

Where should I set up a "base camp" to explore Panama?

Written by T. Rob Brown (aka Roberto Chocolate)

Wednesday, 12 January 2011 14:26 - Last Updated Wednesday, 12 January 2011 14:58

This just came in from Laguna Beach, California. Roberto

Hello Roberto,

I hope this email finds you and yours healthy and happy. We exchanged emails last year regarding my trip to Panama. Unfortunately, my Panama departure date was postponed somewhat. Now, I am back on schedule! As I mentioned, I live in Laguna Beach, California which you said you are familiar with.

I am looking for a city and an apt. to use as a base of "operations" as I venture out to discover Panama. Your city sounds very nice. Can you provide me with any other suggestions for a "Base Camp" and central location? I have many more questions which will follow if you don't mind.

I will arrive in Panama between April 1 and May 1 2011.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

P. S. Nice looking pool

LagunaGuy (Greg)

Dear Greg,

We are all healthy and happy here - thanks. Panama only has a few cities - Panama City 1.3 million, Penonomé 17,000, Santiago 50,000, and David about 100,000.

My 'city's' population is about 80 people. LOL. The rest of Panama is made up of smaller towns of between 100 - 5,000 people.

April and May are hot and humid much of the time. Make sure you are in - or very close - to a pool. March is the hottest month of the year in Panama.

There are three all-inclusive resorts in Panama - all out here in the interior - the Pacific Beaches area, 70 - 90 minutes west of Panama City.

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They are Breezes

www.breezes.com/resorts/breezes-panama

, The Royal Decameron

www.decameron.com/eng/panama/royal/overview.html

and

Playa Blanca

www.panamaplayablanca.com

. There is a gorgeous beach hotel and resort called Buenaventura with a Bristol Hotel -

but it is pricy. The resort has one of the best restaurants in all of Panama - it is not an all-inclusive.

www.buenaventura.com.pa/

All make excellent base camps (the food usually sucks at any all-inclusive - but as you will be out and about - so your not stuck with the food)

Playa Blanca and The Decameron rent golf course condos and villas by the week and month. Rates will be reasonable at that time of year.

All are pretty central to all of Panama. Do not rent a car at the airport - rent from your hotel or at a downtown Panama City office for a much better

deal. best bet - take a cab (\$25) into Panama City, stay there a few days, find a rental car agency when you are ready to head out of town - TAKE

CABS IN PANAMA CITY - it is very difficult to find your way around for the first while - cabs are \$1 - \$3 anywhere in the city

except

in front of hotels

where they try to charge the gringos \$5.

See my article

[101 Exciting Things to Do In Panama](#)

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bit.ly/fDoLU6

for great things to do all over the county - but in Panama City especially.

Thanks - the pool is great - and chemical-free - I have started importing units of the copper-ion pool systems, to reduce the amount of chemicals

we have to use in our pools - copper ion is a great system. Just ask our dogs! LOL

Hope this helps. Roberto