chocolate tasting**, which will give you the tools on how to recognize the difference between a good and a bad chocolate

Return to the hotel.

Dinner - Arranged small group dinners to explore local **Kosher restaurants**

**OVERNIGHT: JW Marriott Hotel, Punta Colón**



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# Your Itinerary

DAY 3: THURSDAY, JANUARY 29

Breakfast at the hotel.

**Rainforest Experience with lunch:** enjoy an ecological boat tour on Gatun Lake, a large manmade lake formed when the Gatun Dam was built. Today it remains an essential part of the Panama Canal system. Gatun Lake is located within an immensely diverse tropical ecological zone and is surrounded by untouched exotic rainforest. Barro Colorado Island, the largest island on the lake, has been protected as a nature reserve by the U.S. Government. A boat ride on the lake will reveal the area's many different species of birds, monkeys, iguanas, and sloths, among others

Visit **Isaac Rabin Jewish School**, the only **ORT school** in Panama

Take a **VIP Canal visit** to Miraflores locks. A Panama Canal guide will introduce you to some of the most important and unique details of this marvel of engineering. You will learn about the history and construction of the first set of locks at the Visitor's Center and Museum and will have the opportunity to watch massive vessels transit through the locks.

Return to the hotel.

Dinner - Choose from a variety of local restaurants to join others from the group or enjoy dinner with your travel partner

**OVERNIGHT: JW Marriott Hotel, Punta Colón**





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# Your Itinerary

DAY 4: FRIDAY, JANUARY 30

Breakfast at the hotel.

Learn about the local Jewish Community and visit the most important Synagogues in Panama City such as **Shevet Ajim** (Sephardic) and **Bet-El Synagogue** (Ashkenazi)

Enjoy lunch with the members of **Yad Vashem Panama**  
Organization in charge of organizing March of the living trips for the community as well as Alumni of a **MASA** program, planned in conjunction with JAFI.

Afternoon free for leisure and time for shopping. Visit the Kosher supermarket.

Return to the hotel and freshen up for **Kabbalat Shabbat** services followed by dinner with members of the community

**OVERNIGHT: JW Marriott Hotel, Punta Colón**





# Your Itinerary

DAY 5: SATURDAY, JANUARY 31

Breakfast at the hotel.

Optional Shabbat services in the morning followed by a group lunch.  
Relax by the gorgeous pool and enjoy an optional Yoga class.

Short walking tour in the afternoon.

Return to the hotel and a **Reflection Session**

Havdalah before final dinner on itinerary

**Farewell Dinner** at a local restaurant

**OVERNIGHT: JW Marriot Hotel, Punta Colón**

DAY 6: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Breakfast and group departure transfer by bus to the airport for your flight back home.

