

Why Santa Clara over other beach communities?

Written by T. Rob Brown (aka Roberto Chocolate)

Tuesday, 16 February 2010 17:53 - Last Updated Tuesday, 04 May 2010 18:39

☐ **The following e-mail came in today. I thought everyone would benefit from the answer.**
Roberto

Roberto: My husband and I are both dual citizens of Canada and the US and are interested in retiring in Panama. We will likely retire within the next three years however we are interested in buying real estate now. I noticed that you live in Santa Clara - why did you pick that community over the other Pacific beach communities. Do you have contacts in the real estate community that we could work with? What about the Caribbean side of Panama - my husband and I are both scuba divers and are under the impression that the diving is better there - any comments?

Any and all assistance is welcomed as we are likely planning a trip to Panama in the next couple of months. The information on your web site has been helpful and will continue to serve as a valuable resource as we move forward towards retirement - thank you.

Mary Beth :)

Dear Mary Beth,

Thank you for your kind words. I am pleased that you have found the site useful. It's fun to be able to report honestly and not have to worry about an advertiser canceling or a boss not liking what I report. I don't make any money from the site, but I do get a lot of free meals and stuff as I review resorts, hotels, restaurants, and tours/attractions in Panama - it's worth it to me.

I find it amazing that the site is attracting over one hundred thousand hits a month!

Like most people, I first came to Panama on a holiday/researching retirement destinations. We stayed at one of the only two all-inclusive resorts in Panama (The Royal Decameron or Playa Blanca) which are both based here in this area (that alone should give you a hint as to best locations in Panama)

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NOTE: A third all inclusive resort called Breezes just opened, calling its location as being on Santa Clara beach - they are not - they are in Sea Cliff which is 5 km away - but Santa Clara has a much better reputation. Breezes is gorgeous by the way - expensive, and geared for a younger holiday crowd (families with kids) but fun.

Why Santa Clara?

Santa Clara is considered one of the best beaches in Panama - whiter than most, very long, uncrowded (except on holidays when EVERYBODY goes to the beach). It has very calm, warm waters, excellent bars and restaurants and beautiful homes on the ocean.

Our house is not on the ocean, we are 300 meters away. We are the poor kids on the block. We can't see the ocean, but we can hear it and walk to it easily.

We chose the Pacific side because we don't like rain. The Caribbean side is MUCH wetter than the Pacific. In fact Santa Clara is located inside the "Dry Arch", which means this area from Farallon to Coronado gets more sunshine than any other location in Panama. However - this area is HOT, all year 'round. My wife wanted a tropical climate and this is it.

Some people prefer the cooler mountain temperatures (70 - 85 degrees). As the movie title suggested; Some like it hot.

There are many different climate and living styles in Panama - from hot, Antillian/wet Caribbean, bone dry desert, lush tropical jungles, hot beaches, exotic islands, cool mountains and a steamy, cosmopolitan capital city of 1.3 million Latinos.

My suggestion - as always - is to rent first. Give yourself time to experience all the areas, both in dry and wet season. The cool, lush mountains are also much wetter than the beach areas, especially in what I call The Green Season (or the growing season)

Every paradise has its thorns. I live in one of the most exclusive beach communities in Panama. However, as I write, hundreds and hundreds of evangelical Baptists are screaming over loudspeakers on both sides of my house - front and back. Imagine four solid days of loud music, fireworks, amplified praying, singing, screaming, clapping, cheering and yelling from 7 A.M to 2 A.M. After four days of this they are now talking in tongues. They have rented the empty property beside me. They will go home this afternoon, and life will return to "normal". It is a small price to pay for never having to shovel a driveway again or worry about a hurricane.

It is Carnival time in Panama. Sleep is not an option anywhere in Panama during Carnival. Buy ear plugs. Go out and enjoy the parades, the parties and the dancing. Learn to do the meringue and salsa. Everything is closed during Carnival anyway.

If this bothers you, consider a nice quiet rest home in Florida, or a strict gated community that

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is devoid of any Panamanian culture.

I say again - give yourself time to learn and experience this exciting, and sometimes frustrating country.